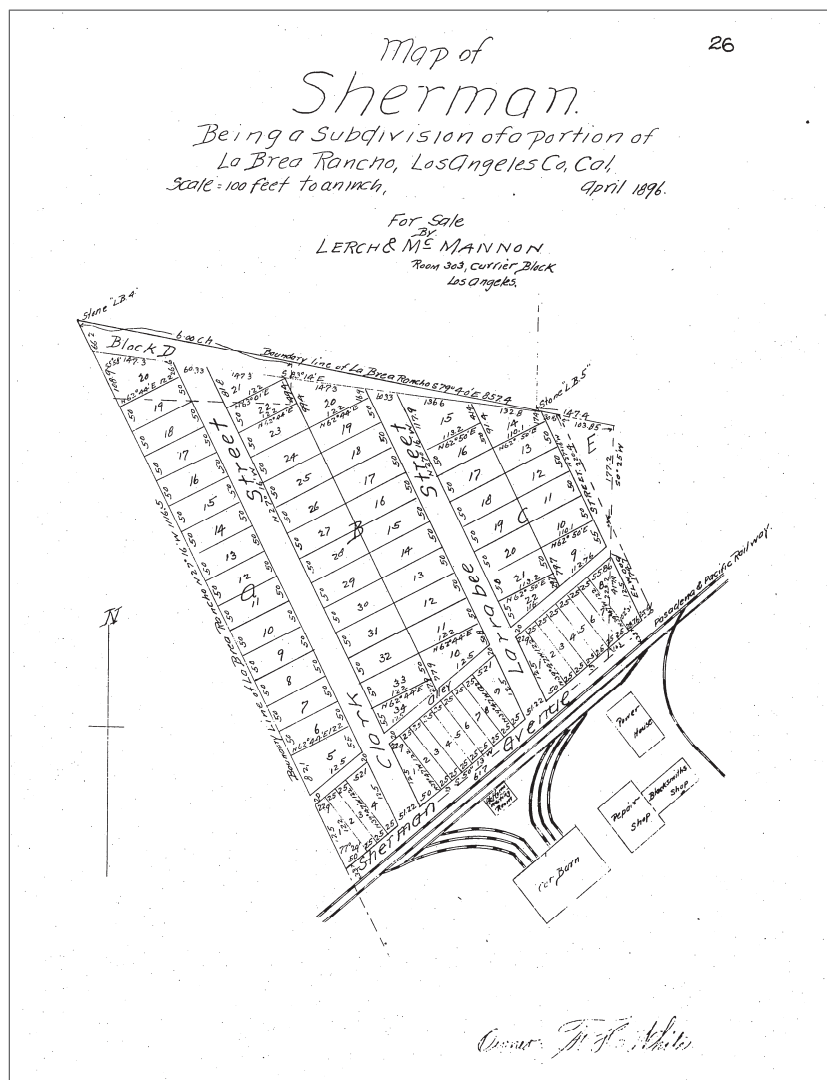


HISTORIC CONTEXT & ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Sherman and Adjacent County Lands 1895 - 1925

The City of West Hollywood began as a small community associated with the railroad. Laid out first as a railyard for the Los Angeles Railway, a town began to develop as land around the yard was subdivided. Largely agricultural at first, the town of Sherman began to take shape. Soon the lots were developed with spacious residences in the hills, and homes that were more modest to the south. Sherman's growth accelerated after the arrival of the motion picture industry in the late 1910s. Its location between Hollywood, home to the burgeoning industry, and Beverly Hills, a new residential haven for Hollywood's elite, made Sherman an attractive place for those in the motion picture industry, stars and workers alike, to unwind. Much of the town's development in the first decades of the twentieth century was driven by its location between Hollywood and Beverly Hills.



Tract map showing original blocks comprising the Town of Sherman, 1896. It is unclear if the name Sherman was used as a place name for all of present-day West Hollywood or simply the western side of the modern city. The names of several streets on the map have changed. Clark Street became San Vicente Boulevard. Sherman Avenue became Santa Monica Boulevard. (Los Angeles County Department of Public Works)

FARMS AND TRAINS – SHERMAN GETS ITS START

The area that would eventually become Sherman was originally part of Rancho La Brea (now Hollywood, part of West Hollywood, and Hancock Park) and Rancho Rodeo de Las Aguas (now part of West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, and Beverlywood).⁸ Rancho La Brea, named for the tar that bubbles to the surface near what is today Wilshire Boulevard and Fairfax Avenue in the City of Los Angeles, had a series of owners, including Jose Rocha and Nemiso Dominguez, neither of whom ever resided on the land.⁹ After California became a state in 1850, Rancho La Brea passed into the hands of Major Henry Hancock. Hancock was a lawyer and surveyor, creating the second official map of Los Angeles in the 1850s. He constructed a home on the land near the tar pits and began selling the tar commercially. Rancho Rodeo de Las Aguas was granted to Maria Rita Valdez Villa, the widow of a Spanish soldier, in 1838. It had a series of owners including Benjamin Wilson and Hancock, who later sold his interest to William Workman.



Sherman Electric Car Station, early 1920s, demolished and now the site of the Pacific Design Center. (Los Angeles Public Library)

In 1877, Eugene Plummer acquired 160-acres of land from Hancock that had been part of Rancho La Brea. Dubbed the Plummer Ranch, the tract of land was bounded by present-day La Brea Avenue, Santa Monica Boulevard, Gardner Street, and Sunset Boulevard. The next year, Plummer constructed a house in what is now Plummer Park. After the death of Eugene Plummer and his wife, their son Eugenio inherited the land, which was gradually sold. Plummer's final three acres passed into the hands of the County of Los Angeles in 1937, though he was permitted to remain in his house until his death in 1943.¹⁰ By the late nineteenth century, the remainder of what had been Rancho La Brea and Rancho Rodeo de Las Aguas was being subdivided for farming. The central portion of what would become West Hollywood was owned by Thomas and Leander Quint. The Quints were brothers from Vermont and nephews of Henry Hancock. In 1893, the brothers filed a tract map for 20 acres of land, but it is possible that they received the land in 1883 when Hancock died.

⁸Ryan Gierach, *Images of America: West Hollywood* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2003), 12-13.

⁹Bruce T. Torrance, *Hollywood: The First Hundred Years* (New York, NY: New York Zoetrope, 1979), 12.

¹⁰The house was moved to the grounds of the Leonis Adobe near the border of Los Angeles and Calabasas in 1983.



Killing a steer for a barbeque at Plummer's Ranch, date unknown, the property is now Plummer Park. (Huntington Digital Library)

In the early 1890s, Moses H. Sherman and Eli P. Clark began developing the Los Angeles Railway, the city's first electric streetcar system. Sherman was born in Vermont and began his career as an educator. He moved to Arizona for health reasons and eventually became superintendent of the territory's schools. He began investing in land, founded the Valley Bank of Phoenix, and took over the Phoenix trolley system.¹¹ He moved to California in the 1890s and began investing in real estate. Among other ventures, Sherman served on the board of directors of the Los Angeles Suburban Homes Company, which was responsible for the early development of the San Fernando Valley.¹²

Eli P. Clark was born in Iowa and began in his career as a teacher, like Sherman. He met Sherman in the 1870s when he moved to Arizona. Clark entered the lumber business and later the railroad business. He became a founding member of a company that funded and operated a railroad line from Prescott to Seligman, Arizona. The line later operated as part of the Santa Fe Railway system. Clark married Sherman's sister Lucy in 1880. The Clarks moved to California in 1891 to partner with Sherman in establishing railways in the Los Angeles area. The two men formed the Los Angeles

¹¹Gierach, 19.

¹²Jerry Berns, "Valley Landmarks: H.J. Whitley, developer of Valley transportation," *Los Angeles Times*, April 7, 1984; James Miller Guinn, *A History of California and an Extended History of Los Angeles and Environs*, vol. 3 (Los Angeles, CA: Historic Record Company, 1915), 893.

Railway Company. Eli P. Clark also served as president of the Sherman and Clark Land Company, a real estate business in Los Angeles.¹³

The first portion of Sherman and Clark's Los Angeles Consolidated Railroad Company system ran from downtown Los Angeles to Pasadena and began service in 1890. It eventually had more than 250 miles of track in an area ranging from Burbank, downtown Los Angeles, and Santa Monica. It was taken over by the Southern Pacific in 1906, and eventually became part of the Pacific Electric Railway system.¹⁴ A portion of the railway was known as the "Balloon Route," which carried passengers along a loop that ran from downtown Los Angeles to Santa Monica, then south to Redondo Beach, and back to downtown.¹⁵ The line followed present-day Santa Monica Boulevard. In 1895, Sherman laid out a five-acre railyard at the corner of present-day Santa Monica and San Vicente Boulevards (then known as Sherman Avenue and Clark Street). Two years later, he named the railyard and surrounding area "Sherman." The South Hollywood-Sherman line connected the railyard with downtown Los Angeles and Santa Monica.¹⁶



Moses H. Sherman, circa 1900.
(California Historical Society)

The Town of Sherman initially comprised the railyard, car barns, a blacksmith shop, storehouses, and repair facilities (none of these buildings remain today). Located adjacent to the railyard was a small community of Mexican workers who worked at the yard (the buildings no longer remain). In 1896, E.H. White purchased twelve acres of land from the Quints and subdivided it into town lots. The first streets laid out were Larrabee Street, Clark Street (now San Vicente Boulevard), Cynthia Street, and Sherman Avenue (now Santa Monica Boulevard).¹⁷ Soon, houses for the yard's workers were constructed and a town began to take shape. Residential lots sold for as low as \$150; many were purchased by railroad workers and those who worked in the surrounding agricultural fields. By 1898, the *Los Angeles Times* noted that "although less than two years old, [Sherman] already contains a population of 100 and has stores, [and a] school, church, and post office, and is the center of an important truck farming district."¹⁸ Leander Quint owned the general store and also served as the town's postmaster.¹⁹

An early commercial enterprise in the area was a steam train line named after the Quints. The line, called the "Quint Cutoff," was constructed by Sherman and Clark in 1900. The train carried granite

¹³Guinn, 689-690.

¹⁴Gierach, 22.

¹⁵Gierach, 18.

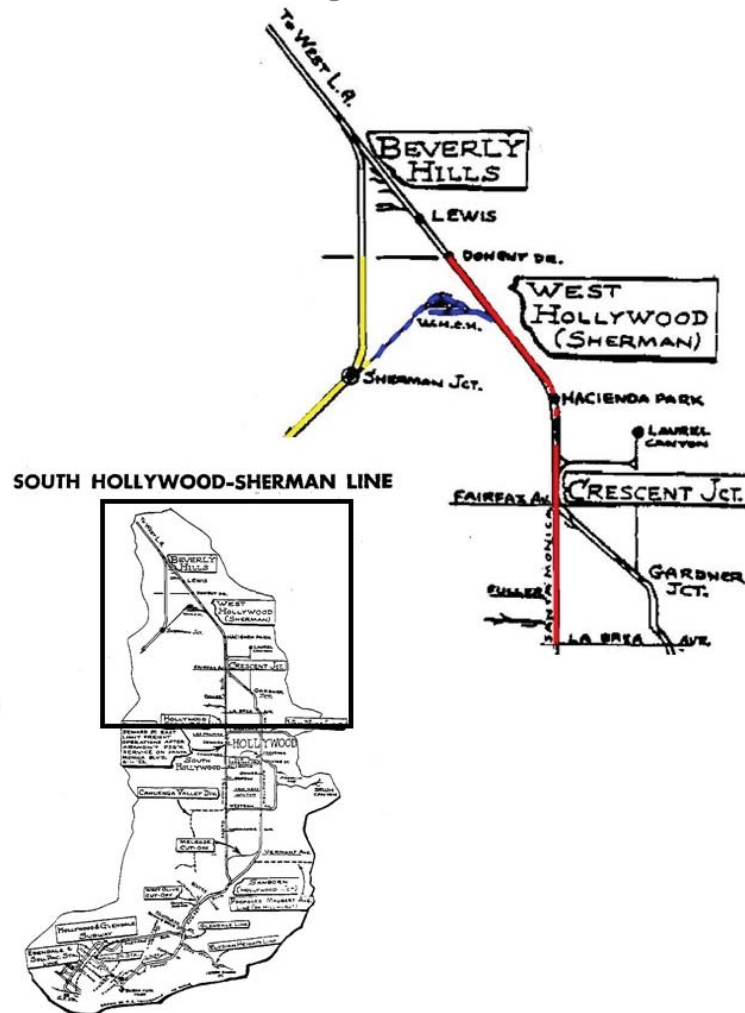
¹⁶Gierach, 20, 25.

¹⁷Johnson Heumann Research Associates, "Historic Resources Survey Final Report," City of West Hollywood, 1987, 8.

¹⁸"Sherman," *Los Angeles Times*, January 1, 1898.

¹⁹Gierach, 27.

quarried out of Laurel Canyon and turned around for its return trip up the hill on tracks laid out in arcs called “wyes.” The line was likely abandoned in 1911, but vestiges of these wyes exist today in the street pattern at either end of Crescent Heights Boulevard at Sunset and Santa Monica.²⁰



The main streetcar lines serving Sherman (West Hollywood) are shown in red. The Hollywood and South Hollywood-Sherman lines met at Crescent Junction, located at Santa Monica Boulevard and Fairfax Avenue. Dual tracks for the two lines continued west in the pavement of Santa Monica Boulevard, passing Crescent Heights Boulevard to Hacienda Park (two blocks east of La Cienega Boulevard). The tracks ran southwest along Santa Monica Boulevard from Hacienda Park, crossing La Cienega Boulevard, and continuing for four blocks to the end of the route at Sherman (West Hollywood). The dual rails turned south into the West Hollywood Car House (WHCH on map, shown in blue). This line discontinued service in 1954 and that the buildings at the yard were removed in 1974. The Santa Monica via Sawtelle Line is shown in yellow. Near West Hollywood, the line ran along San Vicente Boulevard from the east. The Sherman Junction was one block west of La Cienega Boulevard at Le Doux Road and Burton Way (now in the City of Los Angeles). At the Sherman Junction, the line branched north and towards Beverly Hills.²¹

²⁰"Quint Cutoff," Pacific Electric Railway Association, accessed May 6, 2016, <http://www.erha.org/pelines/pewqc.htm>

²¹Caltrans, Los Angeles District 7, 1981 Inventory of Pacific Electric Routes (Caltrans District 7 Public Transportation Branch, 1982).

QUEEN OF THE FOOTHILLS

By 1904, Sherman had enough of a population to necessitate the construction of a school, which was described in the *Los Angeles Examiner* as being “in a very flourishing condition.”²² The school, located at Harratt Street and Clark Street (now San Vicente Boulevard) was later demolished and replaced by the buildings that exist on the site today (expanded to Hammond Street and now called West Hollywood Elementary School). Sherman itself was said to be a “pretty little railroad town [which] is making a growth fully equal to any other part of the valley in point of material prosperity.”²³ The small community had a scattering of modest homes, a tavern, a general store, and other buildings spaced between agricultural fields.²⁴ City lots were developed with residences, and the town’s population climbed to approximately 500 people in 1905.²⁵ Five years later, Sherman had grown to 900. Santa Monica Avenue (now Holloway Drive and Sunset Boulevard) and Coldwater Canyon Road (now Doheny Drive) formed the northern and western limits of the town, though the



Harper Ranch looking east, 1906, demolished. (Playground)

area approximately west of Hammond Street remained undeveloped. It was bounded by Sherman Avenue on the south and Hancock Avenue on the east.²⁶ The lots north of Sherman Avenue (now Santa Monica Boulevard) were developed with modest single-family residences.

The burgeoning town was nicknamed “Queen of the Foothills,” and boosters praised its small town atmosphere, climate, and scenic beauty. Despite its rural setting, they pointed out, it was within a short

ride to downtown Los Angeles as well as the beaches of Santa Monica and Venice, thanks to its location along the Pacific Electric Railway.²⁷ A modest commercial strip was rising along Santa

²²“Education at Colegrove,” *Los Angeles Examiner*, August 14, 1904.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Gierach, 26-27.

²⁵“The County of Los Angeles Outside the Chief City – Sherman,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 1, 1905.

²⁶Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Los Angeles, Volume 10, 1919, Sheet 0c.

²⁷Johnson Heumann Research Associates, 9.

Monica Boulevard, the town's main thoroughfare, in the vicinity of what is now San Vicente Boulevard. The area around Sunset Boulevard remained rural and was lined with avocado groves and poinsettia fields belonging to Victor Ponet. Ponet was a banker and real estate developer from Belgium who owned much of the land north of Sherman. The Ponet residence, constructed in 1898, was located at the corner of what is now Sunset Boulevard and Sunset Plaza Drive. Later in the 1920s, Ponet donated land and money for the construction of St. Victor's Catholic Church. A wood frame building was constructed on Holloway Drive south of Sunset Boulevard (it was replaced in the 1960s). Another large estate in the area, located north of Sunset Boulevard, near what is now Laurel Canyon Boulevard, was the estate of Charles Harper, a Los Angeles businessman who moved to California after the Civil War. His estate, named Cielo Vista, was commonly known as the Harper Ranch.²⁸

By 1919, the area sometimes referred to as West Hollywood was generally considered to be bounded by Sunset Boulevard on the north, Doheny Drive on the west, La Brea Avenue on the east, and Beverly Boulevard on the south. This encompassed the town site of Sherman.²⁹ The street grid that runs through Hollywood dominated the eastern portion of the area, while the angled route of Santa Monica Boulevard, following the railroad tracks, determined the grid to the west.

Until the first decade of the twentieth century, Sunset Boulevard's terminus was located just west of Laurel Canyon Boulevard/Crescent Heights Boulevard.³⁰ In 1906, real estate investors announced plans for a new 140-acre residential development named Hacienda Park, bounded by present-day Sweetzer Avenue, Santa Monica Boulevard, La Cienega Boulevard, and Hollywood Boulevard. The development "extends up the foothills embracing a couple of large cañons, and a fine slope to the southeast" and had, the *Los Angeles Times* praised, "some very pretty romantic sites in and along the sides of the cañons."³¹ As part of the neighborhood's development, Sunset Boulevard was extended west from Hollywood into Ponet's land. Business was brisk south of Sunset Boulevard where lots sold quickly. North of Sunset Boulevard; however, sales were stagnant because there was no infrastructure. In 1923, the Hacienda Park Land Company sold the section north of Sunset Boulevard to the John A. Evans Corporation. Evans installed sewer and gas lines and graded and named the streets. These lots finally began to sell, but Evans' success ended shortly after the 1929 stock market crash.³²

²⁸An alternative spelling for the name of the ranch was Cieola Vista.

Jon Ponder, "1890s: Farms and Estates," Playground to the Stars, accessed February 17, 2016, <http://www.playgroundtothestars.com/timeline/1906-cieola-vista-home-of-the-harper-family/>.

²⁹Architectural Resources Group, "R2, R3, R4 Multi-Family Survey Report," City of West Hollywood, 2008, 19.

³⁰Jon Ponder, "1906: Sunset Strip's Birth Announcement," Playground to the Stars, accessed February 17, 2016, <http://www.sunsetstript.com/2010/11/12/sunset-strips-birth-announcement/>.

³¹"Real Estate Notes," *Los Angeles Times*, April 29, 1906, quoted in Jon Ponder, "Happy Birthday, Sunset Strip, 108 Years Old on April 29," Playground to the Stars, accessed February 17, 2016, <http://www.playgroundtothestars.com/2014/04/happy-birthday-sunset-strip-108-years-old-on-april-29/>.

³²Jon Ponder, "Aerial View of 1930s West Hollywood," Playground to the Stars, accessed February 17, 2016, <http://www.playgroundtothestars.com/2014/12/aerial-view-of-1930s-west-hollywood/#more-6260>.

By the early 1920s, both residential and commercial development was booming. Sherman had a bank (the First National Bank), new commercial buildings, and residences. Boosters seeking to attract settlers to the new town praised Sherman as an “outstanding garden spot in that community of beauty and progress – Southern California.”³³ The commercial district along Santa Monica Boulevard expanded in the 1920s, and the street was widened at the beginning of the decade.³⁴ The existing commercial buildings were moved, and many were remodeled at that time.³⁵ Due to the presence of the railroad tracks, Santa Monica Boulevard, especially the eastern portion, was largely industrial in nature. Businesses like lumberyards, plating factories, and later automobile mechanics could be found along its length.³⁶ One resident recalled that while Sunset Boulevard would later develop into a glamorous Hollywood hangout, Santa Monica Boulevard “with the tracks and trains and all on the street [...] was grimy and noisy.”³⁷ Both freight and trolley cars utilized the tracks. Businesses like taverns and bars catering to the working class cropped up.

THE BIRTH OF THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY IN SHERMAN



Garden of Allah, 1927, demolished. (Los Angeles Public Library)

³³“Sherman – just a real good place to live,” *Los Angeles Examiner*, November 19, 1922.

³⁴“Sherman Goes Straight Ahead,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 5, 1922.

³⁵Johnson Heumann Research Associates, 11.

³⁶Gierach, 33, 51.

³⁷Gierach, 57.

Beginning in the early 1920s, Sherman began to play host to the burgeoning motion picture industry. Though productions began in the Los Angeles area during 1910s, it was not until the 1920s that the industry expanded into Sherman. In 1919, Charlie Chaplin built a studio just over the Sherman border in Los Angeles on La Brea Avenue south of Sunset Boulevard. That same year, businessman Jesse D. Hampton constructed a studio south of Santa Monica Boulevard between Formosa Avenue and Poinsettia Place in Sherman, followed shortly thereafter by the opening of a studio for the Union Film Company at Santa Monica Boulevard and Hammond Street.³⁸ Supporting businesses such as film production plants soon began establishing themselves in Sherman. The area was also used as an outdoor film location, in large part because of its convenient proximity to Hollywood. One of the earliest films to be shot in Sherman was "Casey at the Bat" (1916), which used Sherman Field, a baseball diamond at the corner of Santa Monica and Robertson Boulevard (now part of West Hollywood Park).³⁹

Film stars soon began moving into Sherman and building large homes. One of the first was William S. Hart, whose residence remains at 8341 De Longpre Avenue and is now within a public park.⁴⁰ Other members of the film industry who resided in Sherman included Wallace Reid, Alla Nazimova, and Lon Chaney.⁴¹ Nazimova was a Broadway star who became one of the most famous silent screen actresses of the 1910s. Under contract at Metro Pictures, she purchased the estate of William Hamilton Hay at the corner of what is now Sunset Boulevard and Havenhurst Drive. Hay was one of the developers of the Crescent Heights Tract and constructed a mansion called "Hayvenhurst" in 1913 on two-and-a-half acres of land (much of which was actually in Los Angeles). Under Nazimova's ownership, the mansion became famous for its parties, attracting a largely lesbian crowd. During the birth of the motion picture industry, people with nonconforming



*Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks hanging the sign at their studio, 1922, gate no longer extant.
(Los Angeles Public Library)*

³⁸Marc Wanamaker, "84 Years of the Film Industry in West Hollywood," Unpublished manuscript, 2001, 2.

³⁹Gierach, 33.

⁴⁰Wanamaker, 2.

⁴¹"West Hollywood Expands," *Los Angeles Times*, June 8, 1924.

sexual orientations and gender identities like Nazimova were generally accepted; however, that changed over time (see later sections). Confident in her abilities, she began to produce and write her own films, which were not financially successful. Her estate was converted into a hotel and twenty-five Spanish Colonial Revival bungalows were constructed around the main residence. It was renamed "The Garden of Alla," then "The Garden of Allah" in 1930 (see later sections of context), and demolished in 1959.⁴²

In 1922, Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks took over the Jesse D. Hampton Studio and renamed it the Pickford-Fairbanks Studio. The studio's large backlot sets for films like "Robin Hood" and "The Thief of Baghdad" became prominent landmarks and could be seen throughout the city. The studio quickly expanded (it became the United Artists Studio in 1927 and the Samuel Goldwyn Studio in 1948).⁴³ Around the same time, the Silent Drama Syndicate built a film production plant in Sherman, reportedly one of the largest in the world. The *Los Angeles Times* noted that "Sherman is proud of this industry [film] which promises to grow to enormous proportions and which will probably make the name of Sherman known in the entire world of film."⁴⁴

SHERMAN BECOMES WEST HOLLYWOOD

By the early 1920s, most of the available land in Sherman had been subdivided, and the community was being hemmed in by the neighboring communities of Beverly Hills and Hollywood.⁴⁵ Beverly Hills became the preferred residential area for Hollywood's film stars, and Sunset Boulevard through Sherman served as the main artery between their residences to the west and the studios to the east.⁴⁶ Hollywood's stance as a "dry town," which was enforced even more strictly after the beginning of Prohibition, led motion picture industry workers and stars to seek entertainment elsewhere. Neighboring Sherman became attractive as a nighttime haunt, due in part to its location in unincorporated county and the relatively lax oversight by the Sheriff's Department. Restaurants and taverns were established, and the 1.7-mile long strip of Sunset Boulevard through Sherman (at this time referred to as "the county strip") would contribute significantly to the town's prosperity in the ensuing decades.

Many of the earliest buildings and structures associated with the railyard had already been demolished by this time. The ownership and management of the Pacific Electric Railway and Los Angeles Railway were restructured in the mid-1920s and the repair shops were moved to Los Angeles. The site became a bus depot and continued to serve as a transit center.

The hills above Sunset Boulevard were developed with large residences, while the flats below were populated by more modest homes belonging to people working in Sherman, Hollywood, and Los Angeles. Between 1922 and 1923 alone, the population grew by more than 4,000 people. Sherman

⁴²"Hostelry in Hollywood Opens Soon: Next Sunday Set As Date to Present Garden of Alla," *Los Angeles Times*, January 2, 1927.

⁴³Wanamaker, 3-4; Torrance, 94.

⁴⁴"Sherman Goes Straight Ahead," *Los Angeles Times*, November 5, 1922.

⁴⁵"Sherman Has Great Future," *Los Angeles Times*, August 5, 1923.

⁴⁶Laurie Jacobson, "The Sunset Strip," Unpublished manuscript, 2001, 3.

was part of Los Angeles' Hollywood school district, and the Chamber of Commerce, which had been created in 1920 to help encourage and guide development, began considering consolidation with the larger city.⁴⁷ Use of the Los Angeles sewage and water treatment facilities was a draw for many, but opponents feared consolidation would result in higher taxes.⁴⁸ The vote was close – 814 were against, 750 were for – but in the end, Sherman residents voted against consolidation with Los Angeles and remained unincorporated.

Though the town stayed independent, the community decided in 1925 that it was time for a name change. Residents debated changing Sherman's name to Beverly Park, East Beverly, West Hollywood, or Magnetic Springs.⁴⁹ The *Los Angeles Times* wrote with some condescension that "like a healthy, outdoor child, Sherman has suddenly burst all her old dresses and thinks while she is getting a wardrobe, suitable for a fully grown girl, she might as well discard plain 'Mary' and become up-to-date 'Marie.'" The article went on to say that proponents of the name change were pushing for something that included "Beverly" or "Hollywood" in order to align Sherman with its well-known neighbors.⁵⁰ The name West Hollywood, which had begun to be used informally a few years prior, won out and the town changed its name in 1925.



Streetcar stop Crescent Junction at Santa Monica Boulevard and Fairfax Avenue with commercial brick vernacular and Spanish Colonial Revival buildings from 1920s, photo from 1939, buildings demolished.
(REM-PRS)

⁴⁷ "Sherman Has Great Future," *Los Angeles Times*, August 5, 1923.

⁴⁸ Johnson Heumann Research Associates, 11.

⁴⁹ Helen Starr, "Rich Neighbors Make Sherman Folk Ambitious," *Los Angeles Time*, August 23, 1925.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

The earliest commercial development of Sunset Boulevard began with the construction of four Georgian Revival style buildings by Francis Montgomery, son-in-law of Victor Ponet. The small commercial area, united by style and massing, was expanded in the 1930s and was later known as Sunset Plaza. The Russian Eagle, a popular restaurant and bar with Hollywood stars, was one of the first businesses to open at 8648 Sunset Boulevard. It burned in 1928 from an arson fire and subsequently moved to Vine Street in Hollywood.⁵¹



Sanborn map from 1910 showing new development in the original blocks comprising the Town of Sherman north of Sherman Avenue (now Santa Monica Boulevard) (Los Angeles Public Library)

⁵¹Various *Los Angeles Times* articles, 1928, 1929, 1933.

Architectural Trends

The majority of commercial buildings constructed in West Hollywood during this period were vernacular. In some cases, they were wood-framed structures and in other cases, they were brick. Some larger buildings, such as institutional and commercial buildings, were constructed in the architectural styles popular during the first decades of the twentieth century such as Spanish Colonial Revival. The development of these forms of buildings and styles of architecture are discussed below, as well as the prime examples in West Hollywood.

COMMERCIAL BRICK VERNACULAR

The community's first commercial buildings were mostly wood-framed structures with clapboard or shiplap exteriors. None of these early buildings, however, remain in West Hollywood. Unreinforced masonry buildings replaced wood-framed buildings as the community became more established and prosperous. Still, these buildings were usually unpretentious, designed by the owners or builders who were more concerned about utility than fashion. Vernacular buildings, by definition, do not display the characteristics of a particular architectural style, though some buildings include design details from styles popular at the time.

Commercial buildings along historic streetcar lines such as Santa Monica Boulevard reflect the pedestrian-friendly corridors these lines engendered. In a period before the use of automobiles was common, commercial buildings did not possess parking lots. Their compact scale and continuous store frontage reflect a public that accessed commercial buildings on foot. These buildings typically accommodated multiple tenants and were often mixed-use, with storefronts on the first floor and offices or living quarters on the second floor.

The distinguishing characteristics of the type include:

- Orientation to the street
- Construction to the lot line
- Demonstrate a lack of accommodation for the automobile (i.e. they do not have accompanying surface parking lots or driveways)
- Typically rectangular massing
- One to two stories in height (three or more story examples can be found but are less common)
- Flat or shaped parapets
- Unreinforced masonry construction
- Two-story examples feature storefronts on the first floor and offices or apartments on the second floor
- Storefronts with large display windows, often accented by awnings or arcades
- Often display design detailing from Period Revival or Classical Revival styles
- Ornamentation, if present, may include:
 - Window surrounds or hoods on the upper stories
 - Brackets
 - Pediments

- Cornices or string courses
- Quoins

Many of the extant commercial buildings from this period are examples of this type. They are generally located along major commercial corridors such as Santa Monica Boulevard due to the street's early development as the commercial center of Sherman. Buildings such as 7900-7906 and 7916 Santa Monica Boulevard are good examples of this early commercial building type.⁵² Their two-story height, construction to the lot line, and large first floor display windows (these no longer remain on 7916 Santa Monica Boulevard) are distinctive of the period. They possess varied architectural influences of the Classical Revival style and reflect a community growing and becoming increasingly prosperous in the mid-1920s.

SPANISH COLONIAL REVIVAL

The Spanish Colonial Revival style was part of a more general trend of Period Revivalism in the first decades of the twentieth century. As architects searched for a style appropriate for the region, Spanish Colonial Revival became popular because it was drawn from the area's past, as opposed to earlier styles such as Queen Anne, which were brought from the East Coast. The ornate Churrigueresque style buildings of the Panama-California Exposition held in San Diego in 1915 introduced Spanish architecture to the general public. The exposition's buildings, designed by architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, were inspired by the missions, churches, and mansions of Southern California, Mexico, Spain, and Italy.⁵³

During this period, architects were actively developing a vocabulary for buildings based upon the temperate weather and natural resources of Southern California. The architecture of Spain and its colonies, reimagined for the exposition, was especially appealing, for it was part of a larger cultural myth being created about California at the time. During the early twentieth century, Southern California was promoted and imagined as a romanticized extension of Spain in North America, an idealized view that was used by boosters, architects, and railroads alike. The area's climate, agricultural economy largely based on citrus, and idyllic landscapes all contributed towards a view of the region as a Mediterranean oasis. The use of Spanish architectural elements was seen as a natural expression of the area's cultural roots (though in reality those roots were as linked to Mexico as they were to Spain).

Also influential to the Spanish Colonial Revival style was the architecture of rural Spain, Mexico, and most notably, Andalusia. These buildings, much simpler in form than the exuberant Churrigueresque designs of Goodhue, became the inspiration for a style that would be used

⁵²The addresses 7924 and 7936 Santa Monica Boulevard are also part of the group, but were constructed in 1927 and 1936, respectively, and were therefore not included under this period. All of the buildings are listed on the California Register of Historical Resources.

⁵³Richard W. Amero, "The Making of the Panama-California Exposition, 1909-1915," *The Journal of San Diego History* 36, 1 (Winter 1990), accessed March 28, 2016, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/90winter/expo.htm>.

throughout Southern California.⁵⁴ Like many of the Period Revival styles popular during the same period, Spanish Colonial borrowed and mixed elements from different historical styles. It could incorporate elements from Moorish, Renaissance, and Byzantine architecture, among others.

The character-defining features of the Spanish Colonial Revival style include:

- Asymmetrical primary elevations
- Cross- or side-gabled roof forms
- Red clay tile roofs
- Stucco exterior cladding, finish may be smooth or a hand-troweled texture
- Arched windows and/or doors (sometimes deeply recessed)
- Metal decorative ornamentation consisting of decorative vents or wrought ironwork.⁵⁵
- Secondary materials, often used for ornament, include wood, polychromatic tile, cast stone, and terra cotta



*Crescent Heights Methodist Church at 1282 Fairfax Avenue, built in 1924.
(Security Pacific National Bank Collection)*

The style can be found in cities and communities throughout greater Los Angeles including West Hollywood. The style was applied to a variety of residential building types, and West Hollywood is known for its collection of Spanish Colonial Revival style courtyard apartment buildings. Based upon

⁵⁴David Gebhard, "The Spanish Colonial Revival in Southern California (1895-1930)," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 26, 2 (May 1967): 137.

⁵⁵Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 417-418.

the fieldwork conducted for this historic resources survey, which examined non-residential buildings, the Spanish Colonial Revival style appears to have been utilized in West Hollywood for institutional buildings more frequently than commercial buildings. Examples of Spanish Colonial Revival institutional buildings tend to be freestanding buildings, as opposed to many of the city's commercial vernacular buildings, which often have party walls with neighboring buildings. Some, like the first County Library (903 N. Westbourne Drive), are simpler in their detailing, while others, like the building at 7950 Fountain Avenue possess Churrigueresque influences and have more elaborate design detailing. Other examples from the period can be found at 8795 Sunset Boulevard (later Café Gala) and Crescent Heights Methodist Church (1282 N. Fairfax Avenue).

Associated Property Types

In the first thirty years of West Hollywood's history, the town grew from a small railyard with a scattering of residences and commercial buildings to a thriving community with roots in the motion picture industry. By the mid-1920s, the town was home to a leading film studio and was frequently used as an outdoor filming location (a trend that would continue into the second half of the twentieth century). To more closely align itself with the motion picture industry in neighboring Hollywood, Sherman changed its name to West Hollywood in 1925. Its location between Hollywood and Beverly Hills would make it a natural stopover for those in the motion picture industry, film stars and workers alike. This would greatly contribute to the development of Sunset Boulevard, which would become synonymous with Hollywood glamour and nightlife in the late 1920s and 1930s. Santa Monica Boulevard, which remained more industrial in nature, was also influenced by the area's proximity to Hollywood, as businesses catering to working-class motion picture industry laborers cropped up. The industry would become a dominant one during ensuing decades, and it would sustain West Hollywood's economy through the tough times of the Great Depression.



First Baptist Church at 9025 Cynthia Street, built in 192. (City of West Hollywood)

There are only a small number of buildings remaining from the earliest period of West Hollywood's history. The oldest buildings included in the historic resources survey date from the 1900s, but are residential buildings in the Old Sherman Thematic District that have been converted to commercial uses.

There are a handful of buildings remaining from the 1910s. Among this small group is the William S. Hart House (8341 De Longpre Avenue). It was constructed as Hart's residence in 1919, but is now part of a public park. The majority of the buildings from the 1910s are commercial brick vernacular buildings located on Santa Monica Boulevard between Hayworth Avenue and Gardner Street; however, many have been substantially altered. The majority of the property types associated with

this theme are low-rise commercial buildings constructed during the early 1920s, though a small number of institutional and industrial buildings from the period remain as well. Most of the intact buildings remaining from this period are already designated as West Hollywood Cultural Resources. Examples include the First Baptist Church (9025 W. Cynthia Street), the First National Bank of Sherman (8811 Santa Monica Boulevard), and the County Library (903 Westbourne Drive). Commercial buildings from this period generally do not display accommodation for the automobile (a notable exception to this are the first buildings constructed in Sunset Plaza). Both buildings, listed as West Hollywood Cultural Resources, are two-story masonry commercial buildings that typify the commercial development along Santa Monica Boulevard from the period. 7900-7906 Santa Monica Boulevard and 7916 Santa Monica Boulevard are typical of the period and are among the most intact examples remaining.

Eligibility Standards

Though resources dating to the earliest periods of development in West Hollywood are extremely rare, simply being a commercial resource constructed during this period is not enough to justify significance. An eligible resource must have been important in the commercial, institutional, or industrial development of the city or the architectural history of the city.

To be eligible under the Sherman and Adjacent County Lands 1895 - 1925 theme, an individual property or district should:

- Be associated with a business, organization, or industry that made important contributions to commercial or institutional growth and development of Sherman; or
- Be emblematic of or constructed directly in response to transportation and commercial developments that comprised the early growth of Sherman; or
- Be fully realized example of the style or property type, displaying the significant character-defining features of a style or property type in multiple aspects of design; and
- Date from the period of significance; and
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity.

INTEGRITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, Materials, and Association from the period of significance
- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant business or organization occupied the property
- Setting may be compromised by nearby construction that post-dates the period

- If a resource is a rare surviving example of its type and/or period, a greater degree of alterations may be acceptable
 - The majority of the resource's original materials and design features must remain intact and visible, including wall cladding, fenestration pattern, roof features, and details related to its architectural style (including vernacular styles)
 - Limited door and window replacements at the street level of the primary elevation may be acceptable if they do not change the original fenestration pattern, and are compatible with the original design of the resource
 - Secondary elevation and upper floor window materials should be original

West Hollywood 1926 - World War II

From the time Sherman adopted the name West Hollywood in 1925 until the end of World War II, the up-and-coming town transformed into the home of some of Hollywood's most famous gathering spots. The growth that began in the first half of the 1920s continued during the second half. The western portion of Sunset Boulevard was developed with low-rise commercial buildings in the late 1920s and 1930s. Dubbed the Sunset Strip, this stretch of unincorporated county road became synonymous with Hollywood glamour.⁵⁶ Much of the commercial development along Santa Monica Boulevard dates to the late 1920s, as Santa Monica Boulevard became part of Route 66 during this time (the famous highway was created in 1926 and adopted in California in 1928). As a result, automobile-related commercial buildings, including gas stations and car repair facilities, were constructed in increasing numbers along the thoroughfare. The street retained its more working-class character in comparison to the glamour that was taking root on Sunset Boulevard. Small-scale eateries like Barney's Beanery, established in 1920 in Northern California and relocated to its current location in 1927, catered to the automobile mechanics, carpenters, and other working-class men from the surrounding area.⁵⁷ During the same period, a modest commercial district developed along the streets south of Santa Monica Boulevard: Beverly Boulevard, Melrose Avenue, and Robertson Boulevard. By the eve of World War II, the city was largely built out. The development that would take place in the postwar period largely consisted of infill or the reuse or replacement of buildings constructed during earlier decades.



*Substation at 1051 Orange Grove Avenue, built in 1929.
(Huntington Digital Library)*

THE GROWTH OF THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY

The motion picture industry had significant impacts on the commercial and industrial development of West Hollywood in the 1920s and 1930s. Neighboring Hollywood was the nucleus of the motion picture industry by the 1920s.⁵⁸ One studio, the Pickford-Fairbanks Studio, was located in West Hollywood. It was renamed United Artists in 1927 after producer Samuel Goldwyn, formerly of Metro Goldwyn Mayer (MGM), became a partner. West Hollywood's leading industries in the 1920s

⁵⁶The earliest mention of the term Sunset Strip was found in the *Los Angeles Times* in 1935.

⁵⁷Gierach, 61; Barney's Beanery, "About Barney's Beanery," accessed February 25, 2016, <https://barneysbeanery.com/about/>.

⁵⁸Torrance, 99.

and 1930s were film and related industrial production, including the manufacture of motion picture cameras, radios, and building hardware.⁵⁹

Among these businesses was the Mitchell Camera Company (648 N. La Peer Drive), which would become an innovative producer of film lenses, cameras, and sound equipment that enabled the development of sound pictures and cinematography. Mitchell moved to an industrial area of West Hollywood in 1929 and constructed a factory using designs from the Truscon Steel Company of Ohio. From the new factory in West Hollywood, Mitchell grew to dominate the camera industry in Hollywood; by 1946, 85% of all motion pictures shown in theaters worldwide were filmed with Mitchell cameras produced at the factory.



Mitchell Camera Company at 648 N. La Peer Drive, opened in 1929, company relocated in 1946. (West Hollywood Heritage Project)

The motion picture industry began to diversify during the 1930s with the advent of “talkies,” or films featuring the spoken word. After the success of early sound films, including the most famous example, “The Jazz Singer” (1927), Hollywood quickly moved from silent to sound motion pictures. This effectively ended the careers of numerous silent era stars, while stage stars became more desirable due to their experience with dialogue. The radio and recording industries also took off during this period as American audiences fell in love with sound. This ushered in a period in which artists moved fluidly between film, radio, and recording. Despite the onset of the Great Depression, the entertainment industry helped sustain the economy of both Hollywood and West Hollywood.

⁵⁹ “Westward to the Beaches: West Hollywood,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 2, 1931.

The demand for dialogue lured playwrights and novelists from the east coast to Los Angeles. Several writers from the New York's elite Algonquin Round Table literary clique came west to write scripts for sound pictures. Many, including acerbic Dorothy Parker, took up residence in the bungalows of the Garden of Allah.⁶⁰

As the center of the entertainment industry, Hollywood naturally attracted an artistic community, which was drawn by the freedom it encouraged. Members of what is today identified as the LGBTQ community were among those attracted to Hollywood. During a period when being openly gay or lesbian was difficult and even dangerous, members of the LGBTQ community who worked in the entertainment industry were often free to be themselves in private, as long as their sexual orientation or nonconforming gender identity did not interfere with their public image.⁶¹ Los Angeles' reputation as a frontier town with more liberal social standards than the East Coast or Midwest also enticed many who were part of the LGBTQ community to move West. This reputation lasted into the 1920s, by which time the motion picture industry became its own draw.⁶²

The onset of the Great Depression in the 1930s brought about a more culturally conservative climate in America. Many Americans blamed their hard times on the excesses of the 1920s, particularly the hedonistic culture they associated with being gay, lesbian, or bisexual.⁶³ Additionally, with many men unable to support their families, traditional gender roles and ideals of masculinity were threatened. The reactionary response to the fear and tension of the period was the return of a staunch belief that men should be men, and women should be women.⁶⁴ Demands for greater censorship in film ignited a justified fear of government intervention among studios and producers. To quell the reformist protests, William Hays, President of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA) organization, joined forces with studio executives in 1930 to create the Production Code.⁶⁵

The Production Code, often called the Hays Code, was a doctrine of self-censorship designed to preempt government interference, promote conservative politics, and keep Christian critics at bay. Traditional Catholic values were at its core, so depictions of nontraditional sexual relationships ranging from unmarried straight lovers to gay affairs were supposed to be forbidden; however, there were no means in place to enforce the code, so producers and executives knowingly and willingly violated it on a regular basis in its early years.⁶⁶

In 1934, after heightened threats of government interference and boycotts, all of the major studios agreed to enforcement of the Production Code under the direction of the new Production Code Administration (PCA). The PCA had the final say on all scripts before they went into production and

⁶⁰Kevin Starr, *The Dream Endures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 300.

⁶¹GPA Consulting, "SurveyLA LGBT Historic Context Statement," City of Los Angeles, September 2014, 34.

⁶²Teresa Wang et al, *Images of America: Lavender Los Angeles* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Press, 2011), 11.

⁶³William J. Mann, *Behind the Screen: How Gays and Lesbians Shaped Hollywood 1910-1969* (New York, NY: Viking, 2001), 122.

⁶⁴Mann, 122.

⁶⁵Mann, 122-123.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*

all finished films before they could be released. Conservative Christian values and morals were strictly enforced in all new films as censorship prevailed over self-expression. By the mid-1930s, Hollywood had transitioned from a place of relative freedom for the LGBTQ community to a place of certain fear and prejudice.⁶⁷

The censorship in Hollywood in the 1930s and crackdown on portrayals of any type of homosexuality, including men as effeminate or women as masculine, transcended film. The Los Angeles Police frequently raided bars and nightclubs known for accepting and celebrating homosexual patrons and performers. This drove many over the county line to seek refuge in West Hollywood. The town, situated in unincorporated county territory, enjoyed relatively less supervision from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department than Hollywood and other parts of Los Angeles did from the Los Angeles Police Department. Bars and nightclubs catering to LGBTQ clientele began to crop up in West Hollywood the 1930s. Café La Bohème, though not strictly a gay bar, was one of the first to cater to a gay and lesbian clientele in West Hollywood. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that "to find a café in California that had a truly Parisian Latin-Quarter atmosphere was very difficult until the Café La Bohème was built." The café, located at 8610 Sunset Boulevard (now demolished) and owned by former Metropolitan Opera singer Joseph Borgia, had private, dimly lit dining rooms surrounding a main dance room and wrought iron chandeliers.⁶⁸ Cross-dressing entertainers performed impressions of popular female actresses, such as Joan Crawford, while dressed in "yards and yards of lace and feathers."⁶⁹ The café closed in 1934 and became the location of Café Trocadero. Another nightclub with cross-dressing entertainers was the Footlight Club at 7746 Santa Monica Boulevard. The star of the show was a male impersonator named Tommy Williams.

SUNSET BOULEVARD, DAY AND NIGHT

The construction of the buildings at what is now Sunset Plaza attracted further investment; the nearby Chateau Marmont, located over the border in Los Angeles, was constructed in 1929, and the Sunset Tower was built in 1930 (both were constructed as apartments but are now hotels). The same year, property owners lobbied the County Board of Supervisors for zone changes and improvements that could pave the way for Sunset Boulevard's development.⁷⁰ Much of the western portion of Sunset Boulevard (today known as the Sunset Strip) was developed during the ensuing decade.

⁶⁷ Mann, 123-128 and 140-143.

⁶⁸"News of the Cafes - Latin Quarter Atmosphere," *Los Angeles Times*, February 11, 1927.

⁶⁹ Brian McCray, "Gay and Lesbian History of West Hollywood," Unpublished manuscript, 2001, 3.

⁷⁰Johnson Heumann Research Associates, 14.



Sunset Tower on Sunset Boulevard as seen from a gas station across the street in 1933, gas station demolished. (Department of Water and Power)

Sunset Plaza was complete by 1934. The complex, designed by architect Charles Selkirk, straddled Sunset Boulevard and housed upscale stores and offices that were populated by decorators, beauty salons, and other high-end retail establishments.⁷¹ Businessmen in the entertainment industry including talent agents, publicists, and business managers began to open offices in small buildings lining Sunset Boulevard. The street was so popular that it became known as “agent alley.”⁷² Schwab’s Pharmacy, located further east on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles, opened in 1932, and catered to

⁷¹Johnson Heumann Research Associates, 14.

⁷²Wannamaker, 6-7.

those who worked at the nearby studios.⁷³ It soon became a hangout for Hollywood workers as well as stars, due in part to its proximity to the Garden of Allah.

During the 1930s, Sunset Boulevard became the after-dark playground for the Hollywood elite. It was the perfect location between their studios in Hollywood and homes in Beverly Hills. It also became a haven for members of the mob, who were attracted by the area's lack of police oversight. The repeal of Prohibition in 1933 facilitated the growth of nightclubs and restaurants. In 1934, Billy Wilkerson, publisher of *The Hollywood Reporter*, opened Café Trocadero at the former location of Café La Bohème (8610 Sunset Boulevard, demolished). Café Trocadero, which became known as simply the Troc, was immediately popular with those in the entertainment industry. It became so synonymous with Hollywood glamour that director David O. Selznick reserved it for the opening party for *"Gone with the Wind."*⁷⁴ In 1938, Wilkerson sold Café Trocadero. The building remained empty until 1943 when Eddie LaBaron purchased it, renaming it simply The Trocadero.



Sunset Plaza, 1936. (Los Angeles Public Library)

Wilkerson began his professional career managing a silent movie theater in New Jersey, later moving on to entertainment industry-related jobs in New York City. After the industry newspaper he owned went bankrupt in the 1929 stock market crash, Wilkerson moved to Hollywood. He founded *The Hollywood Reporter* the next year and became known as an aggressive reporter of the town's film scene. As the *Reporter* became successful in the mid-1930s, Wilkerson expanded his business interests in the area. He founded a series of nightclubs on Sunset Boulevard in West Hollywood and moved the offices of the *Reporter* to 6715 Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles. Wilkerson also opened Restaurant LaRue at 8633 Sunset Boulevard in 1944.⁷⁵ Through establishments like LaRue, Wilkerson introduced fine dining to the Sunset Strip.⁷⁶ He would go on to open the first hotel-casino in Las Vegas, the Flamingo Hotel, which was later taken over by mobster Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel.⁷⁷

⁷³Myrna Oliver, "Obituaries – Bernard Schwab, 94; Opened Pharmacy with 3 Brothers," *Los Angeles Times*, March 17, 2002.

⁷⁴Wannamaker, 9.

⁷⁵Jacobson, 8.

⁷⁶Jon Ponder, Interview with Elysha Paluszek, Personal Interview, West Hollywood, February 23, 2016.

⁷⁷Cecilia Rasmussen, "The Man Behind the Sunset Strip," *Los Angeles Times*, December 7, 1997; Nevada Humanities, "Billy Wilkerson," Online Nevada Encyclopedia, accessed February 23, 2016, <http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/billy-wilkerson>.



Ciro's at 8433 Sunset Boulevard, circa 1940, now the Comedy Store. (Martin Turnbull)

After selling Café Trocadero, Wilkerson opened *Ciro's* (8433 Sunset Boulevard, now the Comedy Store), another a widely popular club with movie stars. After the club was sold to showman Herman Hover in 1942, the house band was replaced by big name acts. Among those who played in the luxuriously decorated interior were Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Mae West, and Lena Horne.⁷⁸ The club remained popular until the late 1950s.⁷⁹ Producer George Schlatter later recalled, "*Ciro's* was the hub of the Strip, [...] probably the most elegant of all the clubs. It played the biggest acts and attracted the most famous celebrities in the audience."⁸⁰

Other legendary and popular restaurants and bars during the 1930s included:

- Mocambo (originally Café Versailles, 8588 Sunset Boulevard)
- Little Troc (9263 Sunset Boulevard)
- Café La Maze (9039 Sunset Boulevard)
- Jane Jones's Little Club (8740 Sunset Boulevard)
- Club Bali (8804 Sunset Boulevard)⁸¹
- Café Gala (later Spago, 8795 Sunset Boulevard/1114 Horn Ave)

⁷⁸Sheila Weller, *Dancing at *Ciro's*: A Family's Love, Loss, and Scandal on the Sunset Strip* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2004).

⁷⁹Jon Ponder, Interview with Elysha Paluszek, Personal Interview, West Hollywood, February 23, 2016.

⁸⁰George Schlatter interview with "E!'s True Hollywood Story: Sunset Strip," 1998, quoted in Jacobson, 9.

⁸¹Club Bali was sometimes called "*Bruz Fletcher's*" for its association with pianist Bruz Fletcher, who played there from 1935 until 1940.

Café Gala was run by Baroness Catherine d'Erlanger and Johnny Walsh. The nightclub had Venetian-themed décor, white-gloved waiters, and high caliber performers. Though it catered to Hollywood, it also was known to welcome gay men. Walsh, who was manager, doorman, and performer there, "enforced standards of behavior inside. At the bar, which was often crowded with people – mostly men



Café La Maze at 9039 Sunset Boulevard, 1937, became Sherry's and was later demolished, (Martin Turnbull)

– two or three deep, Johnny would tell someone to sit facing forward. The inference was obvious: no groping on the premises, which in effect meant, 'Don't provoke the Vice [Squad].'"⁸²

The end of Prohibition and the onset of the Great Depression led to a more conservative social and cultural climate in the country and West Hollywood was no exception. In 1935, Barney's Beanery posted a sign stating that it refused to offer service to gays and lesbians.⁸³ Despite the crackdowns, the LGBTQ community retained a small known presence in West Hollywood. In 1934, former actor William Haines opened an antique shop and interior design studio on Sunset Boulevard (8720 Sunset Boulevard). Haines turned to interior design after he was blacklisted in the motion picture industry for refusing to marry and conceal his sexuality for the sake of his public image. Although he did not have any formal training in the field, he possessed a keen eye and natural talent for design. His first clients were friends Joan Crawford and Carole Lombard. He went on to design homes for Hollywood's elite and collaborated with well-known architects of the period, including Roland E.

⁸²Daniel Hurewitz, *Bohemian Los Angeles and the Making of Modern Politics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), 234.

⁸³The sign, which used offensive terminology, would not be taken down until protests by the Gay Liberation Front beginning in the 1970s prompted its removal in 1984 (McCray, 3).

Coate and A. Quincy Jones.⁸⁴ Adrian, a costume designer for MGM and homosexual, also opened a couturier on Sunset Boulevard next to Café Trocadero in 1938.



*Café Trocadero on Sunset Boulevard, 1936, demolished.
(Los Angeles Public Library)*

There were several lesbian-centric nightclubs on Sunset Boulevard, including Jane Jones' Little Club (8730 Sunset Boulevard), open from 1936 to 1939 when it was raided by the Vice Squad for selling liquor after hours and was shut down, and Café Internationale (8711 Sunset Boulevard).⁸⁵ Both featured female singers dressed in tuxedos with tenor voices. Lesbian nightclubs, which were much like other upscale nightclubs on Sunset Boulevard in the prewar period, were largely left alone by sheriff's deputies. Partly because there were so few lesbian-centric nightclubs, they were relatively safe until the mid-1940s when their proliferation led them to be increasingly targeted.⁸⁶ During World War II, the United States Navy issued a list of bars and nightclubs that were forbidden to its sailors. On the list were "gay friendly" clubs like Café Internationale. This resulted in a number of them losing their liquor licenses, which forced them out of business.⁸⁷ However, a few clubs in West Hollywood managed to escape the same fate. The Flamingo Club opened in 1941 at 1027 N. La Brea Avenue (demolished) and featured drag shows, but for some reason was not on the off-limits list for military personnel. One of the performers at the Flamingo was Carroll Wallace who was billed as "The Most Beautiful Boy in the World."

⁸⁴ William J. Mann, "William Haines' Hollywood Interior Design and Decorating," *Architectural Digest*, posted March 16, 2016, <http://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/haines-article-012000>.

⁸⁵ "Liquor Sales Ax Wielded," *Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 1939.

⁸⁶ Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006), 87.

⁸⁷ Jon Ponder, "1942: Navy Bans Gay Clubs," *Playground to the Stars*, accessed February 24, 2016, <http://www.playgroundtothestars.com/timeline/1942-military-declares-chez-boheme-cafe-internationale-off-limits/>.



*Aerial view of West Hollywood in 1926. The Sherman Railyard and Car Houses, now the site of the Pacific Design Center, are located in the center foreground.
(Los Angeles Public Library)*



Sunset Boulevard, south side, east of San Vicente, 1935. (Los Angeles Public Library)

Architectural Trends

The 1920s through the mid-1940s saw the use of a diverse array of architectural styles. Two main trends dominated – Period Revivalism, which looked to history for inspiration, and Modernism, which reacted against the use of historical precedents in design. Styles found in West Hollywood that fall under the umbrella of Period Revivalism include Colonial Revival and French Revival, while the move towards Modernism can be seen in the Art Deco and Streamline Moderne styles. The development of these styles and their expression in the built environment of West Hollywood are discussed below.

The Spanish Colonial Revival style also continued to be used through this period, though it was not substantially different from iterations of the style constructed in the first part of the 1920s. In West Hollywood, the Great Hall/Long Hall community center buildings of Plummer Park were designed by Edward C. N. Brett in the style and constructed by Los Angeles County and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1938. This reflected a continued sentimentality for historic, romantic, and picturesque architecture in the region.

COLONIAL REVIVAL

Colonial Revival is an umbrella term for styles that include Georgian Revival, American Colonial Revival, and Dutch Colonial Revival. The Colonial Revival style was inspired by the architecture of seventeenth and eighteenth century America, specifically the East Coast. This in turn took its cues from English architecture of the same period as well as the architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. Inspired by the architectural work of Andrea Palladio and the archeological discoveries of

ancient temples, English architects turned toward a new emphasis on Classical proportion and design elements that were more faithful to ancient architecture than that of previous periods. In America, the movement frequently borrowed directly from European architecture books published during the period. Both the rural plantation homes in the southern colonies and the urban residences in the north utilized the style.

The Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition in 1876 revived an interest in the colonial period and created a craze for all things colonial, including the style of dress and furniture. However, it was the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in the 1920s and 1930s that sparked further interest in the architecture of eighteenth century America. The publication of colonial architecture in books and magazines made the styles widely accessible to audiences all over the country. Colonial Revival architecture typically combined elements from multiple styles in the same design, while adding new elements not seen in the original prototypes.⁸⁸

Character-defining features of the style include:

- Simple building forms
- Symmetrical façades
- Hipped or gabled roofs
- Use of columns or pilasters
- Entrance doors with sidelights or transoms
- Wood multi-light windows
- Palladian windows and other decorative elements such as an entryway topped with a pediment

In general, the style was not common in Southern California, where architects, builders, and property owners continued to favor the Spanish Colonial Revival architecture developed during the early 1920s. Compared to other communities in the region, however, West Hollywood has a high concentration of Colonial Revival architecture, especially applied to commercial buildings. Colonial Revival was used in the design of small-scale commercial buildings that adapted elements of the style, such as columns or entryway detailing, rather than reproducing eighteenth century examples (large residential examples, on the other hand, were at times more faithful reproductions of original eighteenth century examples). In some instances, the style is also seen combined with others, such as Streamline Moderne.

⁸⁸ Mark Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in their Cultural and Technological Context* (Hanover, VT: University Press of New England, 1999), 180.

In West Hollywood, there are commercial buildings with applied Colonial Revival style features and details (examples can be seen at 662 N. Robertson Boulevard and 8623-8629 Melrose Avenue, though both have been altered). Other examples are more substantial and display more of the typical character-defining features of the style. The Crosby Building (9028 Sunset Boulevard,



*Crosby Building at 9028 Sunset Boulevard, circa 1940.
(Life Magazine)*

pictured below) is a three-story commercial building constructed in the Colonial Revival style. The building was the home of Bing Crosby Incorporated and Everett Crosby Management (Everett was Bing Crosby's brother and Vice President of Bing Crosby Incorporated). Sunset Plaza (8591-8673 Sunset Boulevard) was designed by architect Charles Selkirk and dates from the 1920s and 1930s. Each of its buildings is a unique application of the style and together they form a cohesive whole. Other examples of the Colonial Revival style can be found at 9039 Beverly Boulevard (the remains of Chasen's Restaurant) and 8743 Sunset Boulevard.

FRENCH REVIVAL

The French Revival style, also called French Norman, was typically used for single-family residences in the Los Angeles area. The style emphasized steeply pitched roof profiles and irregular massing over applied ornamentation. It was inspired by vernacular architecture seen in Europe by World War I veterans and reimagined in early films back in the United States.⁸⁹ The style was "modeled after the charming architecture of medieval times" and often incorporated design elements from other styles of architecture based on French historical periods and regions.⁹⁰ Like all Period Revival styles, French Norman buildings were intended to be picturesque and emotionally evocative of a time and place most people were not familiar with firsthand. The motion picture industry in Los Angeles played a role in creating the image of French Norman buildings as well as emotional associations with the style. The movie industry created the public's image of the original French Norman buildings by setting films in medieval France. This popularized the style by associating it with favorite film stories. Film became the "the primary authority on a 'French Norman' country house." The popularity of period films in the 1920s and 1930s led to a spread of Period Revival style architecture in the country, including the West Hollywood area.⁹¹

⁸⁹Merry Ovnick, *Los Angeles: The End of the Rainbow* (Los Angeles, CA: Balcony Press, 1994), 168.

⁹⁰"Plan Dwelling for Hollywoodland: Architecture Typical Of Norman French Chateau Design," *Los Angeles Times*: October 7, 1923, V11.

⁹¹Ovnick, 170.



9120 Sunset Boulevard, built in 1939. (GPA)

The French Revival style is generally simple aside from a conical tower shaped entrance or steeply pitched roof, but it could also refer to more fanciful and decorative “French Provincial” designs based upon rambling French farmhouses and larger, more ornate examples that were more Chateausque in style.

Character-defining features of the style include:

- Irregular massing
- Steeply pitched gabled or hipped roofs, sometimes covered with wood or slate shingles
- L-shaped or irregular floor plans
- Utilization of a combination of cladding materials, including stucco, brick, and stone
- Prominent tower with steep conical roof (usually containing the main entrance)
- Dormers
- Irregular fenestration
- Decorative half-timbering

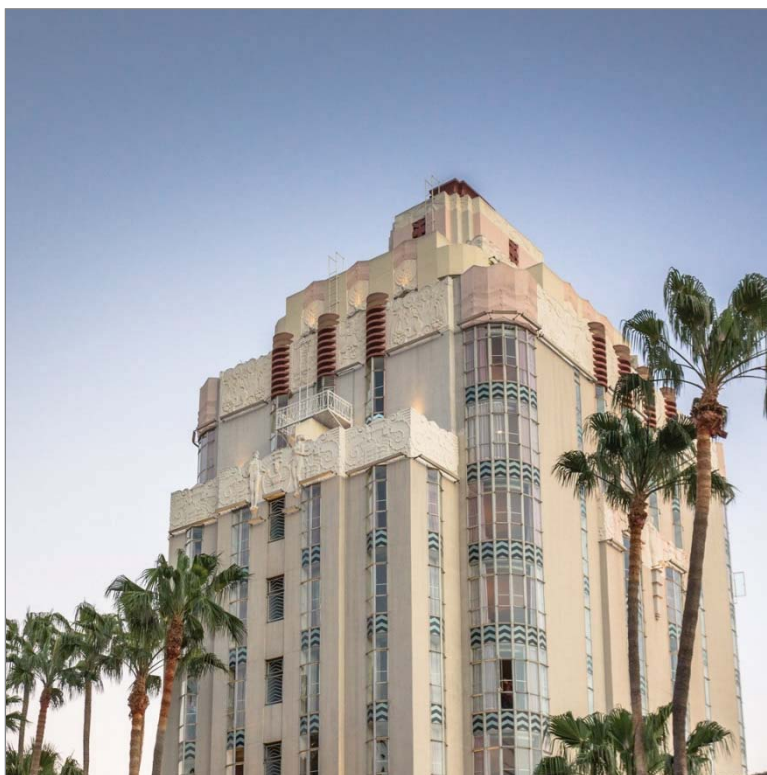
In West Hollywood, the French Revival style was often used for single- and multi-family residences and, somewhat less frequently, for small-scale commercial buildings. Examples are found almost exclusively along Sunset Boulevard, likely due in part to the corridor’s popularity with those in the entertainment industry. Buildings constructed in the style date to the late 1920s and 1930s. Examples can be seen at 9120 Sunset Boulevard and 8776 Sunset Boulevard.

ART DECO

The Art Deco style, generally popular in the late 1920s and early 1930s, was a deliberate reaction against the historicist Period Revival styles. Art Deco’s distinctive detailing was intended, to invoke

the ideas of the modern age rather than the past. The style was popularized by and took its name from the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratif et Industriels Modernes* in Paris in 1925, which showcased not only architecture but also jewelry, furniture, and handicrafts.⁹² Art historian Patricia Bayer describes Art Deco as “an architecture of ornament, geometry, energy, retrospection, optimism, color, texture, light, and at times even symbolism.”⁹³

The Art Deco style used the tools of industrialization for artistically expressive purposes and quickly took hold in the United States. It celebrated new construction and fabrication methods and creative uses of technology in the modern world, particularly within booming cities of the 1920s. The style’s rejection of historic precedent made it especially attractive for the design of skyscrapers, “the cathedrals of the modern age,” in American cities.⁹⁴ It was often applied to high profile, large-scale buildings in the late 1920s, and numerous examples can be found in neighboring Los Angeles such as Bullock’s Wilshire and the Eastern Columbia Building.



*Sunset Tower at 8358 Sunset Boulevard, built in 1929.
(City of West Hollywood)*

Character-defining features of the style include:

- Emphasis on verticality
- Smooth wall surfaces, such as stucco
- Zigzags, chevrons, and other stylized floral and geometric motifs as decorative elements on façade
- Metal windows, often fixed sash and casement

⁹²Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, “Art Deco, 1925-1940,” Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide, accessed March 28, 2016, <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/art-deco.html>.

⁹³Patricia Bayer, *Art Deco Architecture: Design, Decoration, and Detail from the Twenties and Thirties* (New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, 1992), 8.

⁹⁴Bayer, 8.

There are only a small number of Art Deco style buildings found in West Hollywood. The style was applied to both high-rise buildings, such as Sunset Tower and the Emser Tile Building, as well as smaller-scale commercial buildings. Sunset Tower (8358 Sunset Boulevard) was constructed in 1930 as an apartment hotel. Designed by architect Leland Bryant, the building became a popular home for Hollywood actors. The Emser Tile Building (8431 Santa Monica Boulevard) was constructed in 1926 for the Bekins Moving Van and Storage Company. Its multi-story height and combination of Art Deco and Gothic Revival styles, make it a prominent landmark along Santa Monica Boulevard. Other examples in the city are smaller in size and scale. They include 626 N. Robertson Boulevard and 666 N. Robertson Boulevard. These smaller scale applications of the style utilize the vertical orientation common to Art Deco architecture without the more elaborate decoration of a building like Sunset Tower.

STREAMLINE MODERNE

The Streamline Moderne style was popular in the 1930s in Southern California. Like the Art Deco style, it was part of a trend of architectural idioms that sought inspiration from the future rather than the past. It evoked the silhouette of ships, airplanes, and trains that had captured the imagination of the American public as these modes of transportation became more widely accessible. Architects around the country also took interest in the science of aerodynamics that was in its infancy during this time, leading to the style's emphasis on evoking movement and speed.

The style's aesthetic was also applied to cars, trains, furniture, appliances, and fashion. Streamline Moderne is generally less common in Southern California when compared to other styles from the period, and its popularity was relatively short-lived; however, the style became a favorite with Hollywood. The style became was featured on movie sets of the period. It was also used for numerous industrial and commercial buildings, including those related to the entertainment industry. For example, the style was applied to studio buildings constructed for NBC and CBS in the late 1930s.⁹⁵ Prominent architects working in the style included John C. Austin, A.C. Martin, William Lescaze, Welton Beckett, and S. Charles Lee.

Distinguishing characteristics of the style include:

- Horizontal orientation
- Flat or nearly flat roofs
- Smooth stucco cladding
- Unadorned wall surfaces with minimal ornamentation
- Rounded corners and curved surfaces, emulating a "windswept" appearance
- Speedlines at wall surfaces, such as horizontal moldings and continuous sill courses
- Metal windows (often steel casement)
- Windows "punched" into walls, with no surrounds

⁹⁵David Gebhard and Harriette von Breton, *Los Angeles in the Thirties: 1931-1941* (Los Angeles, CA: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1989), 70-71.

West Hollywood is unique in the number of extant examples of Streamline Moderne architecture compared with other parts of greater Los Angeles. Though building activity slowed in the 1930s due to the Great Depression, the construction of commercial buildings continued apace in West Hollywood. Streamline Moderne architecture was at its most popular during this period. As a result, the style is more frequently seen in West Hollywood. Several examples can be found on Sunset Boulevard, including 8947 and 9165 Sunset Boulevard. 8947 Sunset Boulevard is a low-rise commercial building that combines the style with elements of Colonial Revival architecture, including a fluted door surround and broken pediment above the main entrance. The building has a stripped-down style, curved corners, and an overall emphasis on verticality achieved by horizontal moldings and sill courses that place it firmly within the realm of Streamline Moderne architecture. The Berman Building at 9165 Sunset Boulevard (extant, pictured below) also combines Streamline Moderne architecture with elements of the Colonial Revival style. The building's curving corners and horizontal design elements make it a quintessential example of the Streamline Moderne style, while its Colonial Revival elements, including a columned entrance overhang and fluted door surround, lend the building further visual interest. Other examples can be found at 9080 Santa Monica Boulevard and 9157 Sunset Boulevard.



Berman Building at 9165 Sunset Boulevard, built in 1936. (Los Angeles Public Library)

Associated Property Types

During 1920s and 1930s, West Hollywood was transformed from a growing but relatively modest town to a hub for glamorous nightclubs and illegal activities. The restaurants and clubs on the Sunset Strip became famous for their association with the movie stars who frequented them. Some

were also well known for their international cuisine, bootleg liquor, and gambling. During Prohibition (1920 to 1933) most, if not all, speakeasies had gambling. Bootleggers and gambling racketeers were one in the same. Because of its close affiliation with the entertainment industry and its location in unincorporated county, West Hollywood became a haven for the LGBTQ community early on. This remained an open secret at some times and completely hidden at others depending on the social and political climate. Businesses that would not have been allowed freedom elsewhere, such as gay friendly bars and nightclubs, developed along the commercial streets of West Hollywood. During World War II, West Hollywood turned its focus, at least in part, to the war effort. The Mitchell Camera Company manufactured bombsights for the United States Airforce, and Army recruiting offices opened on Sunset Boulevard. Studios like United Artists were kept busy with films about the war, in addition to its regular production schedule.⁹⁶ The shift in the social and political climate during World War II and the immediate postwar period brought dramatic changes to the Sunset Strip and eventually paved the way for the trends that shaped West Hollywood in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Property types associated with this period are primarily low-rise commercial buildings, though a small number of institutional and industrial buildings remain as well. Commercial buildings are most commonly found along Sunset and Santa Monica Boulevards, but can also be found along other commercial streets such as Melrose Avenue. The western portion of Sunset Boulevard became more heavily developed with low-rise commercial buildings during this period as it became known as the place to work and play for those in the entertainment industry.

Low-rise commercial development during this period continued along Santa Monica Boulevard, which had already been established during previous decades due to the presence of the streetcar line. Although Santa Monica Boulevard was made part of Route 66 during the late 1920s, this does not appear to have had a lasting impact on the built environment. A small number of automobile-related resources, such as automobile repair shops and roadside establishments like Irv's Burgers, are seen along the street, but they are few and far between; rather, Santa Monica Boulevard appears to have retained and continued the low-rise commercial character already established by the presence of the streetcar line.

A small amount of institutional and industrial development occurred during this period, as the economy of West Hollywood remained closely linked to the entertainment industry. The West Hollywood School also dates to this period. Located on the same parcel as the original Sherman school, the building standing today dates to the 1930s. Industrial buildings devoted to entertainment industry-related uses were constructed as well. Many of them were located in close proximity to the United Artists Studio south of Santa Monica Boulevard.

⁹⁶Wannamaker, 10.

Eligibility Standards

Eligible resources dating to the period of development between 1926 and the end of World War II reflect commercial development in response to the growing popularity of the automobile, the growth of the entertainment industry, development of the Sunset Strip, and the increasing architectural sophistication of West Hollywood. An eligible resource or district must have been important in the commercial, industrial, and architectural development of the city. Examples may include resources related to retail commercial development, office buildings, and institutional growth.

To be eligible under the West Hollywood 1926 - World War II theme, an individual property or district should:

- Be associated with a business, organization, or industry that made important contributions to commercial or institutional growth and development of West Hollywood; or
- Be emblematic of or constructed directly in response to transportation and commercial developments that comprised the growth of West Hollywood during the period of significance; or
- Be fully realized example of the style or property type, displaying the significant character-defining features of a style or property type in multiple aspects of design; and
- Date from the period of significance; and
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity.

INTEGRITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, Materials, and Association from the period of significance
- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant business or organization occupied the property or the period of initial construction reflecting the original design and architectural character of the resource
- Setting may be compromised by nearby construction that post-dates the period
- If a resource is a rare surviving example of its type and/or period, a greater degree of alterations may be acceptable
 - The majority of the resource's original materials and design features must remain intact and visible, including wall cladding, fenestration pattern, roof features, and details related to its architectural style

- Limited door and window replacements at the street level of the primary elevation may be acceptable if they do not change the original fenestration pattern, and are compatible with the original design of the resource
- Secondary elevation and upper floor window materials should be original

Postwar West Hollywood 1946 - 1965

In the post-World War II period, the West Hollywood area became the center of region's creative communities. A burgeoning gallery scene along La Cienega Boulevard in Los Angeles became a nationally recognized destination for modern art. The interior design industry began a gradual ascendancy in the southeast corner of the area as well; by the end of the twentieth century, it would be one of the largest concentrations of interior design businesses in the Pacific Rim. As the creative environment thrived, the Sunset Strip began an era of transition. The time of supper clubs came to a close. By the early 1960s, construction was underway on several high-rise hotel and office buildings with sleek Modern designs along Sunset Boulevard. The older commercial buildings became the home of a new youth culture where teenagers clashed with authorities.



Bus garage storage at site of the Sherman Railyard, circa 1960. (LAMTA)

THE RISE OF THE CREATIVE CITY



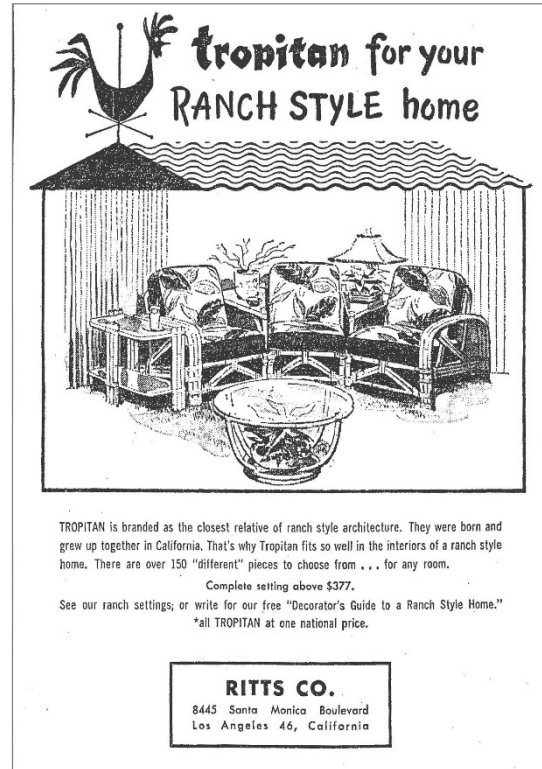
Jules Seltzer Associates store, date and location unknown. (Jules Seltzer Associates)

In the second half of the twentieth century, West Hollywood emerged as the center of the interior design industry for the West Coast. Before World War II, furniture showrooms were concentrated in downtown Los Angeles. Immediately after the war, showrooms began opening along La Cienega, Beverly, and Robertson Boulevards. At the time, these streets were a disjointed collection of single-

family homes, manufacturing facilities, and retail shops.⁹⁷ By the 1950s, design industries spread north to Melrose Avenue. The interior design industry became a prominent force in West Hollywood during the postwar era for three reasons. First, design-related industries wanted to cluster near each other to increase visibility, associate with well-known brands, and create convenience for shoppers. Second, several prominent decorators, art directors, and other figures in the design industry lived and worked in West Hollywood, giving the area a reputation as the center of the industry's most established tastemakers. Finally, property owners and enterprising real estate agents made conscious decisions to attract design industry tenants to specific commercial corridors in West Hollywood.

The first showrooms were located on Beverly Boulevard near Robertson Boulevard.⁹⁸ Land and small industrial buildings in this area were relatively inexpensive and undeveloped in the late 1940s, creating opportunities for the large and flexible warehouse-like spaces needed by the industry to display furniture, carpets, tiles, and fabrics. Herman Miller, a furniture manufacturer, opened a showroom at Beverly and Robertson in 1949.⁹⁹ The building was designed by Charles Eames, who designed furniture produced by the Michigan-based company along with his wife Ray.¹⁰⁰ The Eames design studio was located in Venice, and historians speculate that the Eames likely encouraged Herman Miller to choose a location near the Jules Seltzer Associates showroom (location unknown), which also sold Herman Miller products.¹⁰¹ Albert Parvin and Company, another furniture producer, also opened a large showroom in West Hollywood in 1949.

In the 1950s and 1960s, property owners, real estate developers, and design firms actively created a concentrated design district along the streets of Beverly, Robertson, La Cienega, and Melrose,



Ritts Co. advertisement, 1950. (*Los Angeles Times*)

⁹⁷Gierach, 88.

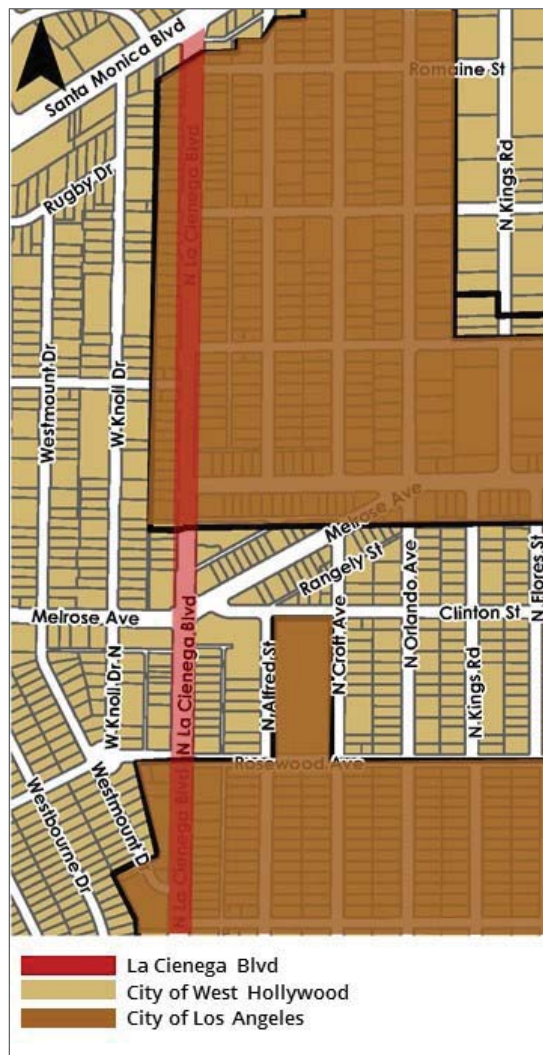
⁹⁸Clark and Burchfield, which opened in 1945, is often cited as the first showroom in West Hollywood. Though close to West Hollywood, it was located at 104 Robertson Boulevard, Beverly Hills in 1949 and, later, 120 S. Robertson Boulevard, Los Angeles. Pasadena Art Museum, *California Design/Eight* (1962), 85.

⁹⁹Evelyn De Wolfe, "Pacific Design Center: Multi-use Concept To Broaden Horizons," *Los Angeles Time*, July 27, 1986.

¹⁰⁰Ray and Charles Eames also designed the building's interiors and many of its early displays.

Pat Kirkham, *Charles and Ray Eames: Designers of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 126-127.

¹⁰¹Gregory Firlotte, "The 40s Forward," *West Hollywood Magazine*, accessed February 16, 2016, <http://westhollywoodmag.net/decades-of-design/>.



The gallery, design, and restaurant businesses along La Cienega Boulevard contributed to the development of West Hollywood; however, many of the businesses lining the corridor are outside the City of West Hollywood

leading to the rapid growth of the industry in the West Hollywood area.¹⁰² Photographers Theda and Emerson Hall owned several vacant lots along Melrose Avenue. According to Theda Hall, "We decided we wanted to switch Melrose to a street of wholesale showrooms by renting to decorators. We wouldn't rent to anybody else but wholesale showrooms."¹⁰³ Local realtors Bert J. Friedman and Ronald S. Kates leased exclusively to design firms along La Cienega Boulevard, which grew rapidly as a destination for antiques, rugs, and new furniture and fixtures.¹⁰⁴ The first Design Center Building, containing showrooms and offices for design professionals, opened in 1964 at 8899 Beverly Boulevard. The reputation of the area was spread further with the publication of *Designers West* magazine. First published in 1964 by Walton E. Brown and Mary Maudlin Brown, the West Hollywood-based interior design magazine featured stories on designers, architects, artists, and craftspeople, "propelling many of those featured into the national and international spotlight."¹⁰⁵ Ancillary support industries surrounding design sprang up in the area. Fabric, rug, and tile showrooms were joined by industry watering holes like Ed's Coffee Shop (460 N. Robertson Boulevard).

As the interior design industry was expanding in the area, innovative art galleries and restaurants, businesses that catered to creative, discerning, and conspicuous consumers, emerged along La Cienega. Many noteworthy galleries and restaurants along the boulevard were in Los Angeles, though these businesses were associated with the cultural development of West Hollywood because of the people they brought to the area and the creative

¹⁰²Gierach, 88.

¹⁰³"Timeline - West Hollywood Design District," West Hollywood Design District, accessed February 16, 2016, <http://westhollywooddesigndistrict.com/decades-design/timeline/>.

¹⁰⁴The exact location of the editorial offices is unknown (Johnson Heumann Research Associates, 18-19).

¹⁰⁵"Timeline - West Hollywood Design District," West Hollywood Design District, accessed February 16, 2016, <http://westhollywooddesigndistrict.com/decades-design/timeline/>.

climate they fostered. The phrase “restaurant row” was used regularly by the 1940s to describe the stretch of La Cienega between Melrose Avenue and Wilshire Boulevard, mostly located in the cities of Los Angeles and Beverly Hills.¹⁰⁶ La Cienega remains a dense concentration of high-end restaurants, drawing patrons from affluent neighborhoods nearby.

Many of the antique shops along La Cienega Boulevard hosted nascent galleries in rear alley storefronts. These older buildings were highly adaptable; most were constructed as retail stores for no particular product and were substantially remodeled. Esther Robles opened Esther's Alley Gallery at the rear of a building on La Cienega in 1947 and moved to a street-facing storefront at 665 N. La Cienega Boulevard a few years later.¹⁰⁷ The Landau Gallery, one of Los Angeles' first galleries to feature works by young artists, opened in 1950 on Melrose Avenue before moving to 702 N. La Cienega Boulevard the next year.¹⁰⁸ Though he did not own the first gallery on the boulevard, Felix Landau ushered in “...an era when La Cienega Boulevard would be the center of Los Angeles's gallery scene.”¹⁰⁹ Founded in 1957, the Ferus Gallery started behind an antique store off La Cienega before moving to 736-A N. La Cienega Boulevard. The Ferus Gallery “was a haven in the 1950s for modernists” and often exhibited provocative material.¹¹⁰ In 1963, the Ferus Gallery was the first gallery to show the work of Andy Warhol. Though all these galleries were within blocks of each other, the Ferus Gallery was in Los Angeles and the Robles and Landau galleries were in the unincorporated area of the county that later became West Hollywood. Unlike the commercial corridors of the Sunset Strip and Santa Monica Boulevard, where county sheriffs had routinely ignored illegal or socially deviant behavior for decades and artistic and fun-seeking businesses flourished, La Cienega Boulevard bisected a jagged border between the county and city of Los Angeles. During a 1957 show featuring art by Wallace Berman, “The Hollywood vice squad descended on the Ferus Gallery shortly after the opening and arrested the 31-year-old artist on charges of displaying lewd and pornographic material.”¹¹¹

By 1963, the weekly Monday night gallery shows on La Cienega were known nationwide. *Time* magazine described the scene as “...a street of restaurants in unearthly shapes, of neon in colors not known elsewhere, of low white buildings - a street, in sum, of vast self-assurance.”¹¹² The gallery scene on La Cienega drew attention to the wider artistic community of the Los Angeles area during the postwar period, helping to establish West Hollywood as a center of creative innovation beyond the entertainment industry.

A vital part of this creative community were the numerous firms and individuals in the interior design industry who rose to prominence in the postwar era, establishing eponymous design studios

¹⁰⁶“Display Ad,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 2, 1943; Los Angeles Street Address Directory, May 1956, 419-421.

¹⁰⁷Suzanne Muchnic, “Esther Waggoner Robles; Art Dealer Launched a Leading Gallery in L.A.,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 1, 2001.

¹⁰⁸“Landau Gallery Will Open April 8,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 2, 1950.

¹⁰⁹Pacific Standard Time, “Felix Landau Gallery,” Pacific Standard Time at the Getty, accessed March 02, 2016. <http://blogs.getty.edu/pacificstandardtime/explore-the-era/locations/felix-landau-gallery/#sthash.lIC07any.dpuf>

¹¹⁰Burt A. Folkart, “Jay DeFeo, 60; Abstract Painter,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 15, 1989.

¹¹¹William Wilson, “Wally Berman, Semina Figure,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 5, 1992.

¹¹²“Art: Monday Night on La Cienega,” *Time*, July 26, 1963.

and drawing international attention to West Hollywood as the center of the trend-setting design industries. The motion picture industry had attracted set decorators and costume designers to the

West Hollywood area before interior design became a major activity on its own, and the interior design industry had a symbiotic relationship with these existing fields. Many designers worked in both industries or gained fame through associations with entertainment industry clientele. One of the most prominent and well-known designers of the period was William Haines who established his studio on Sunset Boulevard in the 1930s, and was a pioneer in the West Hollywood interior design world. Tony Duquette was another renowned interior designer who permeated all areas of creativity. He began his career working for Bullock's Wilshire department store, designed costumes and sets for Vincente Minelli's film productions from the 1940s through 1960s, and decorated eccentric homes for the elite in Los Angeles and the expatriate communities of postwar France. He hosted extravagant parties at his studio, Norma Talmadge's former soundstage located at 824 N. Robertson Boulevard, after moving there in 1956.¹¹³ During the

immediate postwar era, interior design was considered a man's profession. Phyllis Morris was one of the first women to find success in the industry in Los Angeles. She worked out of several studios in West Hollywood, including one at 8770 Beverly Boulevard in the early 1960s, and was often photographed driving around the city in her pink car.¹¹⁴



Tony Duquette Studios, circa 1960. The building was the Cristofelless Lace Factory before it became the designer's office. (Wendy Goodman and Hutton Wilkinson)

¹¹³Wendy Goodman and Hutton Wilkinson, *Tony Duquette* (New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, 2007), 103, 226.

¹¹⁴ Firlotte, "The 40s Forward," <http://westhollywoodmag.net/decades-of-design/>.

THE DECLINE OF THE SUNSET STRIP

The Sunset Strip in the postwar period saw the decline of traditional nightclubs and the rise of the rock music scene. Though turnover was common throughout the Sunset Strip's history, the newer businesses were truly of a different nature by 1965. The first heyday of the Sunset Strip as the destination for restaurants and supper clubs extended over twenty years from 1934 to 1954.¹¹⁵ Culturally and politically, the area became more conservative during this period. By the 1940s, upscale lesbian bars like the Gypsy Room were replaced with more conventional and traditional restaurants.¹¹⁶ By the mid-1950s, the Strip declined as an entertainment destination as televisions became widely owned and variety shows featured many of the former club acts.¹¹⁷ Long dominated by organized crime, the Strip declined as Las Vegas, another mafia stronghold, drew away business. The second heyday of the Sunset Strip, ushered in by the opening of the Whiskey a Go-Go in 1964, witnessed the rise of a different type of club scene dominated by 1960s and 1970s rock music and youth culture.¹¹⁸



*Villa Nova at Sunset Boulevard, 1953, now the
Rainbow Room.*

(Department of Water and Power)



*Senator Kefauver and his wife eating dinner
at the Mocambo, 1951.
(Los Angeles Examiner)*

In the immediate postwar period, the Strip embodied the glamour of Hollywood as the capital of the entertainment industry and many of the area's popular nightclubs were mentioned in celebrity news stories and known nationwide through Hollywood gossip magazines. Along the Strip were some of the Los Angeles area's most upscale bars and restaurants. Average citizens could mingle with the rich and famous for the price of dinner. Turnover was high and few nightclubs had the longevity to remain popular for long. The restaurant scene varied. Some specialized in steaks served in intimate booths. Others were see-and-be-seen destinations with open floor plans. Movie clientele favored the Mocambo (8590 Sunset Boulevard,

¹¹⁵Dawes, 126.

¹¹⁶In the late 1950s, a larger number of lesbian bars were located in the San Fernando Valley rather than the Sunset Strip (Faderman and Timmons, 87, 97).

¹¹⁷Dawes, 126.

¹¹⁸Dawes, 127.

demolished) and Ciro's (8433 Sunset Boulevard, now The Comedy Store).¹¹⁹ The press was theoretically barred from The Villa Nova (9015 Sunset Boulevard, now Rainbow Bar and Grill) an intimate Italian restaurant. Despite the ban, the restaurant appeared in many gossip columns. Several nightclubs had themes before such concepts were kitsch. Bublichki was a Russian restaurant serving dinner accompanied by Gypsy music from a Tudor Revival style building at 8846 Sunset Boulevard (demolished). Emerging musicians played at Café Gala and the jazz-focused Crescendo (8572 Sunset Boulevard, demolished). Interlude, which shared a building with Crescendo, featured stand-up comics. Many of these restaurants listed their Sunset Boulevard addresses as part of "Hollywood," capitalizing on the association with the entertainment industry.

Though the Sunset Strip had always been a center of vice, the flashy nightclub scene of the 1940s and 1950s became the center of escalating violence between organized crime rackets. Dueling organized crime bosses Mickey Cohen and Jack Dragna fought over control of Los Angeles from the sidewalks of Sunset Boulevard in a feud known as the Sunset Wars.¹²⁰ The crime bosses were opposites: "...Dragna preferred to remain inconspicuous – somewhat the opposite of his contemporary Mickey Cohen."¹²¹ Cohen frequented nightclubs along the Sunset Strip and restaurants on Santa Monica Boulevard to the south. Cohen's operation used his clothing shop, Michael's Exclusive Haberdashery (8804 Sunset Boulevard, demolished) as a headquarters.¹²² Gunman attacked the store on August 18, 1948, missing Cohen who was using a restroom at the rear of the building.¹²³



*Bullet holes mark a car on the Sunset Strip after a mob-related shootout in front of Sherry's Restaurant, 1949.
(Los Angeles Times)*

¹¹⁹Joe Kennelley and Roy Hankey, *Sunset Boulevard: America's Dream Street* (Burbank, CA: Darwin Publications, 1981), 179.

¹²⁰Dawes, 132.

¹²¹"Jack Dragna Found Dead in Sunset Boulevard. Hotel: Reputed Ruler of Mafia..." *Los Angeles Times*, February 24, 1956.

¹²²Alison Martino, "The Viper Room Turns 21, The legendary club is legal at last," *Los Angeles Magazine*, August 11, 2014 (<http://www.lamag.com/citythinkblog/the-viper-room-turns-21/#sthash.701O9VTV.dpuf><http://www.lamag.com/citythinkblog/the-viper-room-turns-21/>).

¹²³"Mickey Cohen Associate Slain; Gang Warfare Revival Seen: Shotgun..." *Los Angeles Times*, August 19, 1948; "All-Out War Opened On Gangs: Shooting Of Cohen Stirs Huge-Man Hunt; Howser Tells Of Tip-Off," *Los Angeles Times*, July 21, 1949.

By the late 1940s, several murders had taken place in front of popular nightclubs. After a shootout at Sherry's Restaurant (9039 Sunset Boulevard, now 1Oak) in 1949, a new sheriff's captain was given charge of "cleaning up the county strip and giving police service which will maintain law and order and rid the community of hoodlums and undesirable characters."¹²⁴ The Strip cleanup was part of a wide-scale crackdown on organized crime underway nationwide by the early 1950s. Cohen and Dragna were singled out as mafia controllers of bookmaking, narcotics, and other rackets in Los Angeles by the federal government during the Kefauver hearings and by California Governor Warren's statewide Commission on Organized Crime.¹²⁵ While illegal gambling, drugs, and after hours alcohol service remained part of the Sunset Strip for decades, by the mid-1950s organized crime, movie stars, and tourists were increasingly traveling to Las Vegas for entertainment and legalized vices like gambling. Las Vegas was heavily promoted on billboards along the Strip billboards, helping to signal the Strip's demise as an entertainment destination and eventually siphoning off most of the upscale nightclub business.



*Santa Monica Boulevard with railroad tracks,
1970s. (Los Angeles Public Library)*

The resurgence of the Sunset Strip began in the early 1960s as high-rise office and hotel building construction slowly replaced one and two-story buildings. In contrast, Santa Monica Boulevard retained a consistently low-rise and less refined character. The Pacific Electric Santa Monica Boulevard Line, that connected downtown Los Angeles to Santa Monica, stopped running in 1954. The tracks were used by the Southern Pacific freight and passenger line and remained in the center of the street until 1972 (the tracks were covered with asphalt, but not completely removed until a street improvement project in the early 2000s).¹²⁶ Along Santa Monica Boulevard, the low-rise buildings from pre-World War II periods remained, attracting little attention from developers. Although its reputation may have been tarnished, the name Sunset Boulevard still had prestige and developers seized the opportunity to acquire and demolish the one and two-story buildings of the Sunset Strip at a relatively low cost "to make way for the structures of the sixties."¹²⁷

¹²⁴"Sheriff Acts to Bar Gangs from Strip," *Los Angeles Times*, July 28, 1949.

¹²⁵State of California Commission on Organized Crime, *Final Report* (Sacramento, CA: The Commission, 1953), 126, 129-130.

¹²⁶Scott Harrison, "Freight Trains on Santa Monica Boulevard," *Los Angeles Times*, November 27, 2012.

¹²⁷Tom Cameron, "Sunset Strip Being Transformed By High-Rise Office Structure Trend," *Los Angeles Times*, April 29, 1962.

By 1962, more than a dozen new buildings between four and sixteen stories were planned for the Sunset Strip. The first new buildings were hotels and apartments. The Thunderbird Inn (8300 Sunset Boulevard, now the Standard Hotel) opened in 1961 as motor lodge with abundant parking.¹²⁸ The Playboy Club-Hotel and Offices, adjacent towers, were designed by Richard Dorman and Curtis & Davis, and planned for sites on the south side of Sunset, west of La Cienega. While Las Vegas may have been a threat to business only a few years before, according to Playboy publisher Hugh Hefner, the Sunset Strip was "one of the most famous, glamorous streets in the world. It is enjoying a resurgence and growth that will bring new life, color and excitement to the entire scene."¹²⁹ In 1963, the 300-room Hotel Continental, a Gene Autry hotel group property, opened at 8401 Sunset.¹³⁰ Eight new office buildings were planned for the Strip in 1962, including the 11-story City National Bank.¹³¹ While some high end restaurants, notably Scandia (9040 Sunset Boulevard, demolished) and Cyrano's (8711 Sunset Boulevard), remained open through the 1960s, tastes were changing and diners such as Ben Frank's (8585 Sunset Boulevard, now Mel's Diner) catered to a more casual, car-oriented crowd, and less glamorous. Mimetic and exuberant roadside architecture also triumphed as car culture dominated the area, with wildly decorated storefronts like Wil Wright's ice cream parlor and the hot-dog shaped Tail o' the Pup food stand.



*Hotel Continental at 8401 Sunset Boulevard, built 1963. The hotel later became the Hyatt House.
(Los Angeles Public Library)*

¹²⁸"Motor Hotel Planned for Sunset Strip," *Los Angeles Times*, August 27, 1961; "Suburban Hotel Building Boom On: Hotel Building Boom," *Los Angeles Times*, March 11, 1962.

¹²⁹Cameron, L1.

¹³⁰"May Opening Planned for Sunset Strip Hotel," *Los Angeles Times*, April 21, 1963.

¹³¹Cameron, L1.



Will Wright's ice cream parlor in Sunset Plaza, 1950 (Martin Turnbull)



The Tail o' the Pup was originally located near West Hollywood at 300 N. La Cienega Boulevard in Los Angeles. In the 1970s, the food stand was moved to 329-343 N. San Vicente Boulevard in West Hollywood. It was removed from its last location in 2005 and put into storage (location unknown). (Photograph from City of West Hollywood)

A new era of entertainment on the Sunset Strip began when the Whiskey a Go-Go (8901 Sunset Boulevard) opened on January 15, 1964 in a former bank building. Elmer Valentine, an ex-cop from Chicago with mob ties, created what became “one of the most celebrated clubs in the history of rock music.”¹³² The club was the source of the iconic Go-Go Girl of the 1960s and became an internationally known destination. Valentine named the club after a discothèque in Paris that featured live dancers. To accommodate the tight floor space, Valentine suspended a disc jockey booth from the ceiling. After a female DJ began dancing as she played records between live acts, Valentine added two more suspended cages for dancers. One of the dancers, Joanie Labine, designed what became the official go-go girl costume: fringed dress and white boots.¹³³ The Whiskey a Go-Go became the first of many trendsetting clubs in the second heyday of the Strip. In the following years, the Sunset Strip was revived as a center of the live music scene, with many existing buildings adapted for a new era of entertainment.



Whiskey a Go-Go at 8901 Sunset Boulevard, 1964 (Julian Wasser)

¹³²Douglas Martin, “Elmer Valentine, Owner of Rock Clubs, Dies at 85,” *New York Times*, December 9, 2008.

¹³³Dawes, 127; Douglas Martin, “Elmer Valentine, Owner of Rock Clubs, Dies at 85,” *New York Times*, December 9, 2008.

Architectural Trends

As a center of the creative community and interior design industry, the West Hollywood area was always at the forefront of architectural trends. The Mid-Century Modern architectural style as discussed below is intentionally broad. Several variations of Modern design qualify as distinct architectural styles. The International style, one of the early modern styles distinguished by an emphasis on horizontality and modern industrial materials, is exhibited in the Lingenbrink Grouping (Holloway shops) constructed from 1937 to 1946 and designed by Rudolph Schindler (8756, 8758-8760 and 8766 Holloway, designated).¹³⁴ No other commercial examples of the style remain in West Hollywood. Another style within the Modern idiom for which there is only one example in the West Hollywood is Googie, an exuberant commercial style exhibited at Ben Frank's at 8585 Sunset Boulevard (now Mel's). Other architectural styles of the postwar period, such as Hollywood Regency, were expressed only in the residential built environment, and therefore are not discussed in this theme. Frequently, buildings from the pre-1946 period were altered to fit modern aesthetics and sensibilities. The Mid-Century Modern style broadly applies to commercial properties in West Hollywood.

MID-CENTURY MODERN

The prevalent architectural style for commercial buildings constructed between 1946 and 1965 across the United States was Mid-Century Modern. Emerging from earlier idioms of the Modern movement, Mid-Century Modern was more fully embraced by the public following World War II. The style utilized the industrial materials and streamlined construction techniques developed during the war years. Designs relied on light metal or concrete frames sheathed in thin glass skins over boxy, geometric forms.¹³⁵ The unadorned simplicity and technological sophistication of the style demonstrated a "faith in the future and progress."¹³⁶ Mid-Century Modern designs were used for every type of commercial, residential, and institutional building in America.



*Herman Miller Showroom at 8800 Beverly Boulevard, circa 1949.
(source unknown)*

¹³⁴Schindler was a master architect of the Modern movement who resided on Kings Road in West Hollywood.

¹³⁵Leland M. Roth, *American Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books Group, 2001), 430.

¹³⁶Roth, 412.

The style is generally characterized by:

- Flat roofs
- Geometric roof forms, such as folded plates, dramatic gables, and A-frames
- Canted walls
- Wood or stucco siding, often used in combination
- Brick or stone veneer often used as primary or accent material
- Flush-mounted-steel framed windows or large single-paned wood-framed windows
- Large, single pane windows
- Clerestory windows

In West Hollywood, commercial property types that exemplify the Mid-Century Modern style include institutional buildings, diners, hotels, and corporate office towers. Until the late 1950s, newly constructed commercial buildings in West Hollywood were small in scale, reaching no more than three stories. Many of these commercial buildings were located on Santa Monica Boulevard or on Beverly Boulevard and Melrose Avenue,



*Scandia Restaurant at 9040 Sunset Boulevard, 1960s.
(Martin Turnbull)*

catering to the interior design industry. A prime example is the Herman Miller Showroom at 8800 Beverly Boulevard, designed by Charles Eames. The showroom is constructed with a steel frame and brick walls on its side elevations. The façade used the same prefabricated steel sash units Charles and Ray Eames used later in the design of their home in the Pacific Palisades, Case Study House No. 8.¹³⁷ The interior of the Herman Miller Showroom has an open plan. Some of the most popular restaurants along the Sunset Strip were located in Mid-Century Modern style buildings, communicating a cool, hip aesthetic that contrasted with the Period Revival style of many existing buildings in the area. Scandia (9040 Sunset Boulevard, demolished) was located in a distinctive Mid-Century Modern building. Another Mid-Century Modern building was the West Hollywood Park Library (demolished), an institutional building designed by prolific architect Edward H. Fickett.

In the early 1960s, a new wave of Mid-Century Modern commercial architecture began along Sunset Boulevard. These high-rise office buildings, hotels, and restaurants changed the character of the Strip by increasing the density and height of buildings. Local Modernists John C. Lindsay, Richard

¹³⁷Alterations to the Herman Miller Showroom since initial construction include the replace of opaque panels with translucent glass.

Dorman, and Martin Stern Jr. designed office and hotel towers for the Strip between 1956 and 1963. These new buildings were boxy in massing and featured walls of glass and stucco.

Associated Property Types

During the postwar period, the West Hollywood area became nationally recognized as the center of many creative industries. The interior design industry thrived. The gallery scene on La Cienega was known nationwide for its innovative, period-defining artists. Skyscrapers and high-rise Mid-Century Modern towers replaced low-rise commercial buildings along Sunset Boulevard as Santa Monica Boulevard fell into a period of stagnation. At the same time, youth culture dominated the Sunset Strip. New music clubs opened and patrons clashed with law enforcement officials.

Property types associated with this period are scattered throughout the city and include low-rise commercial buildings and high-rise hotel and office buildings. The construction of new commercial buildings; however, was eventually constrained by the lack of undeveloped land along the major transportation corridors of Santa Monica and Sunset Boulevards. As the commercial streets were hemmed in by residential neighborhoods on the north and south, the relatively small parcels restricted opportunity for new development. The subdivision patterns created during the prewar era remained, and favored the construction of relatively small commercial buildings or the alteration of older buildings from the 1920s through 1940s. Consequently, many resources are located in buildings constructed during earlier periods.

Eligibility Standards

Eligible resources dating to the period of development between 1946 and 1965 reflect a period of transition. The early 1960s were a time of architectural transformation for West Hollywood, with new construction emerging in the Mid-Century Modern style. Buildings dating to earlier periods of development became the center of the new live music and art scenes. An eligible resource or district must have been important in the commercial, institutional, and architectural development of the city during this period. Examples may include resources related to retail commercial development, office buildings, hotels, early live music venues, galleries, and restaurants. Resources may also be buildings constructed in earlier periods associated with businesses, events, and important individuals who achieved significance in the postwar period.

To be eligible under the Postwar West Hollywood 1946 - 1965 theme, an individual property or district should:

- Be associated with a business, organization, or industry that made important contributions to commercial or institutional growth and development of West Hollywood; or
- Be emblematic of or constructed directly in response to cultural developments that occurred in West Hollywood during the period of significance; or
- Be fully realized example of the style or property type, displaying the significant character-defining features of a style or property type in multiple aspects of design; and

- Date from the period of significance; and
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity.

INTEGRITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, Materials, and Association from the period of significance
- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant business, industry, or events took place at the property or the period of initial construction reflecting the original design and architectural character of the resource
- Setting may be compromised by nearby construction that post-dates the period
- The majority of the resource's materials and design features from the period of significance must remain intact and visible, including wall cladding, windows, fenestration pattern, roof features, and details related to its architectural style

Modern West Hollywood 1966 - 1984

From 1966 to 1984, West Hollywood was a destination for several diverse groups of people. The interior design industry continued to be an important force in the area through the 1970s and 1980s. Numerous European firms, including Ligne Rosset, opened their only stores in the United States in West Hollywood, demonstrating the supremacy of the area to the design industry in the country. Spearheaded by developers Friedman and Kates, the construction of the Pacific Design Center in 1975 further affirmed the growth and permanence of the design industry in West Hollywood's economy. By the end of the 1980s, "More than 40% of the city's economic activity derived from creative industries such as fashion, food, and the arts."¹³⁸ In addition, West Hollywood became one of the centers of the music and art scenes for the youth and counter-culture movements of the 1960s and 1970s. The Sunset Strip became synonymous with youth culture as it evolved from the swinging '60s to the harder rock scenes of the late 1970s and early 1980s. At the same time, Santa Monica Boulevard became a business district catering to the gay and lesbian population as they increasingly asserted their rights to identify publically as homosexuals. At the end of the period another group, Russian Jewish immigrants, also found a refuge in West Hollywood. The older population of renters would join with these newer groups to create the new City of West Hollywood in 1984.

THE SUNSET STRIP - THE MECCA FOR MUSIC

Between 1964 and 1966, the Sunset Strip quickly changed from "the star-struck haunt of the rich, renowned and ribald grown-ups..." to the "...in place' for the plus-15 teen-ager and the just-turned-21 young adult."¹³⁹ After the Whiskey a Go-Go opened in January 1964, the Sunset Strip was on the verge of transforming from "Hollywood's last, sacred sanctuary of chichi for the middle-aged" into a center of 1960s youth culture.¹⁴⁰ By August 1965, Sheriff Vice-Captain Walter R. Howell reported that, "The economic character on the Strip has changed significantly from the sophisticated, expensive supper clubs to the gaudy, posteried bistros catering to the younger set."¹⁴¹ The transition reflected the rise of youth culture, which was



Hitchhikers on Sunset Boulevard, 1966. (UCLA)

¹³⁸Alan Citron, "West Hollywood—Small Thinking Big," *Los Angeles Times*, July 10, 1988.

¹³⁹Jerry Cohen, "Big Beat Drives Adults from Erstwhile Haunts: Famed Strip Now Mecca for Youth," *Los Angeles Times*, March 10, 1966.

¹⁴⁰Paul Coates, "Teen-agers Conquer," *Los Angeles Times*, February 28, 1966.

¹⁴¹Cohen, A1.

characterized by a resistance to authority that contrasted with the conservative atmosphere of the preceding postwar period. Music was a central focus and mode of expression for this culture. The Doors, the house band at the Whiskey a Go-Go in 1966, were just one of the many rock bands that defined the era and established the reputation of the Sunset Strip as the center of the contemporary music scene.¹⁴² The Strip and nearby areas of West Hollywood became the center of West Coast rock music as it progressed from the 1960s through 1990s, spanning the eras of rock, folk, punk, glam, new wave, heavy metal, and grunge music.

Several nightclubs featuring rock music, dancing, and stand-up comedy aimed at people under-21 years old opened in the West Hollywood area between 1964 and 1966. Most clubs were along the Sunset Strip, though a few were located on Santa Monica and La Cienega Boulevards. Teenage-centric It's Boss opened in the former location of Ciro's in 1965.¹⁴³ Bill Gazzarri first opened his club at 319 N. La Cienega, but moved to 9039 Sunset by the mid-1960s. Acts at Gazzarri's included The Doors, The Byrds, and Buffalo Springfield.¹⁴⁴ Pandora's Box was located in a triangular traffic strip just across the county line on Crescent Heights in Los Angeles. The counter-culture scene transcended music. At the intersection of Sunset and La Cienega Boulevards, sculptor Mark Di Suvero led multiple artists in an anti-Vietnam War art installation called the Tower of Art (removed).¹⁴⁵ Diners and coffee shops, like Ben Frank's, and vacant lots along the Strip and Santa Monica Boulevard were crowded with people, particularly teenagers, at all hours of the night.¹⁴⁶



Ben Frank's (8585 Sunset Boulevard) on left and adjacent parking lot where teenage curfew violators gathered (Every Building on the Sunset Strip, 1966, Ed Ruscha, The Getty Research Institute), Ben Frank's is now Mel's Diner.

In 1966, several clashes between the Sheriff's Department and teenage curfew violators led to a series of demonstrations known as the Sunset Strip Curfew Riots. After complaints from business

¹⁴²Dawes, 127.

¹⁴³Jerry Cohen, "Big Beat Drives Adults from Erstwhile Haunts: Famed Strip Now Mecca for Youth," *Los Angeles Times*, March 10, 1966.

¹⁴⁴Art Fen, "Gazzarri's," L.A. Musical History Tour, accessed March 17, 2016. <http://www.sofein.com/tourBook/ppBookG.html>.

¹⁴⁵Art Berman, "Art Tower Started as Vietnam Protest: Tower of Art Started for War Protest," *Los Angeles Times*, January 28, 1966.

¹⁴⁶Walt Anderson, "A Hard Day's Night on The Strip: Sheriff's squad patrols a world of funny folks, juvies and 415s," *Los Angeles Times*, October 16, 1966.

owners, deputies began enforcing a ten o'clock curfew for minors in the summer of 1966. Deputies patrolled the West Hollywood area through the night, picking up underage curfew violators. Mass curfew arrests took place by the busload in the parking lot adjacent Ben Frank's, which had become "...a sort of headquarters for teen-agers on the Strip."¹⁴⁷ The Sunset Strip Curfew Riots began on November 13, 1966 when a crowd of demonstrators gathered in front of Pandora's Box in the City of Los Angeles to hold a vigil the night before the club was scheduled to be torn down to reconfigure the intersection at Sunset and Crescent Heights. Los Angeles city police officers and county sheriff's deputies reacted violently when the large crowd blocked traffic on Sunset Boulevard.¹⁴⁸ On subsequent nights, nearly one thousand "...young persons protesting alleged 'police brutality' gathered outside Pandora's Box, where they rioted and invaded two Rapid Transit District buses."¹⁴⁹



*Protestors outside Pandora's Box on Sunset Boulevard near Crescent Heights, 1966,
(Los Angeles Public Library)*

¹⁴⁷Ken Reich, "Crackdown Quiets Teens on Strip: Curfew Violators Cleared from Streets; Below-18 Clubs Quit Sunset," *Los Angeles Times*, June 5, 1966; Walt Anderson, "A Hard Day's Night on The Strip: Sheriff's squad patrols a world of funny folks, juvies and 415s," *Los Angeles Times*, October 16, 1966.

¹⁴⁸Dawes, 128.

¹⁴⁹Tom Goff, "City Seeks to Raze Sunset Teen Club: Pandora's Box Is Target of Council Action Berman," *Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 1966.

Small demonstrations occurred on succeeding nights in front of Pandora's Box and another club, the 5th Estate (8200 Sunset Boulevard).¹⁵⁰ The curfew riots on Sunset Boulevard continued for several days and were seen as a harbinger of future conflicts between young people and law enforcement that characterized the anti-Vietnam War protests of following years. The events inspired Stephen Stills of Buffalo Springfield to write the song "For What It's Worth (Stop, children, what's that sound?)," which became one of the defining songs of the era's anti-war protests. After the riots, numerous clubs were forced to shut down when Sheriff Peter J. Pitchess successfully lobbied to have the county revoke or change dancing permits.¹⁵¹

In the decades following the riots, music and comedy became the primary focus of the West Hollywood nightlife scene. An era of iconic Sunset Strip billboards for rock music began with Elektra Records' billboard for The Doors' first album.¹⁵² The California Sound of the 1970s, a singer-songwriter and folk music style of rock, found a home at Doug Weston's club, The Troubadour (9081 Santa Monica Boulevard). The Troubadour, which began as a coffee house on La Cienega, moved to Santa Monica Boulevard in 1957. From there, the club helped launch the careers of rock and folk



*Tropicana Motel and Dukes Coffee Shop on Santa Monica Boulevard, 1985, demolished.
(Terry Guy via Flickr)*

singers such as Elton John, Linda Ronstadt, and Joan Baez and comedians from the Smothers Brothers to Cheech and Chong. "In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Troubadour was considered the most consistently important showcase of contemporary folk and folk-rock talent in the country"¹⁵³ and one of the country's foremost rock clubs.¹⁵⁴ David Geffen and Elliot Roberts capitalized on the sound in 1971 when they formed their label Asylum Records (offices at 9130 Sunset Boulevard).¹⁵⁵ The artistic communities of West Hollywood were fluid. Janis Joplin, Jim Morrison, and other musicians regularly mingled with Ed Kienholz and the artists of

¹⁵⁰Pete Johnson, "400 Youths on Strip Hold 'Brutality' Protest," *Los Angeles Times*, November 19, 1966.

¹⁵¹The closures included: Stratford-on-Sunset, 8428 Sunset Boulevard; Fred C. Dobbs Café, 8537 Sunset Boulevard; and The Sea Witch, 8514 Sunset Boulevard.

¹⁵²Dawes, 116.

¹⁵³Myrna Oliver, "Doug Weston, Troubadour Founder, Dies," *Los Angeles Times*, February 15, 1999.

¹⁵⁴John Rockwell, "Music Clubs Resist Perils of Overkill," *New York Times*, September 4, 1974.

¹⁵⁵Asylum Records band the Eagles immortalized the Troubadour in their song "The Sad Café," even describing the old tracks along Santa Monica Boulevard in the opening verse:

*Out in the shiny night, the rain
was softly falling
The tracks that ran down the boulevard had
all been washed away*

Dawes, 129; Richard Cromelin, "Popline: Whiz Kid Returns To Active Duty," *Los Angeles Times*, March 4, 1979.

the La Cienega gallery scene at Barney's Beanery (8447 Santa Monica Boulevard) and Duke's Coffee Shop (demolished) on Santa Monica Boulevard.¹⁵⁶ Even The Troubadour's Monday open mic night (the Hootenanny) aligned with La Cienega's Monday night gallery open houses.



*Filthy McNasty's, now the Viper Room, on Sunset Boulevard, 1970s.
(Alison Martino)*

The mellow, marijuana-laced scene at The Troubadour was juxtaposed by a scene of rowdiness at the Continental Hyatt House (formerly the Gene Autry Hotel). Dubbed both "Riot House" and "Riot Hyatt," the hotel became the "unofficial innkeeper" for touring musicians through the 1980s.¹⁵⁷ Notorious incidents of rock and roll debauchery took place at the hotel, with legendary rock bands The Who and Led Zeppelin renting entire floors, allegedly riding motorcycles through the hallways, and flinging televisions out the windows onto Sunset Boulevard. Tower Records, a Sacramento-based chain store, opened a shop on the Strip at Horn Avenue in 1971. Soon it became the company's flagship store on the West Coast and a hub for music lovers who searched for records and experienced in-store performances by their favorite bands. During this period, nightclubs became more specialized by focusing on music or comedy instead of both. The Comedy Store opened at the former Ciro's and It's Boss building in 1972. Sunset Strip venues like Gazzarri's had declined in popularity during the early 1970s, but rose again as the music got louder.¹⁵⁸ Bands such as Frank Zappa & The Mothers of Invention, The Crusaders, and Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band recorded live concert albums at the Roxy. The "Second British Invasion," began in the 1970s and included musicians David Bowie and Queen. They played at the E Club on the Strip, just outside

¹⁵⁶Jim Morrison reportedly lived in room 32 at the Alta Cienega Motel (1005 N. La Cienega), a block from Barney's Beanery. "Down Rock 'n' Roll's Memory Lane," *Los Angeles Times*, March 2, 1992.

¹⁵⁷"Down Rock 'n' Roll's Memory Lane," *Los Angeles Times*, March 2, 1992; Dawes, 120-121.

¹⁵⁸Art Fen. LA Musical History Tour, accessed March 10, 2016, <http://www.sofein.com/tourBook/ppBookG.html>

West Hollywood (8171 Sunset Boulevard). The Rainbow Bar & Grill became a popular hangout for rock musicians and their groupies. Regulars included Keith Moon, Alice Cooper, Micky Dolenz, Harry Nilsson, John Lennon, and Ringo Starr. Other genres of rock, many originating with local bands, emerged in the late 1970s, including punk, new-wave, hard rock, and heavy metal. Reflecting on new bands like Van Halen, The Knack, and The Runaways, who all played at the Whiskey a- Go-Go and other Sunset Strip clubs as The Doors had done in the previous decade, local rock critic Richard Cromelin observed, "The explosions of local talent in 1978 marked a flourishing of native bands unmatched since the go-go days of the mid-'60s."¹⁵⁹



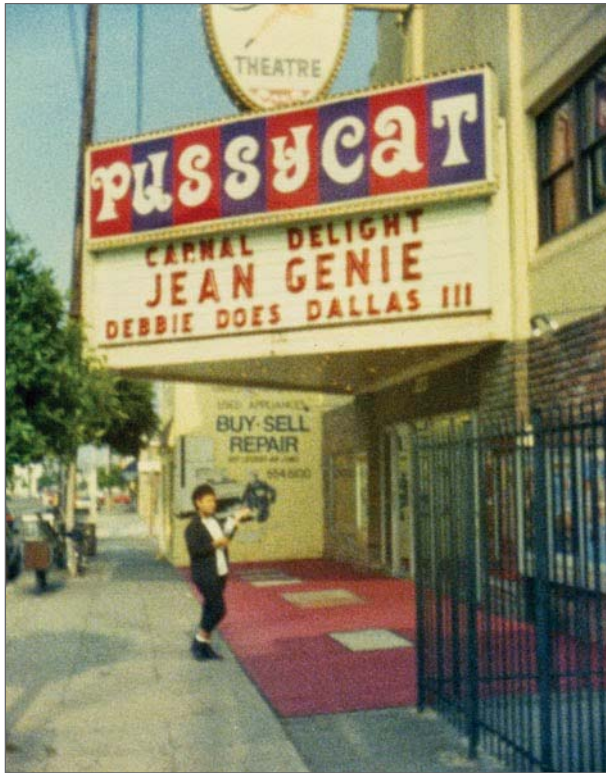
Gazzarri's on the Strip, 1980s, now 1Oak. (Rolling Stone and Getty Images)

Vince Neil of the band Mötley Crüe described the Sunset Strip scene of the 1980s as a "cesspool of depravity."¹⁶⁰ As the 1980s progressed, drugs and loud music seemed to further separate the Strip from its onetime reputation as a destination for sophisticated adults. At the same time, innovative haute cuisine restaurants like Wolfgang Puck's Spago paradoxically brought these types of adults back to the area. As West Hollywood and its performance venues constantly adapted to fit each generation's definition of nightlife, the area remained center of music, comedy, and dining for decades. Performers and their art were always pushing the limits of acceptability, but welcome in the entertainment centers of West Hollywood.

¹⁵⁹Richard Cromelin, "Pop Music: L.A. Bands: Rocking or Reeling?," *Los Angeles Times*, January 21, 1979.

¹⁶⁰This scene would continue past 1984 with seminal Sunset Strip-associated bands (sometimes called Hair Bands) releasing records throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. Guns N' Roses released their first album in 1987. Richard Beinstock, "Mötley Crüe, Poison, Guns N' Roses and The Street Behind Rock's Most Excessive Scene," *Decade Of Decadence: A Timeline Of The Eighties Sunset Strip*, *Rolling Stone*, October, 23, 2015.

LITTLE AMSTERDAM



Pussycat Theater, now Studs, at 7728 Santa Monica Boulevard, no date. (Lyndia Lowy)



The Institute of Oral Love at 7722 Santa Monica Boulevard, 1976. (Time)

During this period of social change, when behavioral expectations and the nature of entertainment were drastically changing, West Hollywood became a haven for commercial activity openly associated with all sexual proclivities. Businesses catering to the open expression of sexuality and fetish culture were scattered along the eastern end of Santa Monica Boulevard west of La Cienega, in a commercial stretch sometimes called Little Amsterdam. Several pornography theaters and bookstores were located in this corridor in the 1960s and 1970s. The area was recognized nationally for these types of business in 1976 when the Institute of Oral Love and the Pink Pussycat Theater, both located on Santa Monica Boulevard, were featured in the *Time* magazine cover story on the rise of the pornographic industry across America.¹⁶¹ While the business names often seemed playful, this industry often had a dark side associated with criminal activity and public health concerns. Business

¹⁶¹The Circus of Books (8230 Santa Monica Boulevard) sold pornography. A movie theater located at 7734 Santa Monica Boulevard began showing adult-oriented films in the 1960s. The theater had many names and programs over the years, among them: The Monica, Left Bank Theatre, Pussycat Theater, The Monica Cat, The Tomcat, and Studs. Information from Stuart Vener, Interview by Lyndia Lowy, Personal Interview, August 10, 2006; "Display Ad 19" *Los Angeles Times*, January 23, 1962, 22; William Farr, "Massage Parlor Crackdown: DA Brings Suit Against 5 Centers," *Los Angeles Times*, March 8, 1976, A1; Lyndia Lowy, Interview by Allison Lyons, Personal Interview, West Hollywood, February 10, 2016.

at many of the theaters dropped substantially after 1977 when the *Los Angeles Times* ceased advertisements for adult films.¹⁶² Many commercial businesses in this corridor continue the trend of “sex positive” retail, selling products for all ranges of sexual preferences.

THE GAY CITY

When the City of West Hollywood incorporated in 1984, it was the first city in the United States to have an elected governing body whose majority comprised openly gay officials. This landmark moment for LGBTQ rights and plurality was possible because of developments in the preceding decades. Beginning in the late 1950s, the LGBTQ community established itself as an integral part of West Hollywood’s identity. The LGBTQ community was mobilized in 1960s when the fight for the civil right to public assembly began in local bars. By the late 1970s, the LGBTQ community was increasingly finding its social, political, and institutional center in the West Hollywood area. LGBTQ community members escaping harsh treatment in other parts of the United States came to West Hollywood, establishing a community of newcomers who gathered in local coffee shops, bookstores, restaurants, and nightclubs. In West Hollywood, they found a home, forming softball leagues, choral groups, and motorcycle clubs. The personal and sexual freedom of the community in the 1970s gave way to the crisis of the early 1980s as the AIDS pandemic swept through the gay community, giving new urgency to activism and LGBTQ-focused social services for the community.¹⁶³ When West Hollywood incorporated as city in 1984, AIDS status and sexual orientation were part of the nondiscrimination measures enacted by the first city council.

The LGBTQ community had long gravitated to the area for nightlife; nightclubs catering to the community began opening in West Hollywood in the 1920s. As county territory, establishments in West Hollywood were raided less frequently by vice squads and law enforcement officers.¹⁶⁴ The police crackdown on gay and lesbian bars in the late 1940s and early 1950s nationwide laid the foundation for the nation’s gay liberation movement. In the 1960s, the LGBTQ community increasingly realized that when they defended their bars from attacks by homophobes, pleaded “not guilty” in court to charges of lewd conduct, or challenged the cops and liquor control boards, they were establishing their constitutional right to gather in public places.¹⁶⁵

Several gay and lesbian civil rights and activist groups emerged in the 1950s and 1960s.¹⁶⁶ Many of these groups were inspired by the Mattachine Society, which was founded in the Silverlake area of

¹⁶²Lyndia Lowy, Interview by Allison Lyons, Personal Interview, West Hollywood, February 10, 2016.

¹⁶³In the City of West Hollywood, much of the organized medical, social, and activist response to the AIDS crisis, including AIDS information centers, public health outreach efforts, and social activism of groups like AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) took place after incorporation in 1984.

¹⁶⁴Kenney, 23.

¹⁶⁵Alan Bérubé, “Marching to a Different Drummer: Lesbian and Gay GIs in World War II,” in *Hidden History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, edited by Martin B. Duberman, Martha Vicinius, and George Chauncy Jr. (New York, NY: New American Library, 1989), 393.

¹⁶⁶Beginning in the early 1950s, publications and newsletters such as *ONE*, *The Advocate*, *The Ladder*, and *The Lesbian Tide* provided an unprecedented level of information about local and national issues of interest to LGBTQ persons. None of these publications was produced in commercial areas of West Hollywood.¹⁶⁶ *ONE*, Inc. began participating in the emerging scene of

Los Angeles in 1950, and was the first sustained American gay rights group. While the Los Angeles chapter of the Mattachine Society fizzled out after the departure of the original founders, it survived elsewhere. In October 1952, a Mattachine chapter in West Hollywood formed ONE Incorporated, an educational and advocacy organization for gay rights. The organization also created several subcommittees to realize its advocacy agenda. In 1956, ONE, Inc. established the ONE Institute of Homophile Studies. A special Social Services Division within ONE consulted with psychologists and focused on destigmatizing homosexuality, which remained classified as a psychiatric disorder by the American Psychiatric Association until 1973.¹⁶⁷ Existing social service agencies were often hostile to the needs of the community and a major component of the gay liberation movement moving forward from the 1960s was gaining equal access to social services.

By the end of the 1960s, LGBTQ organizations formed with aggressive agendas to advocate for civil rights, social services, community support, and mainstream visibility for the community. Though ONE, Inc. readily admitted women in the 1950s, it was not until the 1960s that leaders of the community at large embraced the idea of uniting lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgenders into an organized front.¹⁶⁸ The Gay Liberation Front (GLF) demonstrated against negative images of LGBTQ persons in print media and on television and organized the first gay pride parade down Hollywood Boulevard in 1970.¹⁶⁹ The Municipal Elections Committee Los Angeles (MECLA) formed in 1976 to promote LGBTQ-supportive candidates for public office. MECLA marked a milestone in shaping electoral politics in Los Angeles by raising significant amounts of money and using electoral politics to give power to homosexuals and their allies.¹⁷⁰ Originally called Orion, the group deliberately did not identify its homosexual-rights agenda in its name.¹⁷¹ MECLA organized a successful series of elegant dinners and banquets that for the first time tapped into the wealth of the affluent gay community to influence electoral politics across many jurisdictions in Los Angeles. The organization was based in West Hollywood with offices located in the French Market building at 7985 Santa

gay and lesbian print media relatively early with the publication of its magazine *ONE* in 1953.¹⁶⁶ Though ONE, Inc. was based in the West Hollywood area, *ONE* magazine was published between 1953 and 1967 from an office in downtown Los Angeles. The *Lesbian Tide* newsletter, was affiliated with a radical branch of younger members of the Daughters of Bilitis, the counterpart lesbian organization to the Mattachine Society. *The Lesbian Tide* was first published from the West Hollywood apartment of founder Jeanne Cordova at 1124½ Ogden Drive in the early 1970s. The emergence of LGBTQ media offered an opportunity to market directly to the LGBTQ community. The publications helped create an awareness of the concentration of gay and lesbian-friendly businesses in the area of West Hollywood. For more information on the role of media in the 1960s and 1970s civil rights movement, please see:

Rodger Streitmatter, *Unspeakable: The Rise of the Gay and Lesbian Press in America* (Boston, MA: Faber and Faber, 1995).

¹⁶⁷The ONE Institute amassed a noteworthy library on the topic of homosexuality and offered what were likely the first classes in homophile studies in the United States. They received a large donation from Reed Erickson in 1965, which allowed the group to fulfill its mission. Erickson was a female-to-male transsexual who had inherited his family's fortune. He founded the Erickson Educational Foundation in 1964 and poured millions of dollars into LGBT causes. A.H. Devor, "Reed Erickson and the Erickson Educational Foundation," University of Victoria, Canada, accessed August 29, 2014, <http://web.uvic.ca/~erick123/>

¹⁶⁸GPA Consulting, *SurveyLA LGBT Historic Context Statement*, 12.

¹⁶⁹GPA Consulting, *SurveyLA LGBT Historic Context Statement*, 14.

¹⁷⁰Faderman and Timmons, 232.

¹⁷¹David Mixner, attorneys Roberta Bennett and Diane Abbit, and Steve Lachs were key organizing members.

Monica Boulevard.¹⁷² Political organizing by the LGBTQ community increased significantly across the country by the late 1970s with nationwide orange juice boycotts that protested Florida's repeal of an equal rights ordinance for gays and lesbians.

Over the course of the 1970s, gays and lesbians throughout Southern California recognized West Hollywood as "the most visible concentration of gay culture and power in the region."¹⁷³ Many of the community organizations founded in Los Angeles began relocating or focusing their efforts on West Hollywood with its reputation as the center of the LGBTQ community. As the 1970s and 1980s gay rights movement progressed, organizations were more open about listing their addresses and including the name "West Hollywood." According to historian Moira Kenny, "West Hollywood marks the evolution of Los Angeles's gay movement from one focused on short-term responses to crisis within the community to one of creating and sustaining community institutions through alliances with other local constituent groups and residents."¹⁷⁴ The Christopher Street West Parade or LA PRIDE parade moved to Santa Monica Boulevard from Hollywood Boulevard in 1979.¹⁷⁵ The parade was highly visible and attracted the national media. It became a stage used to attract attention to the issues affecting the LGBTQ community.

Boystown, an area that became emblematic of the openness of the gay community in West Hollywood by the mid-1970s, formed gradually at the west end of Santa Monica Boulevard between La Cienega and Robertson Boulevards.¹⁷⁶ The name itself was a derogatory moniker foisted upon the community by straights. The depressed real estate market of West Hollywood during the 1960s and 1970s was crucial to the early development of the area's gay and lesbian neighborhoods and commercial districts.¹⁷⁷ West Hollywood became a place for newcomers and migrants during the 1960s and 1970s partially because of the availability of space and inexpensive



*Pickers at Barney's Beanery, 1969.
(ONE Archives)*

¹⁷²Karen Ocamb, "Weho French Market Place Memoires," Frontiers Media, 2015. Accessed April 22, 2016. <https://www.frontiersmedia.com/frontiers-blog/2015/03/31/weho-french-market-place-memoires/>.

¹⁷³Kenney, 33.

¹⁷⁴Kenney, 46.

¹⁷⁵Christopher Street West Association (CSW) was the first PRIDE organization in the United States to obtain a city permit for its parade.

¹⁷⁶The name may have been a reference to a Spencer Tracy movie from 1948 about a colony of orphaned boys. The original Boystown colony was located in Nebraska (Faderman and Timmons, 231; Kenney, 33).

¹⁷⁷Kenney, 39.

rent. Boystown formed in the stretch of Santa Monica Boulevard where railroad tracks ran through the center of the street and combinations of industrial and commercial spaces bordered pockets of modest residential development from the 1920s, making it less desirable as a retail destination.¹⁷⁸ Despite the gendered name, Boystown was a showcase for all aspects of LGBTQ culture. The Palms (demolished), a noted lesbian bar, was located in the center of Boystown. Studio One, a disco catering to gay men, opened in the former Mitchel Camera factory building on Robertson. For people who came to West Hollywood from less accepting parts of the world, Boystown was a pleasant surprise. Sexually suggestive businesses, with names like the Big Weenie hot dog stand, proliferated in the 1970s. Boutiques capitalized on the scene where men openly flaunted their bodies and sexuality.¹⁷⁹ Other businesses catered to the unique needs of the LGBTQ community, from travel agents to leather fetish shops. Acceptance of the name Boystown within the LGBTQ community has fluctuated over time.

Since World War II, bars have remained the primary public gathering place for the LGBTQ community. John Loughery observed in *The Other Side of Silence*, "the gay bar was an important focus of homosexual life in America, for the practical purposes of seeing new faces and old friends and as an emblem of cultural survival."¹⁸⁰ In West Hollywood, bars for the LGBTQ community, not only gay men, were concentrated along Santa Monica Boulevard, particularly in Boystown.¹⁸¹ Information about locations of LGBTQ-friendly establishments increased after 1965, when a San Francisco businessman by the name of Bob Damron published and sold an address book of the LGBTQ-accepting bars, nightclubs, restaurants, and coffee shops he visited in his travels across the United States.¹⁸² Led by Scott Forbes of Studio One, several LGBTQ bars around greater Los Angeles joined together as the Los Angeles Tavern Guild and sponsored activities for the community throughout the area.¹⁸³ The appearance of bars and nightlife establishments evolved as the community felt more comfortable and safe. Initially, LGBTQ bars were located in older retail or industrial buildings. Owners removed all fenestration and installed rear entrances. Gradually, as persecution and shame diminished, windows were added to the facades. By the mid-1980s, it was not uncommon for the storefronts in Boystown to open entirely on to the sidewalk.

¹⁷⁸The reliance on available space for rent at relatively low costs would become one reason the LGBTQ community united with other residents of West Hollywood in the early 1980s to protect renter's rights and advocate for cityhood.

¹⁷⁹One business that exemplified the Boystown commercial scene was the Ah Men boutique, which opened in 1958, and sold see-through mesh clothing. Owner Don Cook deliberately "...went after the gay trade in West Hollywood" and opened a boutique at 8933 Santa Monica Boulevard. Interestingly, many of these establishments, were owned by people outside the gay community, and therefore were not locations for political or community organizing. Ryan D'Agostino, *Rich Like Them: My Door-to-Door Search for the Secretes of Wealth in America's Richest Neighborhoods* (New York, NY: Little, Brown, 2009); Kenney, 40, 44. Kenney, 40.

¹⁸⁰John Loughery, *The Other Side of Silence: Men's Lives & Gay Identities – A Twentieth Century History* (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Co., 1998); GPA Consulting, *SurveyLA LGBT Historic Context Statement*, 56.

¹⁸¹The Palms (8572 Santa Monica Boulevard, demolished) and Peanuts (7969 Santa Monica Boulevard) catered to lesbians, while Studio One on Robertson catered to gay men. Seedier pick-up locations, such as "Vaseline Alley" were located east of La Cienega. "Vaseline Alley" was located on the south side of Santa Monica Boulevard, running parallel to the boulevard between La Jolla Avenue and Havenhurst Drive.

¹⁸²Damron's Address Book has been updated annually since 1968 and has been called Damron Men's Travel Guide since 1999. GPA Consulting, *SurveyLA LGBT Historic Context Statement*, 56.

¹⁸³One of these events was a "Gay Day" at Disneyland.



Pride Parade on Santa Monica Boulevard, 1986. (Los Angeles Public Library)

The AIDS crisis deeply affected the gay community of West Hollywood. Researchers believe that the virus began spreading between major U.S. cities from 1977 to 1979. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the unusual combination of symptoms that characterize AIDS appeared disproportionately in the gay community, including many men who lived in West Hollywood.¹⁸⁴ Bathhouses and other social gathering places frequented by gay men were identified as common places where the virus was transmitted.¹⁸⁵ County Supervisor Ed Edelman and Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley were reluctant to close the gay establishments in part because of the role the LGBTQ community played in their elections through groups like MECLA.¹⁸⁶ As the crisis escalated, AIDS Project Los Angeles, who held their first event in 1982, continued the advocacy efforts of earlier generations, fighting for medical care, research, and political support for the community. Much of the organized medical and social response, and the activism, including AIDS information centers and public health outreach efforts related to the AIDS crisis took place after 1984, beyond the period of study for this context.

¹⁸⁴Randy Shilts, *And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1987) 142-143.

¹⁸⁵The 8709 Club was owned Sheldon Andelson, a prominent gay man, MECLA fundraiser, and member of University of California's Board of Regents. Andelson died of complications from AIDS in 1988.

¹⁸⁶Shilts, 490.

IMMIGRATION OF SOVIET JEWS

More than 20,000 Soviet emigres found homes in Los Angeles between 1970 and 1990. "Most of them initially found housing in West Hollywood and in the Fairfax District, traditional magnets for Jewish immigration."¹⁸⁷ Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union began arriving in 1963 as refugees. Their immigration was part of a grassroots human rights campaign to help them escape persecution under the communist regime. The Jewish Federation Council and allied nonprofit organizations assisted with the resettlement in the Los Angeles area. With lower rental rates compared with other areas, West Hollywood became a major destination for Jews from the Soviet Union. Assistance groups also believed that older Jewish residents of West Hollywood, who migrated to the United States in the first half of the twentieth century, shared a similar cultural background and language with the Soviet Jews, which would help them adapt to life in the United States.¹⁸⁸ In 1972, the Jewish Federation Council's Community Service Center opened a special Soviet Jewry Information Office at 163 S. Fairfax Avenue in Los Angeles to assist families with the immigration of their relatives.¹⁸⁹ The peak of the Soviet Jewry immigration wave was in the early 1990s.

CITYHOOD

From 1957 to 1966, several failed attempts were made to incorporate the area of West Hollywood into a city. A special committee formed in 1957 found that residents felt resentful of increasing tax dollars funding projects in other areas of the county when attention to West Hollywood was "so direly needed."¹⁹⁰ Plans were filed for incorporation in July 1957, but the effort ended up in a legal limbo when two groups tried to incorporate the same areas; one sought cityhood for all of West Hollywood and another tried to incorporate only the Sunset Strip.¹⁹¹ These groups could not seek incorporation for overlapping jurisdictions.¹⁹² Subsequent petitions were rejected for not having enough signatures in support of incorporation.

A new drive for incorporation began in 1960. The state released a report recommending that California cities annex territory within their boundaries to create jurisdictions that were more consistent. Leaders of the new incorporation movement in West Hollywood wanted to prevent annexation by the City of Los Angeles because it would result in higher property taxes.¹⁹³ Several incorporation filings occurred between 1960 and 1963, but all were rejected for not containing enough signatures.¹⁹⁴ Leaders of the effort said they were distracted during this period by efforts to

¹⁸⁷Mathis Chazanov, "Jewish Community Prepares for Arrival of Soviet Immigrants," *Los Angeles Times*, January 22, 1989.

¹⁸⁸Lyndia Lowy, Interview by Allison Lyons, Personal Interview, West Hollywood, February 10, 2016.

¹⁸⁹"Soviet Jewry Information Available," *Los Angeles Times*, August 27, 1972.

¹⁹⁰"City Status Proposed For West Hollywood District," *Los Angeles Times*, April 21, 1957.

¹⁹¹"West Hollywood Area Files For Incorporation," *Los Angeles Times*, July 3, 1957.

¹⁹²"Proponents of Cityhood in 'Chess Game'," *Los Angeles Times*, January 12, 1958.

¹⁹³"West Hollywood Seeks Cityhood to Block Los Angeles Annexation," *Los Angeles Times*, June 12, 1960; "Residents Will Hear Cityhood Pros, Cons," *Los Angeles Times*, July 24, 1960; "Petitions Ask W. Hollywood Incorporation," *Los Angeles Times*, July 31, 1960; "2,500 Want To Make West Hollywood City," *Los Angeles Times*, August 5, 1960.

¹⁹⁴"W. Hollywood Incorporation Move Fizzles," *Los Angeles Times*, September 18, 1960.

fight a proposed Beverly Hills freeway that would have bisected West Hollywood. The freeway was successfully opposed.¹⁹⁵

The City of Los Angeles revived its annexation plans in 1966, leading to a new West Hollywood incorporation plan to resist the move from "one political morass to another."¹⁹⁶ Attorney David Leanse, and businessmen Ronald L. Buck and Milton R. Bren led the effort. Both those for and against incorporation worried about law enforcement issues following the curfew riots of 1966.¹⁹⁷ The Sheriff's Department patrolled the West Hollywood area, but residents and business owners were concerned about shouldering the costs associated with contracting the sheriff's services as an independent city and increasing the number of deputies needed if another riot occurred.¹⁹⁸ The West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce opposed incorporation because of the potential to raise property taxes.¹⁹⁹ The Montgomery brothers, who owned the Sunset Plaza shopping area, vehemently opposed incorporation for tax reasons as well.²⁰⁰ Though several efforts to gather signatures were mounted from 1966 through 1967, the effort came to a halt in 1967. David Leanse, explained "...the incorporation attempt was abandoned because 'in great measure' the agencies and commissions of the county rallied to correct the 'aggrieved' conditions in and around the Strip."²⁰¹



New city council members and constituents celebrating the City's formation, November 1984. (Los Angeles Public Library)

In the late 1970s, concern over the countywide rent control law, which was set to expire in 1985, pushed a new drive for the West Hollywood area's incorporation.²⁰² Ron Stone, who was also a gay rights activist, led the drive that resulted in successful incorporation in 1984. Other leaders of the LGBTQ community were reluctant to get involved until the 1980s. The drive for West Hollywood's

¹⁹⁵Pete Searls, "Area Drive For Cityhood Under Study: Notice Of Intent Filed By Citizen, Business Group Cityhood," *Los Angeles Times*, September 26, 1963; "Cityhood Backers Suffer Setback," *Los Angeles Times*, February 20, 1964; "W. Hollywood Cityhood Drive To Start Again," *Los Angeles Times*, March 5, 1964.

¹⁹⁶"L.A. Will Protest Incorporation of West Hollywood," *Los Angeles Times*, November 6, 1966.

¹⁹⁷Tom Goff, "Defense Against Teen-Agers: Petitioners Seek Cityhood for Sunset Strip," *Los Angeles Times*, October 27, 1966.

¹⁹⁸Ken Reich, "Petitions Delayed for Incorporation of Strip: Holiday Season Cited; Opposition Group Starts," *Los Angeles Times*, December 1, 1966.

¹⁹⁹"West Hollywood C of C Opposes Incorporation," *Los Angeles Times*, December 29, 1966.

²⁰⁰Francis J. and George F. Montgomery, "Annexation Row," *Los Angeles Times*, March 3, 1968; Seymour Beubis, "Strip Braces for New Attempt at Annexation," *Los Angeles Times*, February 18, 1968.

²⁰¹"Correction of Faults Along 'Strip' Ends West Hollywood City Drive," *Los Angeles Times*, November 19, 1967.

²⁰²Gierach, 94.

incorporation was not focused on creating an LGBTQ city; it was a coalition of liberal activists who shared a concern for renter's rights. Local leaders worried that the area, situated between several wealthy enclaves, would become the site of massive redevelopment, losing low-rent apartments. Estimates in the late 1970s calculated that 85 to 90 percent of the West Hollywood area's residents were renters.²⁰³ In 1978, 50 percent of the area's residents were Jewish and 30 percent of the residents identified as gay.²⁰⁴ A group called the Coalition for Economic Survival (CES) was a major force behind incorporation, mobilizing and fighting for tenant's rights. Led by Larry Gross, the CES had focused on tenant's rights issues in the South Central and Pico Union areas of Los Angeles.²⁰⁵ *Frontiers*, a local gay magazine published by Bob Craig began supporting incorporation as a way to increase circulation, which encouraged two local groups, the Stonewall Gay and Lesbian Democratic Club and the Harvey Milk Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club to support incorporation.²⁰⁶ While renter's rights were a major focus of the incorporation efforts, when West Hollywood officially incorporated as a city in 1984, "lesbian and gay issues defined early city politics." The first official act of the City Council was to pass an ordinance banning discrimination against lesbians and gays.²⁰⁷

Architectural Trends

The period between 1966 and 1984 was not an era of major architectural development in West Hollywood. Though the first phase of the Pacific Design Center complex began in 1975, few other architecturally distinctive commercial buildings were constructed during this time. Development trends favored strip malls, usually two-story, stucco commercial buildings separated from the street by a parking lot. Several of these commercial buildings were constructed along Santa Monica Boulevard. As in the previous era, buildings from the pre-1946 period were altered to fit modern aesthetics and sensibilities, especially in the interior design district along Melrose Avenue and La Cienega Boulevard. The two most common architectural styles for new construction during the period were Late Modern and Post Modern. Although a few existing commercial buildings in West Hollywood exhibit Post Modern style alterations, there are no prime examples. Therefore, Post Modernism is not discussed in this theme. The Late Modern style is discussed below.

LATE MODERN

Popular during late 1960s and early 1970s, Late Modernism was a reaction to the literal functionality and increasingly cheap construction of Mid-Century Modern style designs. Late Modernism is characterized by sculptural forms that deviate from the box-like quality of earlier Modern designs. Designs in the style utilized the new generation of reflecting glass that had been put on the market in 1963. The glass skin became the defining material of Late Modern architecture. Large commercial

²⁰³Kenney, 46.

²⁰⁴Gierach, 90.

²⁰⁵Gierach, 91.

²⁰⁶Kenney, 47.

²⁰⁷Kenney, 50.

complexes and office towers were designed in the style; one of the foremost examples in West Hollywood is the Pacific Design Center, designed by Cesar Pelli in 1975.

Pelli was a member of a sub-group of the Late Modern movement called the Silvers, which emerged in Los Angeles in 1974. The Silvers consisted of Tim Vreeland, dean of UCLA's School of Architecture, as well as architects Cesar Pelli, Anthony Lumsden, Eugene Kupper, Paul Kennon, and Frank Dimster. The group emerged after a 1974 conference at UCLA called "Four Days in May." Two groups of New York-based architects, the "Whites" and the "Grays," attended the conference. The "Whites" were a group of Late Modernists who were strongly interested in early Modern ideas. Their work focused on residential designs. The "Grays," had more eclectic tendencies that evolved into the Post Modern movement. Vreeland and the other Los Angeles-based architects decided call themselves "The Silvers." The Silvers represented one of the first times in the history of Los Angeles that a group of architects met under one name based (loosely) upon shared design characteristics. They focused on global, larger-scale commissions, including shopping mall architecture.

Character-defining features of the Late Modern style include:

- Futuristic, High-Tech Aesthetics
- "Megastructures"
- Sculptural, cut-out or chamfered Platonic forms
- Long, sloping roofs
- Exterior compositions employing 45 degree angles
- Smooth, shiny surfaces of continuous glass, metal, or ceramic tile.
- All-over mirror or reflecting glass skins set in a smooth grid of mullions
- Lack of traditional ornament or Classical references
- Pipe railings, often chrome or colored
- Accents of saturated colors

While Mid-Century Modern style buildings continued to be constructed after 1965, their designs often incorporated the reflective glass released on the market in 1963. The glass became a hallmark of Late Modern commercial buildings. Beginning in the late 1960s, architects like Vreeland, Pelli and Lumsden began to suppress the projecting aluminum mullions of their glass curtain walls, to try to create uninterrupted planes of glass that they referred to as skin buildings.

Associated Property Types

Between 1966 and 1984, four distinct business and cultural communities were identified within the West Hollywood area. These communities adapted existing buildings to suit their needs. The interior design industry became a major force in the area. Its imprint on the built environment was felt in the continuous alteration and adaptation of buildings in the southeast section of West Hollywood and by the Pacific Design Center after the completion of the first building in 1975. The Sunset Strip and scattered clubs around the area catered to the youth culture, music, and arts scenes. Most clubs opened in commercial buildings constructed during earlier periods, often in former nightclubs from the 1930s and 1940s. The LGBTQ community found a home in West Hollywood's early nightlife scene of the 1920s and 1930s, but the community grew in size and openness during the period between 1966 and 1984. Part of Santa Monica Boulevard became known as Boystown. Though the buildings used by the LGBTQ community dated to earlier periods, spaces like Boystown became representative of the community's assertion of its right to identify publically as homosexuals. LGBTQ bars reflected the transition from hiding their identity to increasing openness, pride, and acceptance. Most of the bars were located in small, unadorned buildings with no windows to hide what was going on inside. Over time, the bars re-opened their façades; walls that infilled storefronts have been changed to panes of glass, open French doors, and outside seating. Finally, West Hollywood became the center of the Russian Jewish immigrant population, who settled in the area because of lower rents and connections between the existing Jewish population and settlement agencies.



Pacific Design Center, 1980. (Los Angeles Public Library)

As in the previous era, property types associated with this period are scattered throughout the city and include low-rise commercial buildings and high-rise hotel and office buildings. With relatively scarce undeveloped land, the adaptation of existing buildings became the regular pattern as new communities converged in West Hollywood. Many of the buildings representing this period of West Hollywood's development were constructed as streetcar commercial buildings or nightclubs in earlier periods. The exceptions are the Pacific Design Center, a significant Late Modern-style complex designed for the interior design industry. The mega block complex was constructed on the former site of the Sherman railyard and car house. Property types associated with this period are most commonly low-rise buildings found in the commercial corridors of Sunset and Santa Monica Boulevards. Very few of the property types associated with this period are buildings originally constructed between 1966 and 1984. Most resources are located in buildings constructed during earlier periods and were adapted to serve new uses as the West Hollywood area evolved.

Eligibility Standards

Eligible resources dating to the period of development between 1966 and 1984 reflect a period when West Hollywood was associated with creative and diverse lifestyles. Commercial corridors became associated with cultural movements, from the music scene on the Sunset Strip to the Boystown district on Santa Monica Boulevard. The period culminated with the founding of the City of West Hollywood in 1984. An eligible resource or district must have been important in the commercial, institutional, and architectural development of the city during this period. Examples may include buildings constructed in earlier periods associated with businesses, events, and important individuals who achieved significance in the period between 1966 and 1984.

To be eligible under the Modern West Hollywood 1966 - 1984 theme, an individual property or district should:

- Be associated with a business, organization, or industry that made important contributions to commercial or institutional growth and development of West Hollywood; or
- Be the primary location of an important business and/or was the primary place of work of an individual important within the theme of commercial development in West Hollywood during the period of significance; or
- Be emblematic of or constructed directly in response to cultural developments that occurred in West Hollywood during the period of significance; or
- Be fully realized example of the style or property type, displaying the significant character-defining features of a style or property type in multiple aspects of design; and
- Date from the period of significance; and
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity

INTEGRITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, Materials, and Association from the period of significance
- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant business, industry, or events took place at the property or the period of initial construction reflecting the original design and architectural character of the resource
- Setting may be compromised by nearby construction that post-dates the period of significance
- The majority of the resource's materials and design features from the period of significance must remain intact and visible, including wall cladding, windows, fenestration pattern, roof features, and details related to its architectural style.