



Supplemental Historic Resources Survey Report Industrial Zone Properties in the Wilmington-Harbor City Community Plan Area



Prepared for:

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Office of Historic Resources



Prepared by:



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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 Wilmington-Harbor City 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 Wilmington-Harbor City main survey report.

Project Team

Additional survey work in the Wilmington-Harbor City CPA was conducted by GPA Consulting. Personnel included Teresa Grimes, Principal Architectural Historian; Allison Lyons, Associate Architectural Historian; and Elysha Paluszek, Architectural Historian II. As-needed field work assistance was provided by Katie Rispoli, intern. Teresa Grimes served as the project manager.

Survey Area

Description of Industrial Areas

The survey area (“Survey Area”) includes approximate 4,189 industrially-zoned parcels. They are located in concentrated pockets throughout the Wilmington-Harbor City CPA. Of these, approximately 3,770 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.

Industrially-zoned parcels in the Wilmington-Harbor City CPA consist of a mix of industrial and non-industrial uses, though the former predominates. Industrially-zoned parcels are scattered throughout the CPA but are primarily located in the southern and eastern portions. The Los Angeles Harbor Industrial Center Redevelopment Area is comprised of 232 acres and is generally located south of Anaheim Street, east of Broad Avenue, and north and west of Alameda Street. The majority of the parcels in this portion of the CPA are, therefore, zoned industrial. Many of these properties consist 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.

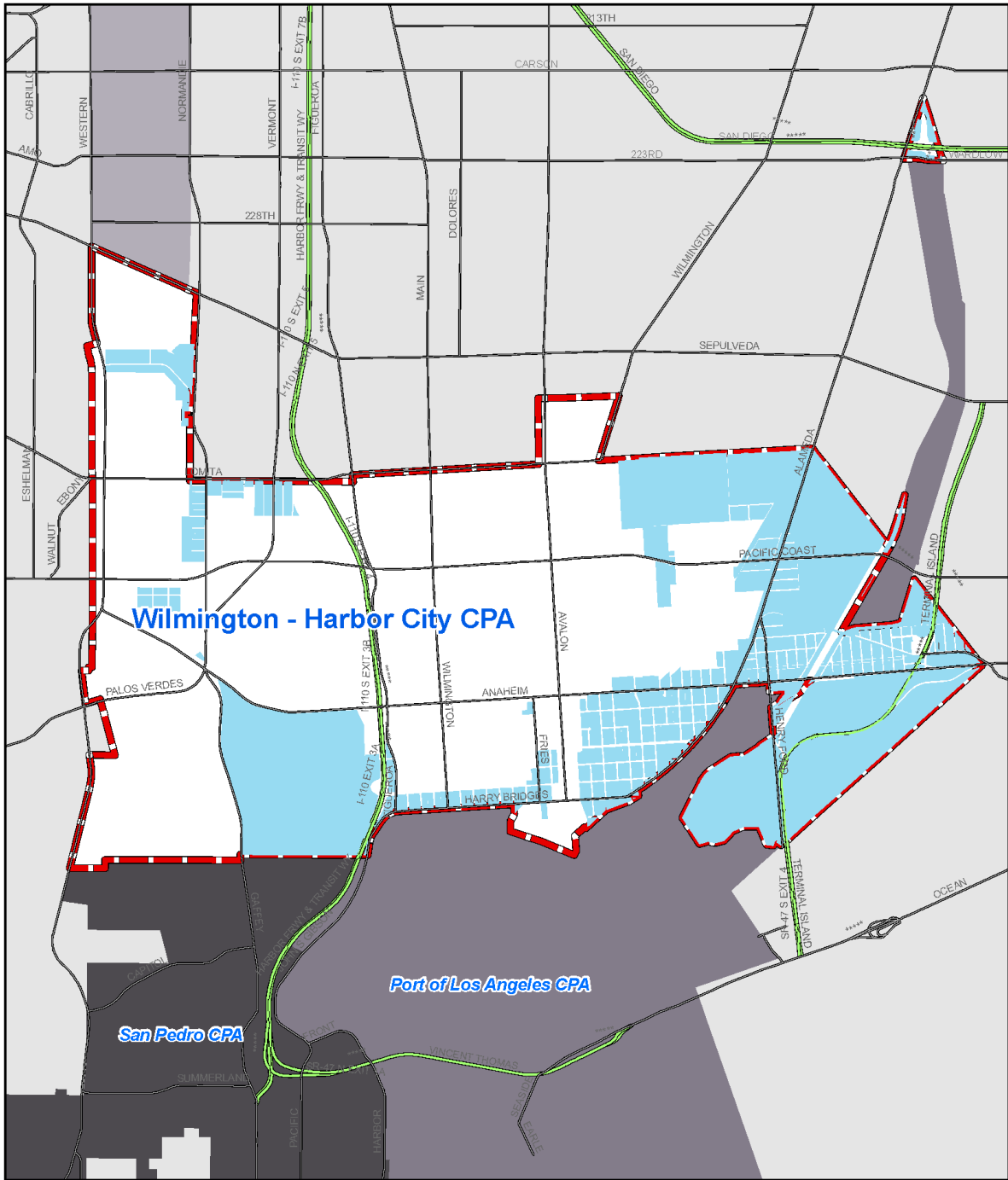
² The main survey report and all appendices for the Wilmington-Harbor City CPA can be found at <http://preservation.lacity.org/survey-la-findings-and-reports>.

uses related to the port or railroad, including shipping or storage. Alameda Street, a historic railroad shipping corridor, runs diagonally through the eastern portion of the CPA. Also located in this portion of the CPA are properties related to the oil industry.

Industrially-zoned properties located in the vicinity of Avalon Boulevard to the south of E Street include commercial and industrial uses. Low-rise commercial buildings are concentrated along Avalon Boulevard. Some of the parcels in this area are related to railroads that no longer remain, though the outline of the tracks is reflected in the shape of parcel lines to the west of Avalon Boulevard. Railroad lines are extant along McFarland Avenue and Alameda Street further east. A small number of residential buildings remain in this portion of the CPA as well. Much of the industrial land to the east of Alameda Street is devoted to oil-related properties, small warehouses, or vacant storage land associated with industrial buildings.

Industrial properties in the Wilmington-Harbor City CPA include warehouses, industrial lofts, buildings and complexes related to oil refineries, Quonset huts, and metal shops. A number of non-industrial parcels are zoned industrial, including union halls and low-rise commercial buildings.

Survey Area Map with Industrially-Zoned Parcels

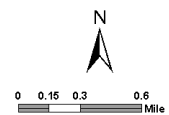


Industrial Zoning



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Wilmington - Harbor City CPA
Survey Area



Industrial-Zoned Area Development History

The industrial development of Wilmington dates to the early days of the community. Phineas Banning, who was ultimately influential in the development of Wilmington, began constructing a wharf and warehouses soon after his arrival in the area in the early 1850s. Banning wanted to create a port in the area. The wharf, which he named New San Pedro, opened in 1858 at the foot of what is now Avalon Boulevard. The town of New San Pedro was founded the same year. The name of the town was changed to Wilmington in 1863 after Banning's hometown of Wilmington, Delaware.³

Industrial development continued near the waterfront in the 1860s. The opening of the Los Angeles and San Pedro Railroad after the Civil War ensured the continued development of Wilmington as a shipping facility. The railroad followed present day Alameda Street and connected Wilmington with Los Angeles. Alameda Street eventually developed as a major railroad connector between the port and the industrial areas south of downtown Los Angeles. Wilmington became the area's primary port town, bypassing San Pedro due to its transportation system, which the latter lacked.

The town's industrial development slowed after the Southern Pacific Railroad gained control of the Los Angeles and San Pedro Railroad and extended the line beyond Wilmington to San Pedro. The latter had also been chosen as the location for Los Angeles' harbor. Much of the city's commercial and industrial foundation in Wilmington moved to San Pedro following this decision. Industrial development slowed but remained south of what is now Harry Bridges Boulevard (then First Street). It remained largely related to the wharf and consisted of buildings such as warehouses and the railroad depot.⁴

Industrial development took off again after the discovery of oil on nearby Rancho San Pedro in 1920 and the Wilmington Oil Field in 1932. The Wilmington Oil Field is the third largest oil field in the contiguous United States; it is thirteen miles long and three miles wide. It stretches from the northwest to the southeast and from San Pedro to Torrance. Wilmington became a local hub of the oil industry with the construction of refineries and other facilities. Other industries in the area included canneries and small-scale manufacturing. The industries established in the 1920s, such as shipping and oil, remain in the area to this day.

The history of labor is integral to the CPA due to its proximity to the port. Local labor unions were influential in what was referred to as the Big Strike, which originated in San Francisco in 1934 and spread to other West Coast ports. Harry Bridges Boulevard, a major thoroughfare in the CPA, was named for the Austrian-born American union leader, first with the International Longshoremen's Association. He played a prominent

³ Summarized from Galvin Preservation Associates, "SurveyLA Historic Resources Survey Report: Wilmington-Harbor City Community Plan Area," July 2012, 6-7.

⁴ Excerpted from Galvin Preservation Associates, "SurveyLA Historic Resources Survey Report: Wilmington-Harbor City Community Plan Area," July 2012, 7.

role in the Big Strike. By the 1950s, Wilmington was known for its influential labor unions. Numerous local headquarters for maritime unions are located in the area.⁵

Industrial property types in the Wilmington-Harbor City CPA are dominated by those related to the shipping and the oil industries. They also include warehouses, industrial lofts, small-scale manufacturing, and properties related to the railroad such as a depot. Only a few large-scale industrial complexes were found.

⁵ For a more in depth discussion of the Big Strike and labor history in Wilmington, refer to the main survey report for the Wilmington-Harbor City CPA.

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

The Wilmington-Harbor City CPA contains a range of extant industrial property types, representing a number of periods of development. Industrial property types that were documented and evaluated as historically, culturally, or architecturally significant include an industrial loft, a warehouse, a railroad depot, a metal shop, and two Quonset huts. Other property types located on industrially-zoned parcels that were documented and evaluated as significant include a gas station, a former post office, and two labor union halls.

Summary of Context and Themes

Several of the Contexts and Themes developed for the SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement are represented in the industrially-zoned areas in the Wilmington-Harbor City CPA. The following is a representative sampling of some of the more common Context/Theme combinations used in the survey, as well as some examples that are specific to this part of the city. Each Context/Theme is illustrated with specific examples from the Survey Area.

For a list of all resources identified in the Survey Area see the *Wilmington-Harbor City Community Plan Area Industrial-Zoned Area Supplemental Appendices* at SurveyLA.org.

Context: Industrial Development, 1850-1980
Theme: Industrial Design and Engineering, 1892-1965

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate properties that are excellent examples of an industrial property type, such as industrial lofts. Only one example of a property under this Context/Theme was found in the Wilmington-Harbor City CPA. The property at 315 N. Marine Avenue was constructed in 1926 as a wholesale grocery warehouse for Smart and Final Grocer. Industrial lofts are characterized by their multi-story height, rectangular massing, and bays of multi-light industrial sash windows.



Address: 315 N. Marine Avenue

Date: 1926

Context: Industrial Development, 1850-1980
Theme: Freight Rail Transportation, 1876-1920

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate an early railroad depot associated with the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad. Rail transportation was instrumental in the industrial development of Wilmington due to its proximity to the Port of Los Angeles.



Address: 711 E. Anaheim Street

Date: 1935

Name: Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad
Depot

Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980

Theme: Neighborhood Commercial Development, 1875-1960

Sub-Theme: Neighborhood Commercial Centers, 1875-1960

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate the Avalon Boulevard Commercial Planning District South, the southern portion of Wilmington’s commercial center, which began developing in the early twentieth century. The area was recorded as a planning district since it did not have the necessary integrity to qualify as a historic district. The northern portion of the planning district was recorded during the survey of the Wilmington-Harbor City CPA in 2012.



Location: Avalon Boulevard between E Street and Harry Bridges Boulevard
Name: Avalon Boulevard Commercial Planning District South



Location: Avalon Boulevard between E Street and Harry Bridges Boulevard
Name: Avalon Boulevard Commercial Planning District South

Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980

Theme: Commercial Development and the Automobile, 1910-1980

Sub-Theme: The Car and Car Services, 1910-1960

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate an automobile service station. It was one of the few found in the area with integrity. Service stations from the 1930 and 1940s represent early commercial development dedicated to the service and accommodation of the automobile in the built environment.



Address: 807 N. Sanford Avenue

Date: ca.1935

Context: Public and Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980

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

Theme: Federal Infrastructure and Services, 1850-1980

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

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate what was previously the Wilmington Post Office. It is an excellent example of an early post office and represents the area's commercial and institutional development.



Address: 301 N. Avalon Boulevard

Date: ca.1925

Name: Wilmington Post Office

Context: Public and Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980
Sub-Context: Social Clubs and Organizations, 1850-1980
Theme: Social Clubs and Ethnic/Cultural Associations, 1850-1980

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate the Union Mutualista de San Jose, a social hall associated with the area's Latino community. Though the existing building was constructed in 1955, the mutualista was founded in 1921. In addition to being a gathering place for the community, the mutualista provided aid to Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans during the 1920s, a period when Latinos often could not find assistance through other means.



Address: 1023 N. Henry Ford Avenue
Date: 1955
Name: Union Mutualista de San Jose

Context: Other Context, 1850-1980

Theme: Event or Series of Events, 1850-1980

The Other Context is used to capture unusual or unique property types for which a specific context/theme has not yet been developed.⁶ In the Wilmington CPA, this Context/Theme was used to evaluate union halls related to labor history and a metal shop that made parts for the shipping industry, rather than the building materials industry.



Address: 122 E. D Street
Date: 1947
Name: Longshoremen's Dispatch Hall



Address: 903-913 N. Mahar Avenue
Date: 1930
Name: Wilmington Bowl



Address: 245 N. Fries Avenue
Date: 1917
Name: Wilmington Transfer and Storage Company

⁶ The Labor History theme is currently in development.

For Further Reading

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