



Supplemental Historic Resources Survey Report Industrial Zone Properties in the San Pedro Community Plan Area



Prepared for:

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



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Project Overview

This supplemental historic resources survey report (“Supplemental Survey Report”) summarizes additional field work conducted for SurveyLA in the industrially-zoned areas of the San Pedro Community Plan Area (CPA).¹ This survey report is to be used in conjunction with the main survey report and associated appendices for this CPA, published in July 2012.² All survey work was conducted according to SurveyLA methodology as discussed in the San Pedro main survey report.

Project Team

Additional survey work in the San Pedro CPA was conducted by Historic Resources Group. Personnel included Kari Michele Fowler, Senior Preservation Planner; Christine Lazzaretto, Principal; Heather Goers, Architectural Historian; and Robby Aranguren, Planning Associate. Additional assistance was provided by intern Scott Watson. Kari Fowler served as the project manager.

Survey Area

Description of Industrial Zone Areas

The survey area (“Survey Area”) includes approximately 423 industrially-zoned parcels in the San Pedro CPA. Of these, approximately 351 parcels were surveyed by SurveyLA. SurveyLA generally does not include properties constructed after 1980, or resources that have been designated under Federal, state, or local programs. The map below illustrates the boundaries of the CPA and the location of industrially-zoned parcels.

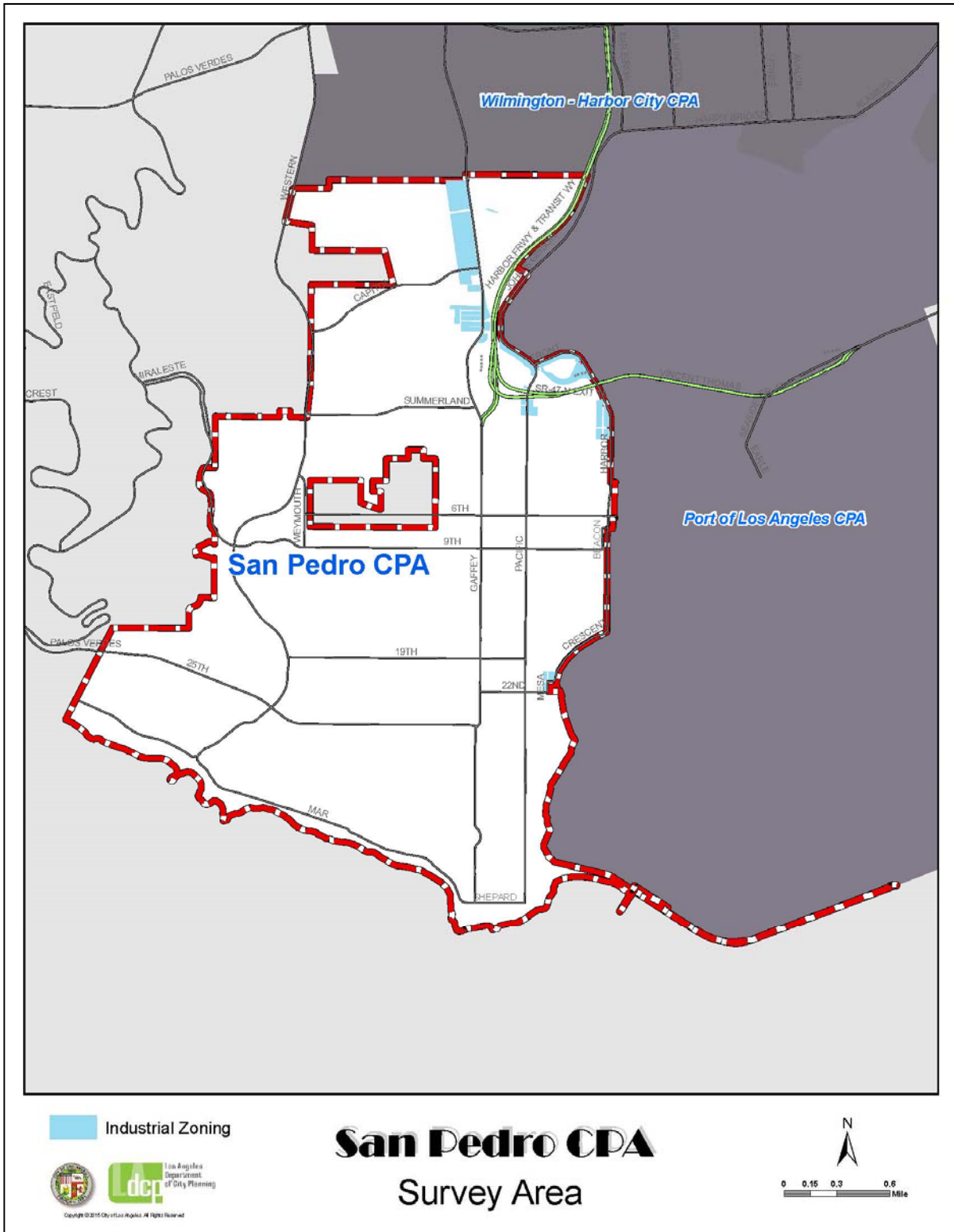
The Survey Area includes parcels within the CPA that were zoned industrial at the time of the survey. It includes industrial property types, but may also include other uses and associated property types such as residential, commercial, and institutional.

Industrial areas in the San Pedro CPA are situated primarily in the northeastern corner of the survey area, adjacent to the Port of Los Angeles. Concentrations of industrial properties occur along North Gaffey Street, which parallels the railroad line, from parcels north of Westmont Drive south to Miraflores Avenue. Additional concentrations are sited along the rail line further south, on Shields and Knoll Drives. Other pockets of

¹ When this CPA was originally surveyed for SurveyLA, the Industrial Development context for the Citywide Historic Context Statement had not been developed. Therefore, industrially-zoned parcels could not be surveyed at that time. The context has since been completed. For this reason, survey teams have returned to this CPA to survey industrial parcels.

² The main survey report and all appendices for the San Pedro CPA can be found at <http://preservation.lacity.org/surveyla-findings-and-reports>.

Survey Area Map with Industrially-Zoned Parcels.



industrial development on Beacon Street and Pacific Avenue are located near, but not directly adjacent to, rail lines and freeways. Industrial resources within the CPA are limited to these small concentrations of properties. The vast majority of industrial resources in the San Pedro area are related to the development of the Port of Los Angeles. However, most of these industrially-zoned parcels fall outside the boundaries of the San Pedro CPA. As the Port of Los Angeles completes historic resources surveys within their area of jurisdiction, no surveys of the Port were conducted for SurveyLA.

Industrial Zone Areas Development History

Industrial development as well as the local economy in and around San Pedro have been largely driven by the presence of the Port of Los Angeles. The development of overseas shipping, fishing, canning, and other maritime concerns in the area were all motivated by the demands and resources of the port, which is one of the largest and busiest deep-water ports in the world.

The Port of Los Angeles began as a quiet natural harbor ringed with Gabrieleno-Tongva villages.³ No permanent European use or development of the bay took place until the early 1770s, when Spanish missionaries established Mission San Gabriel Arcangel some 40 miles inland. The missionaries used the harbor in San Pedro as a trading post and the first landings, docks, and wharves in San Pedro Bay were constructed during this time period. After gaining independence from Spain, Mexico lifted Spain's trade restrictions in 1822, leading to rapid growth of settlement and commercial operations in the San Pedro area. By the time California joined the United States in 1848, San Pedro was well-established as a port of trade and a transportation hub.

Delaware native Phineas Banning arrived in San Pedro in 1851 and proceeded to spearhead much of the port's development. After an 1857 storm destroyed his San Pedro wharf, Banning founded the town of New San Pedro (later renamed Wilmington) and moved his base of operations there. Banning's new location required the creation of a shallow harbor, excavated from the mud flats, as well as the construction of a new wharf, which was completed in 1858.

Banning's plans began bearing fruit with the completion of the Los Angeles and San Pedro Railroad (LA&SP) line between Wilmington and Los Angeles in 1869, enabling quicker shipment of goods and passengers. In 1871, Banning's political efforts resulted in U.S. Congressional approval of funds for major harbor improvements. Business at the improved port accelerated, and by 1885 it was handling 500,000 tons of cargo annually. The City formally acquired the harbor and its facilities in 1906 by annexing a mile-wide strip of land, known as "The Shoestring," running the sixteen miles between the

³ The following discussion of the history and development of the Port of Los Angeles has been adapted and excerpted from the industrial context statement prepared by LSA Associates for SurveyLA. See LSA Associates, "Draft Historic Context Statement, SurveyLA Industrial Development, City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California." Prepared for the City of Los Angeles, August 26, 2011.

southern city boundary and Wilmington/San Pedro. It later consolidated the harbor cities as well. In 1907, the City Council created the Board of Harbor Commissioners and officially founded the Port of Los Angeles.

Development of the port proceeded apace in anticipation of the 1914 completion of the Panama Canal and the fundamental changes in shipping patterns it would bring. The major port development of the early 1900s involved extensive dredging, completion of the large breakwater, wharf construction, placement of the Los Angeles Harbor Light, also known as Angels Gate Lighthouse, and establishment of a municipal pier and wholesale fish market. Improvements to port facilities continued into the early twentieth century, culminating in the construction of the first warehouse in 1915, one year after the opening of the Panama Canal, which substantially increased the port's profile. Port development slowed with the United States' entry into World War I, and shipbuilding became the dominant activity. Shipbuilding grew in importance after the passing of the Merchant Marine Act in 1916, which led to the creation of a merchant marine fleet. By 1918, the port had at least four shipbuilding yards employing over 20,000 workers.

After the war, shipbuilding slowed significantly but shipping traffic at the port skyrocketed as stockpiled goods began to be moved, and booms in construction required more materials. Lumber was a particularly ubiquitous import, coming from the Pacific Northwest to fuel the Los Angeles building boom. Oil production and storage had been taking place in the area since the turn of the century, but became a major port industry after the discovery of nearby oil fields in 1921. By the 1920s, commercial fishing had become one of the principal activities at the harbor, and San Pedro reportedly became the largest supplier of canned fish in the United States. The plentiful supply of fish, industrious canneries, and good railroad connections (not to mention cunning promotions that created a market for tuna) made the port the leading commercial fishing center in the nation.

A \$15 million bond issue for harbor improvement, passed in 1923, funded improvements which enabled port commerce to expand beyond lumber, oil, and fish, gave rise to direct trade with Asian markets (which had previously gone only through San Francisco and Seattle), and signaled a major shift to truck transportation of goods in addition to rail transportation. They also led to an increase in passenger traffic, with ships carrying people everywhere from Catalina Island to the other side of the world.

Port commerce slowed in the Great Depression, and harbor improvements scaled back. Several years later, World War II dramatically changed the face of the port, as every shipyard of every size shifted to the construction and maintenance of ships for the war effort. The port continued serving as a shipping hub during the war, with very limited international trade but with millions of tons of war materials and equipment coming through the area. The port quickly returned to normal operations at the end of 1945, including extensive repairs and maintenance that had been deferred during the war, and expanded into the now-vacant land that had once contained hundreds of Japanese-

American residences. Shipping of lumber and other materials increased to meet the demands of the postwar construction boom, and the harbor continued to build up and develop through the late 1940s and 1950s. In 1959, voters approved a measure authorizing the Harbor Department to finance harbor improvements with revenue bonds, leading to a large-scale replacement of older terminals and the renovation of many of the terminals that survived.

With the advent of containerization, where cargo was moved from place to place in large standardized containers, the port experienced a significant change in the way it operated. The use of these large containers meant changes in cargo ships and in port infrastructure; wharves had to be modified to support the increased weight of tons of containers, to store large amounts of cargo in the open instead of in warehouses, and to accommodate the new larger ships. Most of the wharves in the port were eventually rebuilt with concrete to handle the increased loads. By the late 1960s, the Port of Los Angeles had converted its infrastructure to adapt to containerization and was solidly established as a modern industrial hub. This conversion resulted in significant and widespread changes to its built environment, as existing facilities were modified or demolished to make way for new construction on an unprecedented scale.

The 1960s also saw the beginning decline of canning operations at the Port as the largest operations, Van Camp and Star-Kist, began establishing other canneries overseas. By 1975, most of the port's canneries had been bought out by multinational corporations. By the mid-1980s many of their operations had moved out of Los Angeles. The last plant, Chicken of the Sea, closed in 2001. Port development continued over the years and included dredging and widening the Main Channel to accommodate ever-larger cargo ships, creating new landfill from the dredged sediments to increase storage space, construction of new terminals, and general maintenance and upgrading.

As the Port of Los Angeles developed over time, a secondary support industry evolved as well, both at the Port itself and in the adjacent community of San Pedro. Many businesses and manufacturing operations were established to meet the demands of the Port community for services and supplies. Operations included brick yards, lumber companies, gas plants, laundry plants, trucking and shipping services and supplies, boat building, marine salvage yards, warehouses, and various railroad-related facilities. These support services flourished during the early years of the development of the port. However, over time many of the physical resources of these operations have been demolished or converted to other uses, including residential, commercial, and manufacturing functions.

Summary of Findings

The following discussion of Contexts, Themes and Property Types relates to resources on industrially-zoned parcels identified and recorded as eligible for designation.

Summary of Property Types

In the San Pedro CPA only one industrial property was documented and evaluated as significant, as outlined below. Additionally, one institutional building situated on an industrially-zoned parcel was also evaluated.

Summary of Contexts and Themes

Due to the limited number of industrially-zoned parcels in the survey area, only one of the themes developed for the Industrial Development context of the SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement is represented in the San Pedro CPA. Additionally, an Institutional theme is also represented.

For a list of all resources identified in the Survey Area, see the *San Pedro Community Plan Area Industrial Zone Properties Supplemental Appendices* at <http://preservation.lacity.org/surveyla-findings-and-reports>.

Context: Industrial Development, 1850-1980

Theme: Early Industrial Development, 1880-1945

This theme was used to evaluate a rare example of early-20th century industrial development in San Pedro. Originally constructed in 1910 as Golden State Laundry, this building housed a laundry plant that washed clothes and linens for cargo ships calling at the Port of Los Angeles. Later operating as Pacific Laundry Co., the laundry plant was in continuous operation until 1953, when the building became a warehouse for Harbor Ship Supply, a ship chandler. In 1995, the building was converted into artist lofts. Today, this property is one of few examples of industrial development remaining from the early 20th century, as well as a rare remaining example associated with the shipping industry in San Pedro.



Address: 401 S. Mesa Street
Name: Golden State Laundry; Pacific Laundry Co.
Date: 1910



Address: 401 S. Mesa Street
Name: Golden State Laundry; Pacific Laundry Co.
Date: 1910

Context: Public and Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980
Sub-Context: Government Infrastructure and Services, 1850-1980
Theme: Government Administration Buildings and Centers, 1904-1970
Sub-Theme: Post WWII Branch City Halls and Administration Centers, 1957-1970

This theme was used to evaluate an excellent example of a 1960s county administration building situated on an industrially-zoned parcel in San Pedro. Constructed in 1968, this highly-intact office building was developed as part of a citywide program to improve access to government services. The San Pedro County Building consolidates various county offices, including the San Pedro Courthouse, Los Angeles County Sheriff, and a Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors field office.



Address: 505 s. Centre Street
Name: San Pedro County Building
Date: 1968



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Name: San Pedro County Building
Date: 1968

For Further Reading

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