



# City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement

*Prepared for:*

**City of Riverside Community and Economic Development Department**  
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**COVER PHOTOS, FROM TOP LEFT, CLOCKWISE:**

- (1) Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, 1929-present, Eastside
- (2) Anita Avila with three of her nieces, daughters of Jess and Lupe Avila (Catherine Avila-Sanchez, Stella Avila-Sanchez, and Mary Lou Avila de la Torre), circa 1945 in Riverside
- (3) Cinco de Mayo in Casa Blanca, 1910
- (4) Dario and Ysmael Villegas, before service in World War II in the Philippines

**PLEASE CITE THIS STUDY AS FOLLOWS:**

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- C “Guide to Using the Multiple Property Document Form,” Excerpt, Latinos in Twentieth Century California, OHP, 2015

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# 1 Introduction

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The *Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement* was prepared by Rincon Consultants at the request of the City of Riverside Community and Economic Development Department. The study was funded through the Certified Local Government (CLG) program of the State Office of Historic Preservation.

Riverside is home to one of the oldest, most cohesive Latino communities in California. Across generations, this community was built by pioneering immigrants, migrant workers and families, community organizers and civil rights leaders, teachers and artists, business owners and volunteers. For well over a century, the Latino community in Riverside has made a vital, immeasurable contribution to the City's growth and prosperity.

In this way, the history of Riverside's Latino community *is* the history of Riverside itself. From the era of Spanish-language settlements at Agua Mansa and La Placita, to the influx of settlers who helped build the transcontinental railroad and citrus industry, fought for their country in two World Wars, Korea, and Vietnam, to those who raised families in an era of segregation and discrimination, Latinos in Riverside built a community that has endured for over a century.

Although the history of Riverside's ethnic communities "runs as deep as the urban fabric of the City itself,"<sup>1</sup> few context-driven studies have been completed that help broaden our knowledge of Latino heritage and history. Several historic surveys have occurred in neighborhoods with long-time Latino communities. To date, however, no citywide survey has focused solely on Latino history. This document provides a key tool for doing so in the future. Applying this framework in evaluations will help ensure that the potential significance of Latino-related resources is adequately considered. This document provides not only a history of Riverside's Latino community but also a comprehensive, proactive method for identifying Latino-related historic resources as well as a means for helping the City to meet its obligations under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Since Riverside County designated the 1863 Trujillo Adobe in 1969 (one of the last remnants of the City's original Spanish-era settlement), few landmarks significant to the Latino community have been identified or designated. (The Trujillo Adobe was since designated a City landmark in 2015 and was included on Hispanic Access's Top 10 Latino sites in the US in 2017.) One recent designation occurred in December 2017, when the Community Settlement House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its association with ethnic heritage and Riverside's Latino community.

As development pressures increase throughout the City, resources with potential significance to the Latino community are not always apparent. As community member Mary Pasillas wrote in 2014:

As I travel around my city looking at the old buildings that still remain, I sometimes wonder if my grandfather was on that construction site of many of these old buildings. I do recall seeing old photographs of my grandfather on the construction site of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine.

Could this be why I love my city's architecture and buildings so much? The jewels of the city buildings call out my inheritance...[they are] a legacy of love for what my grandfather's hard labor and work put into this city. I do know my roots run deep within this city.<sup>2</sup>

This study represents an important step toward ensuring that the "jewels of the city" significant to Riverside's Latino community are identified, recognized, and preserved.

## **Report Contents**

In 2015, the California Office of Historic Preservation prepared a Multiple Property Document Form (MPDF) study, *Latinos in Twentieth Century California*. The document provided, for the first-time, a consistent, context-driven approach for assessing significant associations with Latino history and heritage, tailored to the specific case of California. This study tiers off the state-level approach, with a few important modifications, tailored to the specific case of Riverside.

One of the most significant departures from the state-level study is the addition of a subtheme for “Citrus and Agriculture Workers.” As in other centers of citrus and agricultural production, in Riverside, the citrus industry decisively shaped early settlement and employment patterns for many Latinos. In some cases, these patterns are still evident in the built environment. Including this subtheme will ensure that evaluations weigh the centrality of the citrus industry in the lives and livelihoods for many Latinos in Riverside, in particular during the first half of the twentieth century.

The *Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement* includes nine sections. Sections 1 and 2 describe the overall purpose, methodology, and regulatory framework guiding the project. Section 3 provides a snapshot of the construction chronologies and character of four historically Latino communities, Casa Blanca, Eastside, Arlanza, and Northside. Although the City is home to other vital, long-term Latino communities, these four offer a representative sample.

Next, Section 4 “Themes of Significance,” describes four thematic categories, along with the subthemes, events, people, and places behind each. In order to ensure consistency with the state-level framework, this study uses the four broad thematic categories identified in the 2015 study, albeit tailored to Riverside’s unique history:

**Theme #1: Making a Home and a Nation**

Subtheme: Immigration and Settlement

Subtheme: Community Building and Mutual Assistance Organizations

**Theme #2: Making a Living**

Subtheme: Citrus and Agriculture Workers

Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education

Subtheme: Latinos in the Military

**Theme #3: Making a Life**

Subtheme: Religion and Spirituality

Subtheme: Recreation and Sports

Subtheme: Cultural Development

**Theme #4: Making a Democracy: Latino Struggles for Inclusion**

Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation and Discrimination

Subtheme: Housing

Subtheme: Education

Subtheme: Building the Civil Rights Movement

Subtheme: Latinos in Labor History

In evaluations of some properties, more than one theme might apply. For example, in December 2017, the Community Settlement House in Riverside was listed on the National Register of Historic Places under the “Making a Nation” and “Making a Life” themes of the state-level study, *Latinos in*

*Twentieth Century California*. It is expected that other historic resources of import to the Latino community will qualify under more than one theme.

Section 5, “Associated Property Types,” describes the variety of built environment resources that might reflect the themes of significance. Definitions are provided for each category, along with eligibility standards. Because this document tiers off the 2015 State Office of Historic Preservation study, Section 5 excerpts and adapts the state-level framework to ensure consistency in evaluations. Although this study did not include a survey component, a number of designated or potentially eligible resources were identified in the course of research. These are listed in Section 5, with a complete list included in Appendix A.

Section 6 includes a project summary and recommendations, Section 7 includes a “Timeline and Milestones,” and Section 8 contains the study bibliography. Comprehensive endnotes in Section 9 round out the report. Appendix A includes all known and potentially eligible historic resources recommended for further study; Appendix B includes Arc-GIS maps with dates of construction for Casa Blanca, Eastside, Arlanza, and Northside neighborhoods; and Appendix C includes an excerpt from the OHP 2015 study, *Latinos in Twentieth Century California*, on how to use the Multiple Property Document-Form historic context statement.

*This document offers not just a history of Riverside’s Latino community. It creates the City’s first context-based framework for identifying significant Latino-related historic resources. This study allows the City to proactively identify and preserve the places that are important to the Latino community as well as to facilitate City compliance with CEQA.*

## **Data Gaps, Challenges, and Future Opportunities for Research**

While recent literature has illuminated a range of historic, cultural, and sociopolitical topics that have affected California’s Latino community overall, few studies are available on the specific case of Riverside. As such, this historic context statement draws on a wide range of available sources, including research and materials compiled by the Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society, previous oral histories, interviews with community members, prior historic resource studies, and a range of available written materials, in English and in Spanish.

A number of data gaps remain, however. These are noted in the recommendation section as possible areas for future study and for focused, thematic oral history collection. In particular, under-researched topics in need of additional information include: long-time, prominent citrus workers; Latino cultural development, arts, music; recreation, sports, and sports leagues, and important coaches and players; the people and places involved in early community building and mutualista establishment; the labor movement and unions; the civil rights and Chicano civil rights movement.

As of 2018, neighborhoods throughout Riverside are home to Latino families and citizens. Historically, three neighborhoods in particular, Casa Blanca, Eastside, and Arlington Heights, were early areas of concentrated settlement for the community. For this reason, much of the available literature focuses on these neighborhoods, and therefore they garner frequent mention in this study.

Future research and oral history collection could focus on broadening our knowledge of Latino settlement patterns, events, people, and places in other neighborhoods in Riverside, including Arlanza and Northside, for example. Although Casa Blanca and Eastside often provide the case studies examined here, the themes of significance identified apply to resources throughout the City as well as the County.

## 1.1 Acknowledgements

Rincon wishes to acknowledge the invaluable contributions and expertise provided by many individuals and organizations throughout the community in the preparation of this study.

First and foremost, this study would not have been possible without the participation of Ms. Linda Salinas-Thompson, founder of the Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society. For over a decade, Ms. Salinas-Thompson has conducted research, collected interviews, and compiled a range of historic documents on the Mexican-American experience in Riverside. Although the Mexican-American story forms a highly significant chapter in the history of Riverside, to date, as a collective history, it has remained under-documented and under-explored. In this way, Ms. Salinas-Thompson's research and expertise helped fill critical data gaps, and Rincon is grateful for the expertise and assistance she provided throughout the project.

Dr. Carlos Cortés and Dr. Catherine Gudis of the University of California, Riverside, Steven Moreno-Terrill, University of California, Riverside, and Ruth McCormick and Celeste Reyes, City of Riverside Public Library gave of their time and expertise throughout the project, and Rincon is grateful for their contributions. City of Riverside historic preservation specialists Scott Watson and Jennifer Mermilliod provided valuable input and review of the draft and final Historic Context Statement.

In addition, the Rincon project team wishes to thank the following individuals for their valuable assistance and input:

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- Simona Valero
- Gilbert Vasquez
- Paul A. and Joanne Viafora
- Scott Watson, City of Riverside, Community and Economic Development Department

## 1.2 Personnel

This report was written and researched by Rincon Senior Architectural Historian Debi Howell-Ardila, MHP. Rincon Architectural Historian Susan Zamudio-Gurrola carried out additional research and project assistance. Strategic oversight was provided by historic preservation consultant Jan Ostashay, Ostashay & Associates Consulting, and Rincon Architectural History Program Manager, Shannon Carmack. All team members meet and exceed the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for architectural history and history (NPS 1983). Report figures were prepared by Rincon Geographic Information System (GIS) Specialists Marcus Klatt. Rincon President Mike Gialketsis reviewed the report for quality control.

## 1.3 Methodology

This historic context statement drew on a broad range of available sources, in English and in Spanish, including primary and secondary sources, oral histories, historic photographs, maps, and other materials. In the initial stages of the project, a community meeting was held to hear feedback and ideas on potentially significant events, people, and places in the Latino community. As follow up, through the course of the project, a number of additional interviews, both in-person and via telephone, were conducted with community members and scholars. As the draft neared completion, a final community meeting was held. Research was conducted at a variety of repositories, including:

- Riverside Metropolitan Museum
- Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society
- Tesoros of Casa Blanca
- Combined collections of the Riverside Public Library, including the Shades of Riverside, Shades of Casa Blanca, Avery Fisher Photographic Collection
- Riverside Art Museum
- University of Riverside
- University of California, Berkeley, Chicano Studies Department
- University of Texas, El Paso, Bracero Oral History Project
- California State University, Fullerton, Center for Oral and Public History. Mexican American Oral History Project, with interviews gathered from 1968 to 2002

As stated above, this study uses the National Park Service Multiple Property Document Form (MPDF) approach, with identified themes of significance, property types, eligibility standards, character-defining features, and integrity thresholds. Considered the gold standard for evaluations, the MPD form Historic Context Statement allows surveyors to apply a consistent and comparative framework for evaluations.

All work was carried out in accordance with the applicable guidelines and standards, including the State Office of Historic Preservation guidance on survey and historic resource identification and documentation, the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation*, National Park Service Bulletin No. 15, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, and National Park Service Bulletin No. 16B, *How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form*.

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

This study draws extensively on pioneering studies on the heritage, history, and contributions of the Latino community in California and Riverside. Those studies are:

- “Riverside,” unpublished manuscript, Paul A. Viafora, University of California, Riverside, Department of History, 1973
- “A History of Mexican Americans in California,” in *Five Views*, December 1988, José Pitti, PhD., Antonia Castaneda, PhD, and Carlos Cortés, PhD
- *Latinos in Twentieth Century California*, 2015, California Office of Historic Preservation

**Terms and Definitions**

The history of the Latino community in Riverside stretches back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although immigration patterns have shifted over time, with immigration from Central and South America increasing since the 1980s, a majority of Latinos in Riverside trace their ancestry to Mexico. For purposes of this historic context statement, the following summarizes the meaning of the terminology used in this study:

The term “Latino” refers to anyone of Latin American (as opposed to European) ancestry.

The phrase “Mexican-American” refers to native born Americans of Mexican heritage. Given patterns of immigration in Riverside, the predominant Latino population for much of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century came from Mexico.

“Anglo” or “Anglo-American” generally refers to Americans of European ancestry.

“Chicano/Chicana” refers to Mexican-Americans involved in the 1960s-era Chicano Civil Rights Movement. Also known as “El Movimiento,” or “the movement,” the Chicano Civil Rights Movement grew out of the Mexican-American civil rights movement in the postwar period.

“Hispanic” refers to Spanish-speaking individuals living in the United States.

## 2 Regulatory Setting

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The following sections describe the regulatory framework considered in the Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement.

### 2.1 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

According to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), public agencies in California are required to analyze whether historical resources may be adversely impacted by proposed projects. Answering this question is a two-part process: first, the agency must make a determination as to whether projects might involve a historical resource. Second, if historical resources are present, the agency must study whether the proposed project might result in a substantial adverse impact to the historical resource. According to CEQA Guidelines, historical resources are defined as:

1. A resource listed in, or formally determined eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources;
2. A resource included in a local register of historical resources;
3. Any building, structure, object, site, or district that the agency determines eligible for national, state, or local landmark listing; generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be historically significant if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register (described below).

In addition, according to CEQA, the fact that a resource is not listed in or determined eligible for listing in the California Register or is not included in a local register or survey **shall not preclude the lead agency from determining that the resource may be an historical resource**. Pursuant to CEQA, a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource may have a significant effect on the environment.

### 2.2 National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) recognizes properties that are significant at the national, state, and local levels. To be eligible for listing in the NRHP, a resource must be significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture. A property is eligible for the NRHP if it is significant under one or more of the following criteria:

- Criterion A:** It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- Criterion B:** It is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in our past;
- Criterion C:** It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; and/or
- Criterion D:** It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

## **Integrity**

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey the reasons for its significance. To be listed in the National Register, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the National Register criteria, but it also must possess integrity. The evaluation of integrity must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. The National Register criteria recognize the following seven aspects that define integrity:

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

Several other factors come into play in making determinations regarding the retention of integrity. In general, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and local registers have lower integrity thresholds. A property that meets criteria for significance but exhibits a number of alterations might not qualify for the NRHP but might still qualify for the CRHR or a local register.

Integrity evaluations should weigh the relative rarity of the resource as well as its historic context. For example, a modest, altered property that represents one of only a few—or the last—of its type might be found to meet eligibility standards. In addition, resources that are significant on the basis of ethnic and social history might have varying integrity thresholds. Such determinations are best made comparatively, in light of available information, on a case-by-case basis.

## **2.3 California Register of Historical Resources**

The California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) is an inventory of the state's significant cultural resources. Resources can be listed in the CRHR through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and NRHP-listed properties are automatically listed in the California Register. A resource, either an individual property or a contributor to a historic district, may be listed in the CRHR if it meets one or more of the following criteria, which are modeled on NRHP criteria:

- Criterion 1:** It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage.
- Criterion 2:** It is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
- Criterion 3:** It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
- Criterion 4:** It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Resources nominated to the CRHR must retain enough of their historic character or appearance to convey the reasons for their significance. Resources whose historic integrity does not meet NRHP criteria may still be eligible for listing in the CRHR.

## 2.4 City of Riverside

The City of Riverside's Cultural Resources Ordinance is codified in Title 20 of the Municipal Code. The ordinance establishes the criteria and process for designating potential cultural resources (historic resources) as local landmarks, structures of merit, or historic districts.

### Landmark Criteria

A cultural resource may be designated by the City Council upon the recommendation of the City's Cultural Heritage Board as a Landmark if it retains a high degree of integrity and meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, architectural, or natural history;
2. Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history;
3. Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship;
4. Represents the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect, or important creative individual;
5. Embodies elements that possess high artistic values or represents a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation;
6. Reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of park or community planning, or cultural landscape;
7. Is one of the last remaining examples in the City, region, state, or nation possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen;
8. Has yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

### Structure of Merit Criteria

A cultural resource may be designated by the City Council upon the recommendation of the City's Cultural Heritage Board as a Structure of Merit if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. Has a unique location or singular physical characteristics or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood community or of the City
2. Is an example of a type of building which was once common but is now rare in its neighborhood, community or area;
3. Is connected with a business or use which was once common but is now rare;
4. A Cultural Resource that could be eligible under Landmark Criteria no longer exhibiting a high level of integrity, however, retaining sufficient integrity to convey significance under one or more of the Landmark Criteria;
5. Has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory; or

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

6. An improvement or resource that no longer exhibits the high degree of integrity sufficient for Landmark designation, yet still retains sufficient integrity under one or more of the Landmark criteria to convey cultural resource significance as a Structure or Resource of Merit.

**Historic District Criteria**

In Riverside’s zoning code, a historic district can be either: (1) a concentration, linkage, or continuity of cultural resources, united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development (Criterion 1), or, (2) a thematically-related grouping of cultural resources (Criterion 2). More than fifty (50) percent of a district's properties should contribute to the historical, architectural, archaeological, engineering, and/or cultural values that make it important. A grouping of resource or geographic area may be designated by the City Council upon the recommendation of the City's Cultural Heritage Board as a Historic District if it meets either Criteria 1 or 2, and one or more of the following criteria:

3. It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, architectural, or natural history; or
4. Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history; or
5. Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or
6. Represents the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect; or
7. Has a unique location or singular physical characteristics or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or of the City; or
8. Embodies a collection of elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation; or
9. Reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of park or community planning; or
10. Conveys a sense of historic and architectural cohesiveness through its design, setting, materials, workmanship, or association.

## 3 Built Environment Overview

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This study provides a framework for historic resource evaluations and surveys weighing potential significance based on the social and ethnic history of the Latino community. Therefore, this document focuses primarily on socio-ethnic history rather than architectural style. Discussions of eligibility are based primarily on Criteria A/1/1 (patterns of development and events) and Criteria B/2/2 (significant individuals) rather than Criteria C/3/4 (architectural style).

As background information, it is worth briefly noting past survey results, overall construction chronologies, and architectural character for a few of Riverside's historic areas of settlement for the Latino community. This background on the built environment helps set the stage for the themes of significance introduced in this context.

### Previous Historic Resource Surveys

To date, no citywide survey has yet taken place with a focus solely on Latino history. However, a number of surveys have taken place in areas with long-time, well-established Latino neighborhoods. This section describes several of the largest-scale survey efforts to date.

#### *City of Riverside Historic Resource Surveys, Casa Blanca and Eastside, 2001*

In 2001, historic resource surveys were conducted of Casa Blanca and Eastside neighborhoods, the site of the oldest Latino communities in Riverside.<sup>3</sup> As part of the project, 1,400 properties were surveyed. For Casa Blanca, the survey recommended one property as eligible for the NRHP and as a National Historic Landmark, the Casa Blanca Elementary School. While the present study did not include a full survey, research and site visits conducted to date concur with this result. In addition, one historic archaeological site, the Casa Blanca Depot site, with its four Canary Island Palm Trees, was recommended eligible for the NRHP. In addition, 33 properties were recommended as Structures of Merit, 86 as warranting special consideration in local planning.

In Eastside at the time, one property was listed in the NRHP (University Heights Junior High School, now César Chavez Community Center, 2060 University Avenue) and three properties were designated as local landmarks (2921 Sixth Street, 2933 Seventh Street, and 2374 Seventh Street). For Structures of Merit, 15 properties were designated and another 64 were recommended as eligible. Three areas were designated or eligible as local historic districts, and one was recommended as a neighborhood conservation area. Capping off these results, a total of 260 properties were identified as eligible for special consideration in local planning.

#### *City of Riverside, Historic Resources Survey of the Arlington Neighborhood, 2003*

In 2003, an intensive-level historic resources survey took place of the Arlington neighborhood. Funded in part through a Certified Local Government grant, the project included a historic context section and the identification of detailed themes of significance, properties, people, and places of import to the community. With a scope covering hundreds of properties, the project resulted in findings of eligibility for a number of properties as local Landmarks, Structures of Merit, Neighborhood Conservation Areas.

*City of Riverside, Northside Historic Resources Survey, 2004-2005*

Between 2004 and 2005, a historic resource survey was completed for nearly 1,000 properties in Northside.<sup>4</sup> As a result of reconnaissance-level survey and research, three potential historic districts were identified. In addition, 11 properties appeared individually eligible for local designation, and 16 were recommended for further study. At the time, further study was recommended for the theme of immigration and ethnic diversity, in order to ensure that evaluations adequately considered the historic context of primarily Latino/Hispanic heritage in the neighborhood.

*City of Riverside Marketplace Specific Plan Area Historic Resources Survey, 2012*

Additional surveys have included a 2012 historic context statement and survey of an area of University Avenue in Eastside, in the Marketplace Specific Plan area.<sup>5</sup> As a result of this survey, 14 properties were recommended NRHP eligible and 8 recommended CRHR eligible. Another 2 were already listed on the NRHP. In terms of local designation, 14 were already designated or eligible as contributors to historic districts, and another 22 were designated or eligible as City Landmarks or Structures of Merit.

## **Summary of Riverside's Earliest Latino Neighborhoods**

This section provides a brief overview of the property types and styles historically found in two of the City's oldest Latino communities, Casa Blanca and Eastside.

Since the 1870s, the landscapes around Casa Blanca and Eastside were dominated by citrus groves, planted to the south and southeast. The streetscape is primarily defined by Victoria Avenue, which lies to the south and east of the two communities. Victoria Avenue is lined with roses and mature trees (palms, pepper, sycamores, eucalyptus, and magnolia), while adjoining streets, such as Jefferson and Washington, are lined with like trees, creating a notable landscape. The Gage Canal and Riverside Irrigating Canal, which at one time provided water service to the groves and developing residential areas, also run through portions of each neighborhood.

Historically, in Casa Blanca and Eastside, the most common built type is the single-family residence. In most cases, homes were not architect designed but rather were function-driven buildings constructed by a local contractor or the homeowner. These were the homes of generations of working- and middle-class citizens. Intact clusters of properties help to reveal the character of early working-class neighborhoods. In the postwar era, the housing boom that transformed much of Riverside also arrived in neighborhoods such as Casa Blanca and Eastside (albeit in an era of housing discrimination), in particular in undeveloped peripheral areas.

Another shared characteristic of Casa Blanca and Eastside (as well as Arlanza and Northside) are the postwar tracts of Ranch Style homes. Constructed primarily in the 1950s and 1960s, these housing tracts feature one-story Ranch Style and contemporary homes, with generous setbacks, landscaping, and curvilinear streets and cul de sacs.

### *Casa Blanca Overview*

Originally a citrus *colonia*, or worker settlement, Casa Blanca is one of the oldest continuously owned and occupied Latino communities in California. Citrus packinghouses and other associated buildings were clustered near major transportation routes, such as the Santa Fe railroad line. Property types and sites associated with Casa Blanca's agricultural industry included citrus groves, fields, and trees. Today, much of the land once occupied by the packinghouses is dotted with modern residential dwellings.

In the first quarter of the twentieth century, early development in Casa Blanca was primarily residential. The construction of numerous, modest bungalow and Hall and Parlor-style single-family residences was the product of the local citrus growers who offered land to Mexican-Americans at reasonable prices in an effort to retain a resident supply of low-wage labor. Early commercial areas were centered near the intersection of Madison and Evans or adjacent to the large packinghouses along the railroad track. These businesses included grocery stores, a post office, barbershop, billiard hall, and cafes, all of which formed the downtown hub of Casa Blanca. As agricultural industries developed and neighboring land was subdivided and settled, the community of Casa Blanca developed civic, educational, religious, cultural, and social institutions integral to its continued growth.

The only school of primary-level learning in the community was the Casa Blanca School. Still located at the corner of Madison and Emerald Streets, Casa Blanca School was designed by well-known local architect, G. Stanley Wilson, in 1923. The school replaced a provisional 1913 classroom. In terms of churches, residences and meeting halls were often the first home to religious institutions. Constructed in 1976, replacing an earlier 1923 building, Saint Anthony's Church at 3056-3074 Madison Street represents one of the earliest Catholic congregations in Casa Blanca, founded in 1921.

In postwar Casa Blanca, by 1952, most of the citrus packinghouses that once lined the railroad tracks had been removed or replaced by fewer, but larger, citrus packing companies. The entire corner of Evans and Pliny Avenues came to be occupied by the Victoria Avenue Citrus Association, a major employer in the neighborhood. Electrical transformers were installed on the lots where the California Citrus Union Packinghouse and the Fairview Citrus Packinghouse once stood. Postwar housing tracts arrived in the 1950s, with the addition of Ranch House tracts in the eastern portion of the neighborhood.

### *Eastside Overview*

In Eastside, as well, citrus packinghouses were located near major transportation routes, such as the Santa Fe and Union Pacific railroad lines. As agricultural land was settled and as transportation systems brought residential development to the Eastside, the community developed a wide range of social, religious, and cultural institutions, as well as civic institutions introduced by the city government. Meeting halls, club buildings, churches, and parks catered to the social, cultural, and religious needs of the community. Post offices and schools were often the first civic buildings constructed in the area, followed by police and fire stations. Often, civic institutions were originally housed in buildings not specifically designed for their use.

Local commerce in the Eastside consisted of a wide range of retail businesses and services, typically housed in simple, low-rise buildings constructed of wood or brick. They were typically located along the main streets of the community or along the railroad right-of-way.

Schools reflecting the architectural styles of the day arrived in the neighborhood to serve a growing population. However, racial segregation and unequal facilities and curricula remained the norm until the 1960s. In Casa Blanca and in Eastside, most schools were segregated and remained so until 1965. Among early Eastside schools were Thirteenth Street Public School (1330 Grove Street), Longfellow Public School (441 East Seventh Street), and Lowell Public School (4690 Victoria Avenue). By 1940, Irving Elementary School had replaced Thirteenth Street Public School, though with a different address (2775 Fourteenth Street). Irving Elementary School displayed late Moderne architectural style. In 1928, University Heights Junior High School was constructed at 2060 University

Avenue; it is now the César Chavez Community Center. The building is designated a local landmark and is listed in the NRHP.

In terms of Eastside religious institutions, each neighborhood generally included at least one church building and sometimes several. Spanish Colonial Revival and Gothic Revival were the predominant architectural styles of church buildings in the area. Christian denominations represented included Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, and various evangelical sects. Fraternal organizations, clubs, and recreational institutions constructed throughout both neighborhoods were physically diverse; their architectural styles, size, and plans were dependent on the styles of the day, as well as function and available resources.

By the 1920s, garages and other related automotive structures had already emerged in both communities. Most were constructed of concrete or other masonry materials and were located near commercial and industrial areas. Gas stations were simple one-room structures oriented diagonally towards a street corner.

During the 1940s in Eastside, several small, wood-framed grocery stores opened along the 4000 block of Park Avenue. By the 1950s, the Eastside's local commercial enterprises were well-established. Many of these businesses were located in one or two story wood-framed or concrete constructed structures of utilitarian function and design along University Avenue.

By the late 1950s in Eastside, a number of single-family residences were converted to multi-family units and/or commercial use; in some cases commercial and residential buildings were combined on one lot. The majority of single-family residences along University Street were replaced with restaurants, motels, car washes, and service stations that served the travelers visiting the area. However, the rest of the Eastside community remained primarily residential. In the early 1960s, State Highway 60 was re-aligned, thereby by-passing University Avenue. In subsequent decades, with the resulting loss of thoroughfare traffic, this area experienced an economic decline. Signs of recovery have been evident with redevelopment efforts, as well as expansion of the UC Riverside campus.

### *Architectural Styles*

As in other neighborhoods, the range of architectural styles present in Casa Blanca and Eastside reflect their dates of construction and styles popular at the time. These include Queen Anne and other Victorian-era styles, Mass Plan Vernacular homes (a small, usually hipped-roof cottage clad in clapboard, with a small recessed front porch), American Foursquare (a turn-of-the-century style most common in Eastside), and the Hall and Parlor home (a very common style in Casa Blanca). The Hall and Parlor house is a simple rectangular house, one or one-and-one half stories, with a side gable roof. Usually displaying a three bay facade, the single front door is generally centered on the facade and opens directly into the hall room. Floor plans consist of a hall or general eating and living space and a smaller, more formal parlor that may also have doubled as a bedroom.

Craftsman Bungalows are also evident throughout both neighborhoods (and in neighborhoods throughout Riverside). Defining elements of the style include a horizontal orientation, wood detailing, exposed rafter ends, overhanging eaves, wide porches, and porch supports. The emphasis was on simplicity of design, a break from the ornamental style of the Victorian period.

The 1920s brought a menu of period-revival styles to both neighborhoods, such as Spanish Colonial, Mission, Mediterranean, and English Tudor Revival styles. Casa Blanca also retains an adobe residence, constructed in 1920, at 3175 Samuel Street.

The 1930s, 1940s, and postwar periods brought a number of simple, contemporary designs, the Minimal Traditional, and the Ranch Home to both neighborhoods. The Ranch House appears in both neighborhoods in single-lot construction and new housing tracts. Examples include Los Ranchitos in Casa Blanca and the Streeter Tract in Eastside, both Ranch House suburbs constructed in the 1950s (during an era of housing segregation and discrimination; these two tracts, along with the Woods Tract in Eastside, were the only three new postwar housing tracts open to minority buyers).

### **Construction Chronologies, Casa Blanca, Eastside, Arlanza and Northside**

Today, members of Riverside’s Latino community span all areas of the City. In order to begin broadly characterizing patterns of development and settlement for the Latino community, this section presents an overview of construction chronologies in four of the City’s Latino-majority neighborhoods: Casa Blanca, Eastside, Northside, and Arlanza.

Dates of construction were drawn from County of Riverside Tax Assessor parcel data. It is worth noting that data were not available for 18 percent of the total parcels in Casa Blanca (196), 21 percent in Eastside (737), 10 percent in Arlanza (469), and 20 percent in Northside (538). It is likely that these properties were constructed in the early twentieth century.

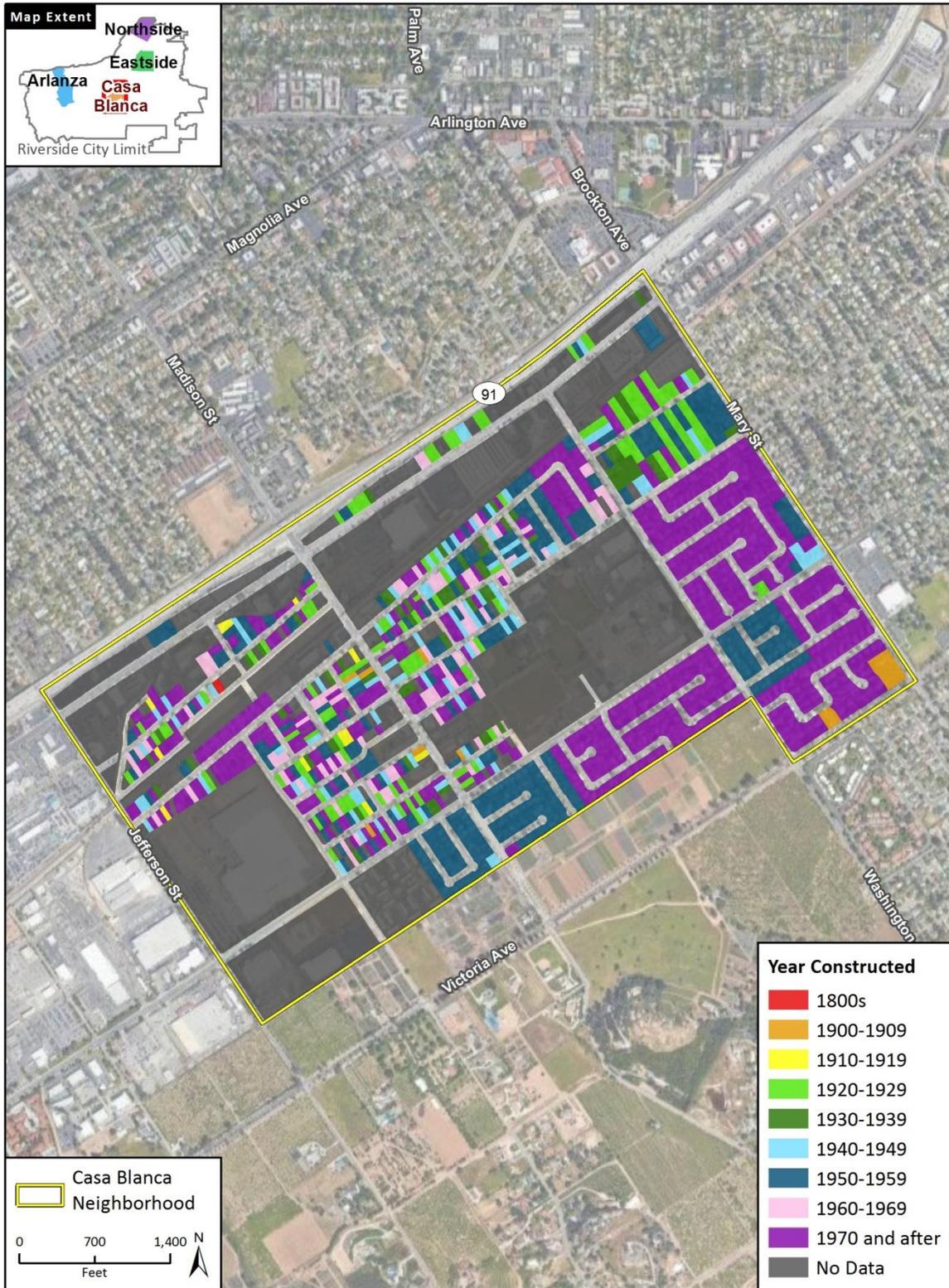
Among available data, Eastside and Casa Blanca neighborhoods are the oldest settlement areas, with hundreds of extant properties dating to the early twentieth century. Nearly 30 percent of parcels in Eastside, for example, date from the 1880s through 1929. Almost 10 percent of Casa Blanca properties were constructed from the 1800s to 1929.

For Casa Blanca and Eastside, only 3 and 4 percent, respectively, date to the 1930s, in a reflection of the Great Depression’s economic slump. The 1940s and war-time construction added another 7 percent in each neighborhood. The decade with the most rapid expansion was the 1950s, which accounts for a total of 25 and 30 percent in Casa Blanca and Eastside, respectively. A total of 49 and 22 percent of parcels in Casa Blanca and Eastside, respectively, were constructed in 1970 and later.

In both Arlanza and Northside, the decades with the most significant expansion were the 1970s and later (42 and 63 percent, respectively), and 1950s (36 and 20 percent, respectively). In Arlanza, only 13 properties were constructed between 1910 and 1939. The addition of 223 properties, or 5 percent of the total, during the 1940s reflects construction of Camp Anza in present-day Arlanza.

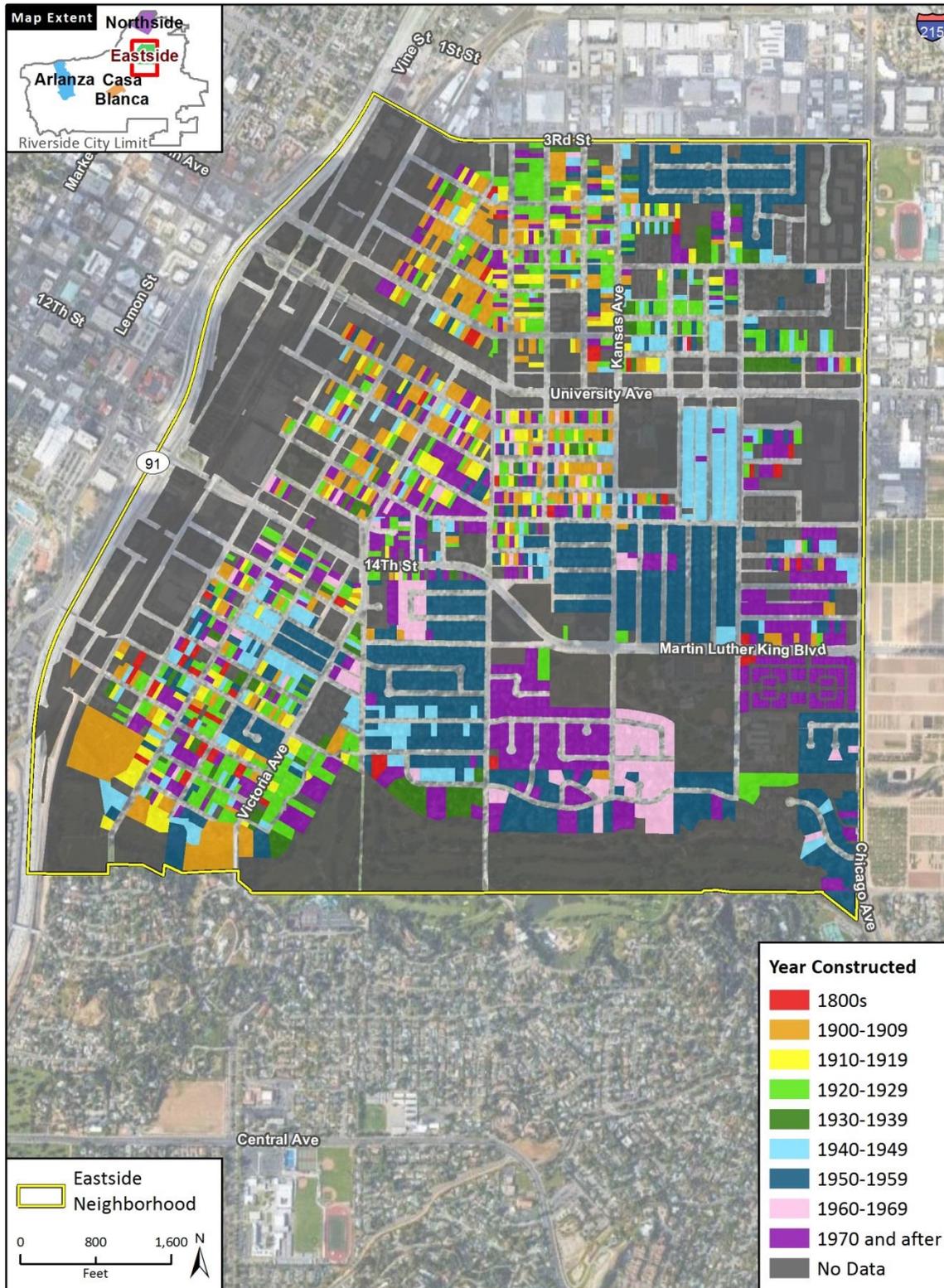
In the next section, a series of Arc-GIS maps provide a visual overview of this data and patterns of construction. Appendix B includes decade-by-decade maps for each neighborhood.

**Figure 1 Construction Dates, 1880-2000, Casa Blanca Neighborhood**



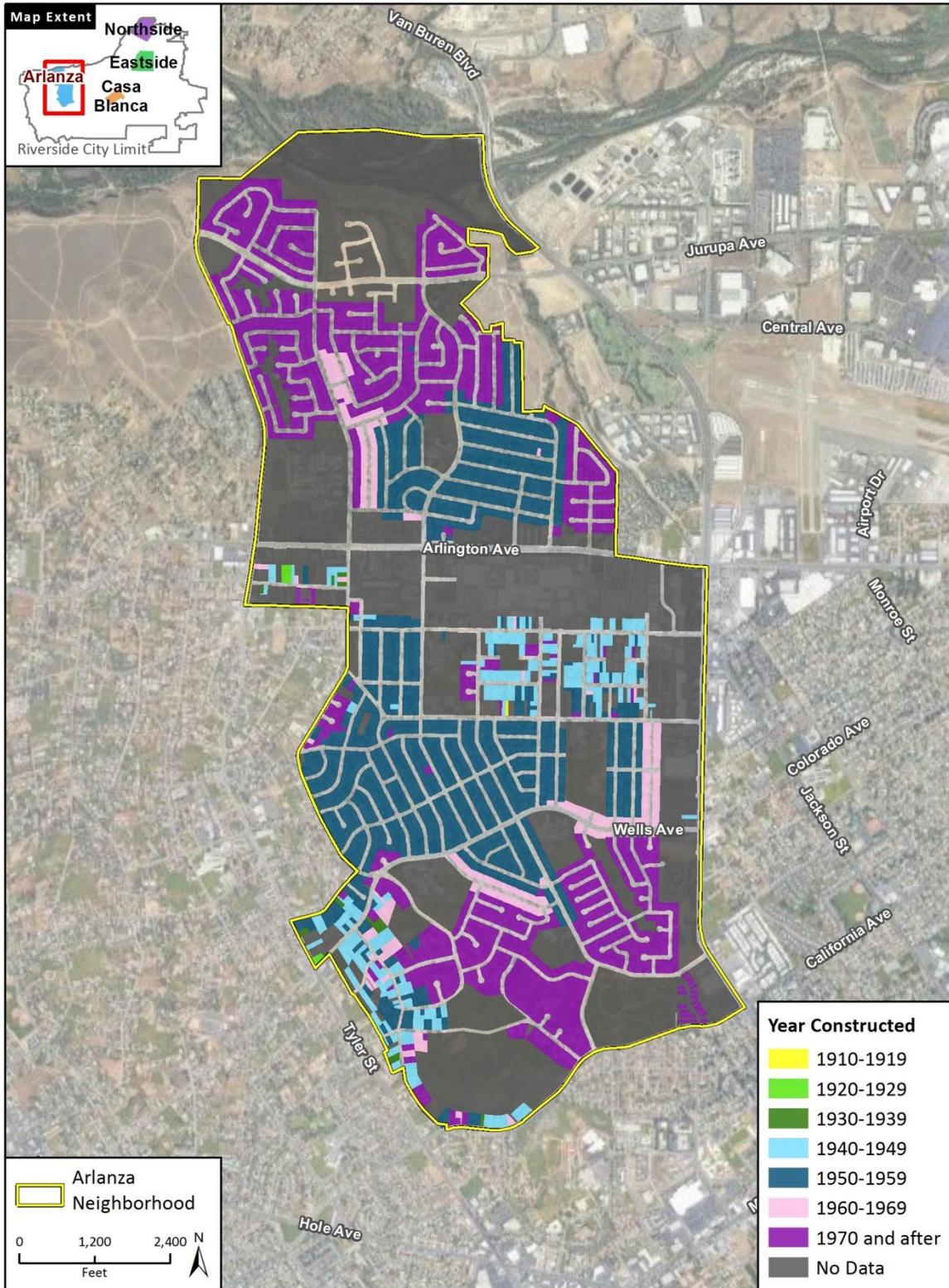
Imagery provided by Esri and its licensors © 2018.  
 Parcel Data from Riverside County, 2018. Mapping by Rincon Consultants, 2018.

Figure 2 Construction Dates, 1880-2000, Eastside Neighborhood



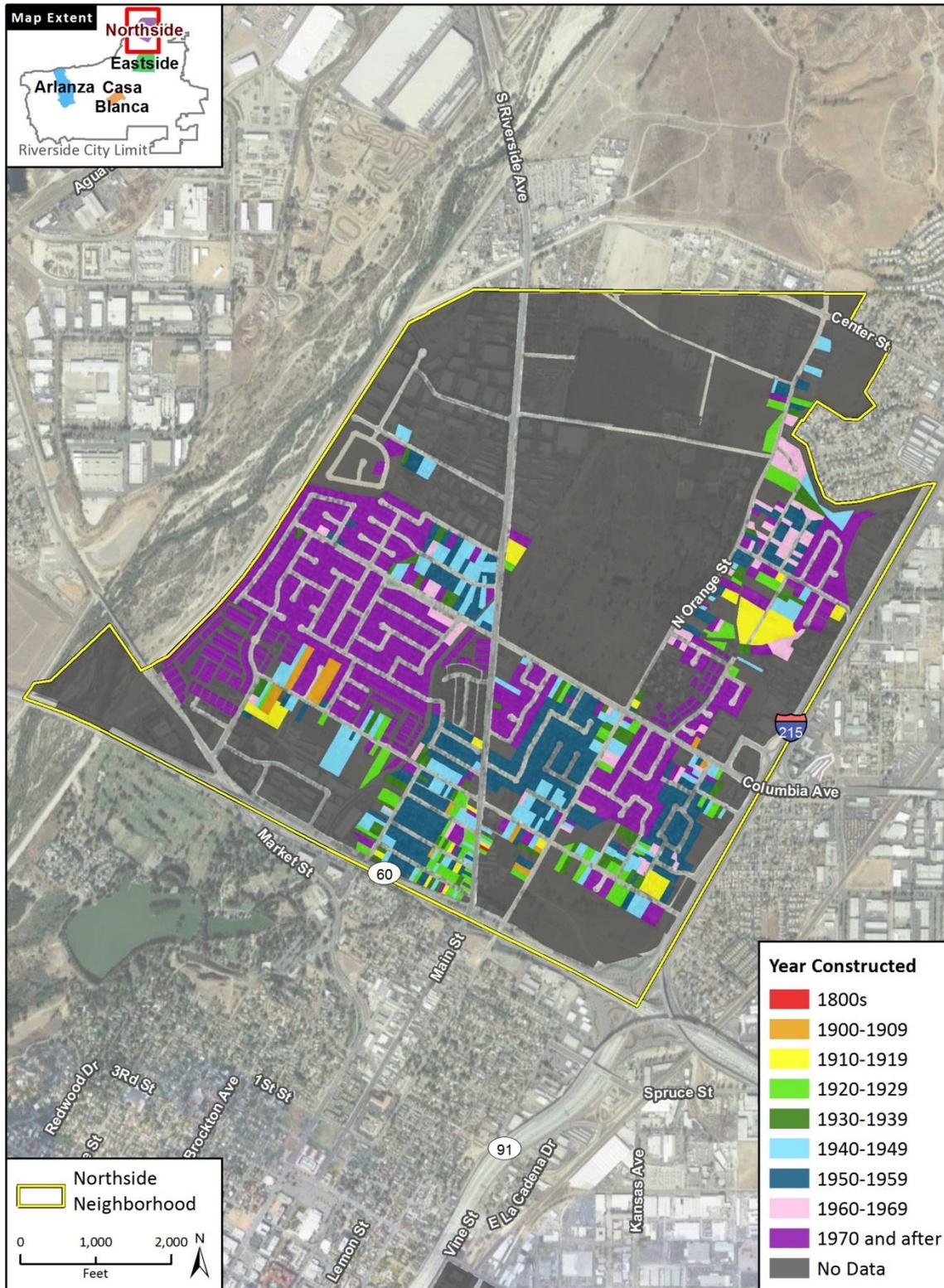
Imagery provided by Esri and its licensors © 2018.  
Parcel Data from Riverside County, 2018. Mapping by Rincon Consultants, 2018.

**Figure 3 Construction Dates, 1880-2000, Arlanza Neighborhood**



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 Parcel Data from Riverside County, 2018. Mapping by Rincon Consultants, 2018.

Figure 4 Construction Dates, 1880-2000, Northside Neighborhood



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Parcel Data from Riverside County, 2018. Mapping by Rincon Consultants, 2018.

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## 4 Themes of Significance

### 4.1 Theme #1: Making a Home and a Nation

#### Subtheme #1: Immigration and Settlement

##### *1840s-1900: Early Settlement and Founding Years*

Following secularization of the Mission system in 1834, the mission lands that included present-day Riverside were divided into several large land grants. Land owners in this period included Juan Bandini, Louis Rubidoux, Cornelius Jensen, Able Steams, Arthur Parks, Lorenzo Trujillo, and J. H. Stewart and others. In 1844, Bandini gave a portion of his lands to Spanish-speaking settlers of Spanish, Mexican, and Native-American descent from New Mexico.

On this land, a primarily Spanish-speaking community took shape on the east and west banks of the Santa Ana River. Established in 1844 to 1845, the communities were known as La Placita and Agua Mansa, collectively called San Salvador. In the 1840s, they were the largest known settlements between New Mexico and Los Angeles. La Placita was founded by 20 families, including Lorenzo Trujillo and Jose Martinez, just west of present-day Highgrove. Agua Mansa was founded nearby on the west side of the river. These early settlers made a living by growing grain and produce and raising livestock.

By 1855, approximately 200 residents lived in the villages.<sup>6</sup> Institutions emerged to meet the needs of the small community, including a church parish and a school district, founded in 1863 (the subsequent Riverside School District, founded in 1871, grew out of this early district). Devastating floods in 1862 destroyed much of the original townsites, though settlements were subsequently rebuilt.

Among the surviving remnants of the early Spanish-language settlements in the Riverside area are the Agua Mansa Pioneer Cemetery, the 1863 Trujillo Adobe, and the 1865 Agua Mansa bell, the first church bell forged in Riverside County.<sup>7</sup>

**Figure 5** Trujillo Adobe, ca. 1909 (left); Trujillo Adobe Historic Landmark signage (right)



Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

The Agua Mansa Pioneer Cemetery, located in present-day Colton, retains a remarkable collection of gravesites and markers from some of the region's earliest settlers. Currently administered as a San Bernardino County Museum, the Agua Mansa Pioneer Cemetery is California State Historical Landmark No. 121.

The Agua Mansa bell is a one-of-a-kind artifact, forged by Mexican laborers of the Cornelius Jensen Ranch (Jensen's gravesite is located within the Agua Mansa Pioneer Cemetery). In Agua Mansa in the 1860s, following the devastating floods of 1862, the priest of the local church wanted a new bell: "He recalled that a Mexican man had offered to cast a bell for two good horses and twelve dollars. The bell was cast on the Cornelius Jensen Ranch. When the cast was removed, it showed numerous flaws on the bell. The main flaw was the hole on the top portion of the bell. The Community gathered and decided to dedicate the bell to Our Lady of Guadalupe in 1866."<sup>8</sup>

The bell's inscription and dedication to Our Lady of Guadalupe encircles the top of the bell. In 1939, when the Agua Mansa bell was already over 70 years old, it was recognized as one of Riverside's significant historic artifacts. In 1939, the *Riverside Daily Press* reported that "An aged Mexican woman, who was present at the casting of the bell, stated that she saw many people throw gold and silver coins, chains and other article into the cauldron in which the bell metal was being melted."<sup>9</sup> After remaining in the collection of Frank Miller (which also included the first school bell and fire bell), the Agua Mansa bell became part of the collections of the Mission Inn, where it remains on display.

The only surviving building from this era is the Trujillo Adobe, located at Center and North Orange Streets in Riverside's Northside neighborhood. The Trujillo Adobe "tells the story of the U.S. westward expansion and the role of Spanish and Latino families migrating from the southwestern state of New Mexico to California."<sup>10</sup> The Trujillo Adobe was the first Riverside building to receive landmark designation for its association with Latino heritage. Although in pressing need of restoration and stabilization work, the building is believed to be the last standing structure from this early era.

Given the rarity of built environment resources reflecting this early era, in September 2017, the Hispanic Access Foundation, based in Washington, DC, included the Trujillo Adobe as one of ten most significant Latino sites in the United States in need of preservation:

The Trujillo Adobe is a site that demonstrates the connections and contributions that Latino communities had as part of western expansion, specifically the settlement of California. The adobe is the last standing remnant of the Trujillo legacy and one of the first nonindigenous settlements in this region. It is recognized as a cultural landmark by the City of Riverside and a potential site of high significance as part of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail by the Department of the Interior.<sup>11</sup>

With this early foundation, Riverside's Spanish-speaking community was already well established and 25 years old by the time John W. North founded Riverside in 1870.

When Riverside was founded, the town encompassed a small, square-mile tract, with governmental land lying to the east. The establishment of the transcontinental railroad and an extensive canal system allowed Riverside to expand quickly. Between 1880 and 1890, the City's population expanded threefold, growing from approximately 1,350 to 4,600 residents.<sup>12</sup> By the time of incorporation in 1883, the City spanned nearly 56 square miles. As Riverside expanded, ethnic communities such as the early Latino population lived predominantly in Eastside, Casa Blanca, and Arlington Heights neighborhoods. (The history of ethnic settlement in Northside is not well known,

though former members of La Placita and Agua Mansa settlements are likely to have settled in the adjacent community of Northside.<sup>13)</sup>

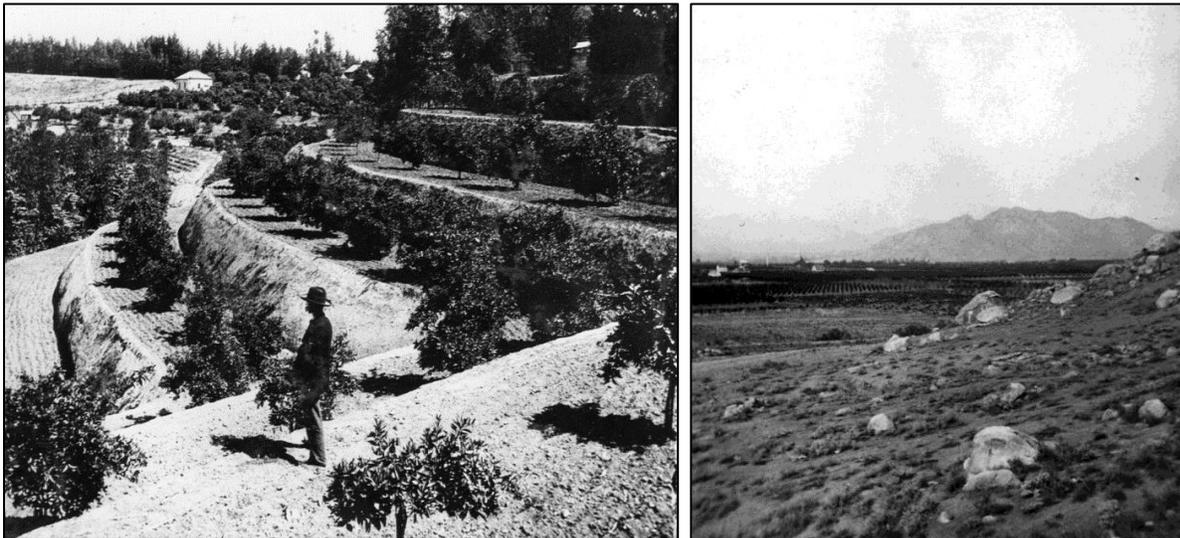
One of the early landmarks for Casa Blanca in these days was the 1897 Casa Blanca train depot, which was adjacent to a row of packinghouses and groves of citrus trees. In the postwar period, with the decline of the citrus industry and consolidation and relocation of packinghouse associations, the Casa Blanca Depot began to see considerably less freight traffic. In 1967, the ticket office closed, the station stop was retired, and the Casa Blanca Depot was demolished. As of 2018, the site of the depot is still marked by three surviving Canary Island palm trees and the original concrete foundation.

### THE RISE OF THE CITRUS BELT AND FORMATION OF COLONIA CASA BLANCA AND COLONIA PARK (EASTSIDE)

During these founding years, one of the most significant events for Riverside was the introduction of the Washington Navel Orange. Imported from Brazil by the United States Department of Agriculture, the navel orange was brought to Riverside in 1873 by Eliza and Luther Tibbets. Within five years, “the Washington navels were winning prizes, and Riverside instantly became the model citrus landscape.”<sup>14</sup>

The rise of the citrus industry, along with the establishment of the Southern California Fruit Exchange, helped Riverside expand greatly through the 1880s, a decade that brought a real estate boom throughout Southern California following the establishment of the transcontinental railroad. The small town quickly became one of the state’s most prosperous and productive agricultural communities. In addition, as historian Carey McWilliams observed, the citrus boom gave rise to a new social class, the “aristocrats of the orchards,” who ultimately dominated political, social, and economic life in Riverside.<sup>15</sup>

**Figure 6 Riverside citrus and agricultural fields, circa 1890 (left) and 1910 (right)**



Source: Los Angeles Public Library

With the rise of citri-culture, the low-wage workforce also expanded greatly. New arrivals and workers settled in neighborhoods near the groves and packinghouses. One of the earliest such settlements was Casa Blanca. Named for the nearby estate of Harry Lockwood (which was an imposing *casa blanca*, or white house), the neighborhood has the distinction of being one of the

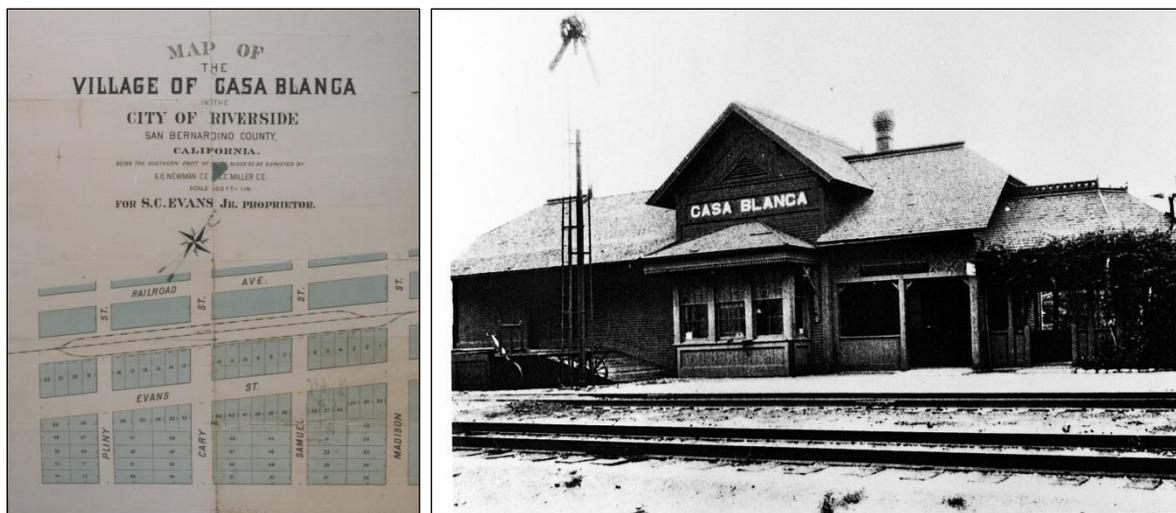
oldest Latino communities in California. The origins of the community can be traced to the 1870s, when Mexican-Americans living in Agua Mansa and La Placita used the land generally encompassing Casa Blanca as grazing lands for their livestock.

Between 1890 and 1895, much of present-day Casa Blanca was planted with navel orange groves under the management of the Arlington Heights Citrus Association. In 1886, a tract map was developed for Casa Blanca and included Railroad Avenue and Pliny, Evans, Samuel Streets. No buildings or structures were illustrated on this map, except the railroad tracks. According to the map, parcels were rectangular in shape, set within a grid pattern of streets.

By the 1890s, Casa Blanca had already begun attracting citrus and railroad workers, as well as new immigrants and their families. According to census data, in the late nineteenth century, the neighborhood was home to Chinese, Japanese, Italian, and Mexican laborers. By 1900, the neighborhood had already become a largely Hispanic community.

Based on Sanborn maps and other historical maps, the oldest existing part of Casa Blanca is located in the vicinity of Madison and Evans Streets. The citrus industry and the railroad became the impetus for development in this part of the community in the 1870s, with packinghouses situated along the railroad tracks and residential areas intermingled amongst the citrus groves. At this time, citrus laborers and railroad workers settled the community, as small parcels of land could readily be obtained from local citrus growers. The growers sold land at low prices, hoping to retain a permanent, nearby source of labor. With the proximity to the fields and railroad line, Casa Blanca was an active center for shipping, packing and transferring citrus goods. Along with Colonia Park (Eastside), Casa Blanca provided the labor supply needed by Riverside's navel orange industry. The neighborhood flourished and expanded, even as few services or infrastructure were provided during the early years.

**Figure 7** “Village of Casa Blanca” map, 1886, and Casa Blanca Depot, 1897



Source: Riverside Public Library, Shades of Casa Blanca

### *1900 – 1919: The Mexican Revolution and World War I*

Beginning in 1910, the Mexican Revolution sparked an intense, decade-long wave of immigration to the United States. Through these years, Riverside's agricultural and citrus industries continued to grow. The scale of this growth – and the intensive work required for citrus harvesting – triggered the need for a constantly expanding, low-wage workforce. For this reason, ranchers actively lobbied to

ensure that the border with Mexico remained as porous as possible, in order to maintain a large supply of able-bodied workers. At the same time, immigration policies led to a sharp decrease in Chinese and Japanese immigration, and Mexican nationals and Mexican-Americans filled the gap. Through the early twentieth century, Mexican labor was actively recruited for the citrus industry, as well as for work building the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad and the Southern Pacific Railroad lines.

The 1910s saw a boom in the level of Mexican immigration to the United States, with two events acting as push-pull catalysts. The first event was the decade-long Mexican Revolution, which triggered significant waves of immigration to the US. The second event was the US entry into World War I, which created a national labor shortage. These two events helped trigger a large influx into the United States, with Latino communities in California and Riverside growing significantly through the decade. Many of the ancestors of Latinos in Riverside today arrived during the 1910s.

Having a reliable, low-wage work force was critical for citrus farmers, so much so that the Department of Labor lobbied Congress to change the Immigration Act of 1917. The requested changes included “suspending mandated literacy tests, contract labor provisions, and the eight-dollar head tax”<sup>16</sup> to favor the ongoing immigration of Mexican nationals to the United States. Even though immigration law encouraged them to come, once here, Mexican nationals arriving under this law were restricted to agricultural work. Remarkably, under these provisions, any worker attempting to leave farm labor for work in other industries would be jailed or deported. That is to say, many Mexicans entering the United States during this period were “bound to their sole participation in field labor.”<sup>17</sup>

This was not a false threat. When Mexican nationals attempted to leave agricultural work, farmers relied on statewide cooperation to track down, jail, and deport workers. One such case took place in Riverside in 1918. At that time, three Mexican nationals had secured jobs at nearby March Army Air Field, whose war-time operations were expanding. However, the three men had travelled to the United States “under bond by the National Beet Sugar Company,” thereby binding them to agricultural work in the beet fields. After a slow season, the three men had sought better opportunities and gained employment at March Army Air Field. After the beet farmer notified Riverside County officials, the County Deputy Sheriff traveled to March Army Air Field and “placed the three under arrest. They are now confined in the Riverside county jail and will be deported.”<sup>18</sup>

In general, some degree of restriction on employment opportunities, whether through official policy or unofficial discrimination, would continue for Latinos until World War II. In this way, World War II proved transformative for the Latino community, in terms of opportunities to serve in the military, to obtain jobs in defense-related work, and to branch out and gain experience.

The 1917 Immigration Act also changed circular migration, making it preferable for families to settle permanently rather than travel back and forth. As the Mexican-American community grew and flourished in Riverside, chain and circular migration of extended family and community members created extensive social and kin networks.<sup>19</sup> (By the 1960s, for example, as author Vicki Ruiz noted, “the Eastside barrio had so many members of a single extended family that Raymond Buriel recalled how he and his buddies had to venture into the rival barrio Casa Blanca to get dates.”<sup>20</sup>)

**Figure 8 Velazquez family, ca. 1915 (left), Martinez family member in citrus fields, ca. 1925 (right)**



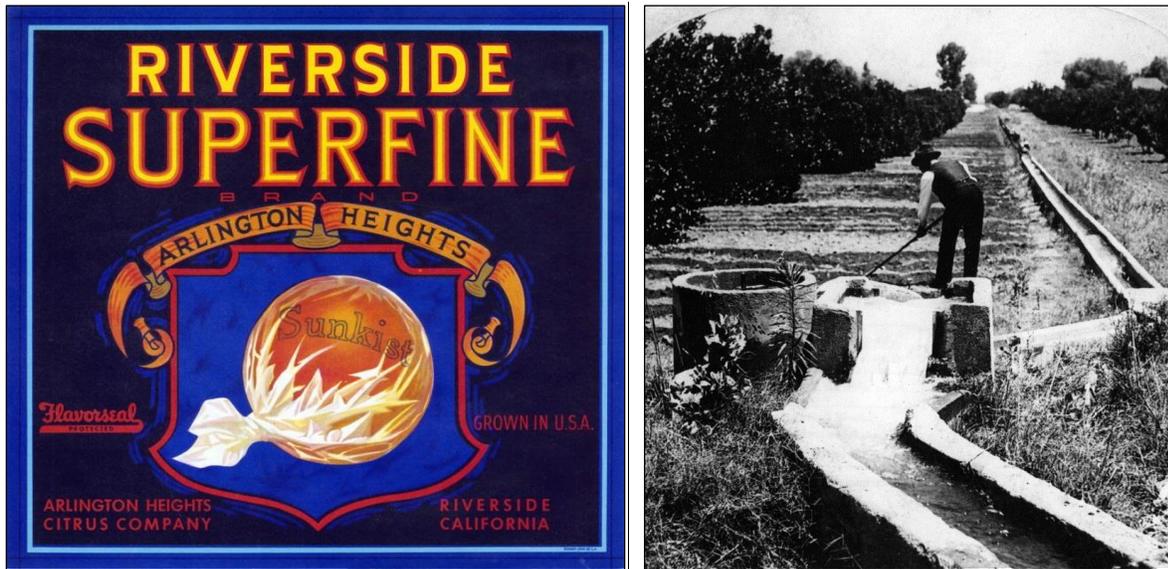
Source: Courtesy of Riverside Metropolitan Museum and Family of Esther Martinez

### **EXPANSION OF RIVERSIDE'S MULTICULTURAL COLONIAS**

Riverside's Latino community expanded rapidly during the opening decades of the twentieth century. Mexicans and Mexican-Americans made their homes in the small settlements adjacent to the railroad, citrus groves and packinghouses. Initially, many Mexican workers in Riverside followed patterns of circular migration, in which a porous border made it possible to return to Mexico frequently, visit family, then return to work in the United States. As these patterns changed, families made the move to the United States permanent, as immigration laws changed and border crossings became more complicated.

As the Latino community grew, alongside the region's booming citrus-culture, three main areas in Riverside became home to sizable Mexican and Mexican-American populations: Casa Blanca, Eastside, and Arlington Heights neighborhoods. As noted by historian Steven Moreno-Terrill, all three neighborhoods "have one thing in common: they are just east of the railroad tracks and west of the citrus groves."<sup>21</sup>

**Figure 9** Arlington Heights Superfine citrus label (left); citrus worker irrigating crops, 1904 (right)



Source: Riverside Public Library and Los Angeles Public Library

At times in its history, Casa Blanca included Italian, Mexican, Japanese, and Chinese laborers. By 1900, it had become majority Mexican and Mexican-American, though residents recall friends and neighbors of other ethnicities. According to life-long Casa Blanca resident Simona Valero, residents in the neighborhood were primarily Mexican, Italian, and Japanese in the early years. Born in 1922, Valero grew up in Casa Blanca: “We were all like a big family, Japanese, Italians and Mexicans.”<sup>22</sup> In those early years, an Italian family lived next door to the Valero family home, and Simona’s mother would try to communicate with her neighbor, Margarita. As Valero recalled, Spanish and Italian are similar enough that “they used to converse over the fence, they understood each other. They were wonderful neighbors.”<sup>23</sup>

In the Eastside, by 1900, the area south of University Avenue (originally Eighth Street) became an area for Latino settlement, and the area north of University Avenue became home to the neighborhood’s early African-American community. Near Thirteenth Street and Lincoln Park, nearby residents “were primarily first-generation Mexican immigrants. The dominant occupation of residents was ‘orange picker’ for one of the citrus packinghouses in the area. A small number of residents were also employed as domestic workers or gardeners at private homes.”<sup>24</sup>

#### *1920 – 1929: Expansion & Permanent Roots in Riverside Colonias*

During the boom of the 1920s, the Latino community in Riverside continued to expand. The colonias had grown into cohesive, self-contained communities, with shops and businesses, mutual assistance societies, new churches and schools, and a yearly Cinco de Mayo celebration and parade that became known through the Latino community statewide. The year 1928 heralded the addition of a post office facility and mail service for Casa Blanca. Although operated as a contract station out of a market, the post service represented an improvement on the rural delivery service that had been used until that time.

The boom experienced in Riverside was mirrored throughout the United States. The roaring 1920s brought not just a construction boom but also an immigration boom and greater presence and profile for the Mexican-American community. From 1920 to 1929, an estimated 500,000 Mexican citizens entered the United States on permanent visas. This represents 11 percent of all immigrants

to come to the US during the 1920s.<sup>25</sup> By the end of the decade, California had become home to more than 30 percent of US residents born in Mexico.

**Figure 10 Wedding of Jesus and Maria Chavez, Saint Anthony's Church, 1926 (left); local baseball team, sponsored by the LV Brown Packinghouse, 1928 (right)**



Source: Riverside Public Library and Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

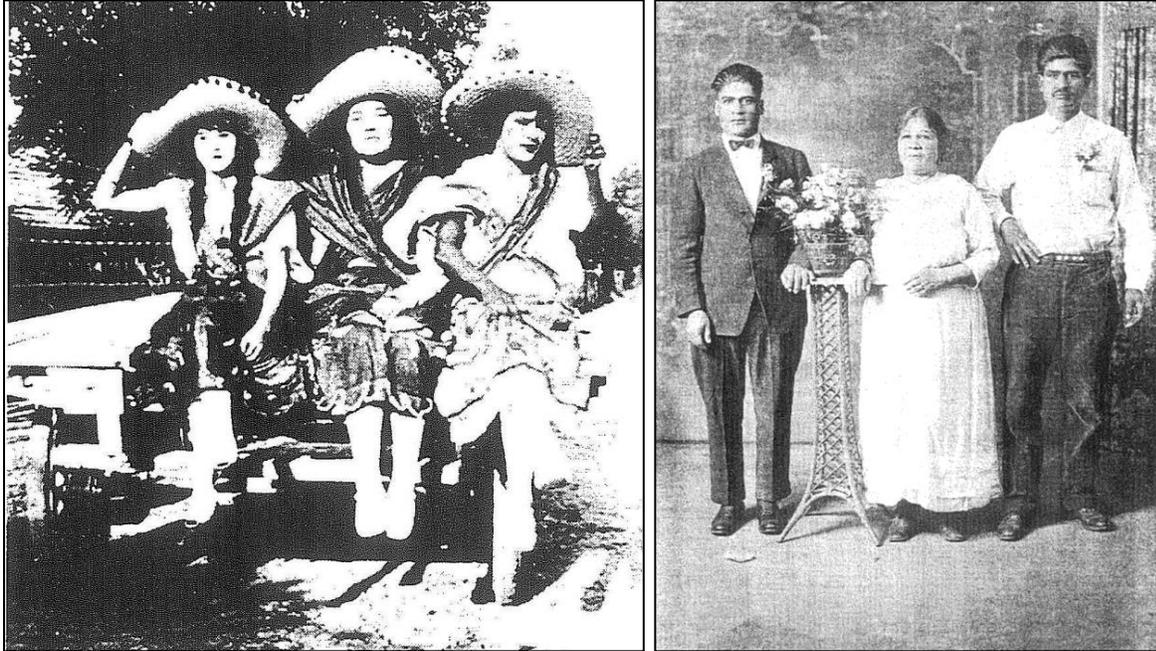
Thousands more came to the United States informally, hoping to either avoid the process or fees of applying for a visa or unaware of the legal requirements. In this way, this era brought about the rise of the “coyote,” or smugglers who moved people across borders without documentation. In this era, the demand for Mexican labor was such that smuggling immigrants across the border was often encouraged and monetized by commissions from US businesses.

As the decade opened, a new law imposed strict limits on immigration. However, the agricultural industry and lobby succeeded in keeping immigration numbers high for Mexican applicants, thereby securing the ever-expanding, low-wage workforce they needed. The 1924 Immigration Act created the Border Patrol, though the initial focus was on Chinese immigrants. In California through the 1920s, the rapid growth, as well as long-term presence, of the Mexican community translated into an emerging middle-class:

The growth of barrios and colonias fostered expansion of small businesses such as grocery and dry-goods stores, restaurants, barber shops, and tailor shops. Small construction firms emerged. Chicanos entered the teaching profession, usually working in private Chicano schools or in segregated public schools.<sup>26</sup>

The growth and diversification seen in California’s Latino community was also seen in Riverside. Between 1920 and 1930, the community grew nearly fourfold. By the end of the decade, Mexican natives and Mexican-Americans comprised just over 13 percent of the City’s total population.<sup>27</sup> The African-American community also experienced growth during the 1920s, in particular in the Eastside area. The population rose and fell with the agricultural seasons, as many Latinos worked as migrant farm workers and followed crop rotations elsewhere in the state or region after Riverside’s citrus season ended.

**Figure 11** Maria Victoria Cisneros (far left) and friends, dressed up for festival queen competition, ca. 1925, Porfirio Fuentes and family members on his wedding day, 1927 (right)



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Metropolitan Museum, *Nuestros Antepasados*

The 1920s brought the construction of Casa Blanca Elementary School, Saint Anthony's Church, and the Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine (originally St. Francis of Assisi Church), which was financed and built by community members. Through the years, these neighborhood institutions were the source of community pride as well as the focal points for gatherings, meetings, social events, dances and *jamaicas*, or charity bazaars. The arrival of religious and educational institutions also reflected the Latino community's growing presence and permanence in Riverside.

Although the Latino community was here to stay, the neighborhood of Casa Blanca still lacked the most basic infrastructure and services. The neighborhood lacked sewers, paved streets, and sidewalks. With no paved streets or proper drainage, during the rainy season Casa Blanca's streets became "muddy quagmires" and remained under water for much of the winter.<sup>28</sup> These problems would only intensify in the 1930s; paved streets would only arrive in Casa Blanca in the postwar period.

In Riverside, through the 1920s, there was also evidence of growing anti-immigrant sentiment and racism. In 1924, a local branch of the Ku Klux Klan held a rally at Polytechnic High School, with the permission of the school district. Thousands of Riverside residents were said to have attended the event (described in more detail below).

### *1930 – 1941: Great Depression and Repatriation*

The roaring 1920s came to an abrupt end with the onset of the Great Depression. Throughout California, the Latino community suffered the effects. Faced with the depression's economic slump as well as droughts in the Great Plains, Mexican immigrants were now actively discouraged from entering the United States. This represented a sudden, dramatic reversal of long-time immigration policy. This interruption of immigrant labor also affected the production lines of Riverside's citrus industry.

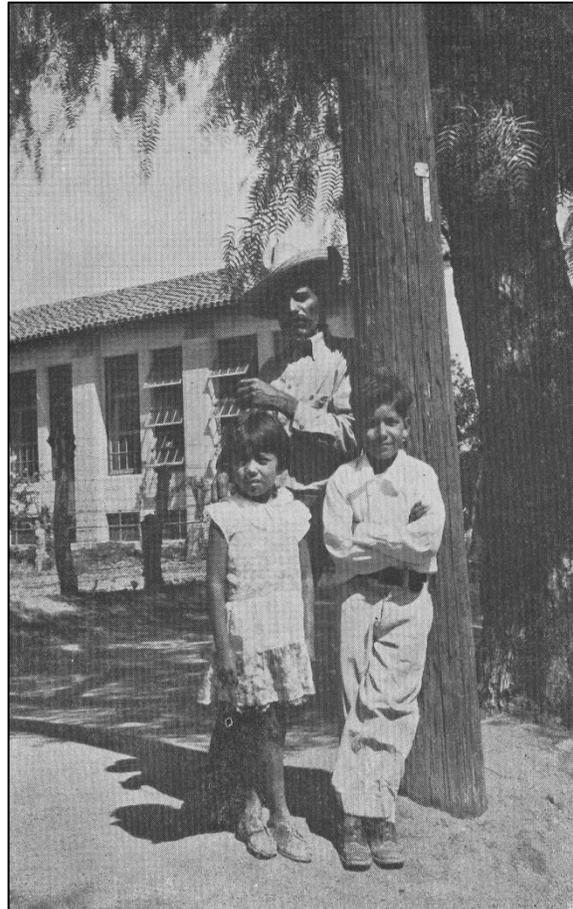
**Latino Historic Context Statement**

Mexican nationals as well as Mexican-Americans were also subject to a federal, “voluntary” repatriation program. Throughout the 1930s, this far-reaching program ultimately resulted in the expulsion and deportations of an estimated 500,000 Mexican-Americans. With the blessing and cooperation of federal, state, county, and local officials, and in coordination with the Mexican government, Mexican nationals and even Mexican-Americans were pressured to “return home” to Mexico (even though many of the affected individuals were American born). In reality, the program more often meant outright deportation rather than voluntary departure:

Mexican aliens who lacked documents of legal residency, including many who had entered the United States in good faith during an earlier period when immigration from Mexico was a more informal process, were particularly vulnerable. Among the victims of the process were naturalized and US-born husbands, wives, and children of Mexican repatriates, who had to choose between remaining in the United States or maintaining family unity by moving to Mexico.<sup>29</sup>

In this way, the 1930s brought a temporary reversal in the expansion of Mexican-American migration and settlement in the United States. Total numbers of Mexicans immigrating to the United States dropped more than tenfold, from nearly 500,000 in the 1920s to just 32,000 through the 1930s.<sup>30</sup> The Bureau of Labor, once so eager to attract Mexican workers to the US, now offered free passage to Mexico, for both native Mexicans and Mexican-American born children.

**Figure 12 Casa Blanca residents, Elisa Rodriguez and infant (left); Pete Hernandez and children, in front of Casa Blanca Elementary School (right), 1935**



Source: *Maestro*, M. Stowe Colvin, 1935

With millions of Americans suddenly unemployed, American views on Mexican labor shifted:

Previously welcomed as important contributors to an expanding agriculture and industry, Mexicans now were seen as ‘surplus labor.’ No longer considered the backbone of California agriculture and invaluable contributors to other employment sectors, Mexicans instead were viewed as an economic liability, and had become objects of resentment as recipients of scarce public relief funds.<sup>31</sup>

This climate directly affected the Latino community in Riverside, where repatriation efforts were led through “a partnership between the Bureau of Labor, the County Superintendent of Welfare and Relief, and the Mexican Consulate.”<sup>32</sup> Between 1931 and 1932, “these efforts would eventually result in deportation of 2,641 Mexican people from Riverside and San Bernardino counties.”<sup>33</sup> A surge in nativism and anti-immigrant sentiment was also evident, as Mexican natives and Mexican-Americans were scapegoated for a range of societal ills. In February 1930, for example, in response to the news that one-third of all births in Riverside were to Mexican and Mexican-American families, the *Riverside Press Enterprise* commented that,

With this steady increase in the Mexican population that we have in Southern California because of the high birth rate, it is certainly difficult to justify the agitation for more ‘seasonal labor’ from Mexico. Certainly Americans who are out of work do not enthuse over that view.<sup>34</sup>

Throughout this period, a number of Mexican native and Mexican-American residents either opted to leave Riverside or were forcibly deported. The numbers were particularly high leading up to the nadir of the Great Depression, in the early 1930s. As Riverside historian Paul A. Viafora noted,

In August 1931, the *Press [Enterprise]* reported that over 200 Mexican families had left Riverside. Less than nine months later, in April 1932, over 325 families left the city. In February 1933, *Hayden’s Weekly* claimed that over 2,000 Mexican families had left Riverside in just one week. Editor Hayden sarcastically lamented that ‘this should reduce the totals rung up on the cash registers in Riverside and San Bernardino shops. If times were good our merchants would no doubt ask the local chambers of commerce to resolute against the wholesale deportation.’<sup>35</sup>

One Riverside resident who saw family members deported was Herbert Sanchez.<sup>36</sup> Born in Casa Blanca in 1921, Sanchez lived in Riverside with his parents and brothers. His parents had immigrated to the United States in 1910. When Sanchez was twelve, his father and older brothers were forced to repatriate to Mexico, causing great hardships for the family. Another Riverside resident who witnessed repatriation was Esther Martinez. Martinez recalled that, based on the rumor about forced repatriation, in addition to the growing tide of racism and nativism, many Latino residents of Riverside decided to leave. As Martinez said:

A few relatives heard the rumor of repatriation. My Aunt Sally, she used to tell me, you should have seen, *mija*. You’ve seen those movies of the covered wagons? Well, this was a line of Model Ts, like the wagon trains, going to Mexico. ...And we just stood there and watched them until we couldn’t see them anymore. Because a lot of the relatives left. But my grandfather refused to go. He said, “I paid to come to this country, and I’m going to stay here!” It cost 2 cents, that was during Mexican Revolution.<sup>37</sup>

For Latino families and businesses remaining in Riverside, the exodus was a blow. The sudden loss of clientele, not to mention family members and friends, hurt the many small businesses that had emerged in Latino neighborhoods. In Eastside, for example, “almost all the Chicano-owned shops

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

along Park Avenue were forced to close their doors.”<sup>38</sup> Making matters worse, outside assistance was also lacking: “The chief activity of the Welfare Bureau with respect to needy Chicano families was to arrange for their repatriation, placing them on a train at the Colton depot and paying their fare to Mexico.”<sup>39</sup> Similarly, for Latinos who found themselves in need of legal services from the Welfare Department, the department’s response was to deport them to Mexico.

Some residents left the United States voluntarily to visit family members in Mexico, believing they would be able to return. One such Riverside resident was pioneering Latino business owner, Francisco (Frank) Lozano. In the early 1930s, Lozano had traveled to Mexico on a few occasions to visit his father (who, as a non-citizen, had been refused work in Riverside during the Great Depression). In 1935, while returning to the United States during one of these trips, Lozano did not have his papers and had trouble re-entering the country. He was allowed back in, but shortly after the Mexican consul contacted Lozano and advised him to leave the United States. If he left voluntarily, he was told, “he could return again in nine months, but if he didn’t leave voluntarily, it would cost the US government a lot of money for deportation costs.”<sup>40</sup> He decided to leave, with the assurance that he would soon be able to return to his Eastside home: “Lozano had family, a gas station and auto repair shop (the first on Eastside), and a pool hall on Park Avenue.”<sup>41</sup> The assurances of a quick return did not come to fruition, though, and Lozano was not allowed back into the United States for nine years. In the process, he “lost everything—his house, his restaurant, and his gas station.”<sup>42</sup>

After years of steady growth, the City’s two Latino-majority schools showed drops in enrollment. In 1931 at Casa Blanca School, for example, enrollment decreased from 468 to 383 between June and December 1931, in a loss that “exceeded the past gains in the previous five years.”<sup>43</sup> At Independiente Elementary School, enrollment dropped from 131 to 98 from June to December 1931.<sup>44</sup> Overall, in Riverside, the “Depression exodus reduced the size of the barrio.”<sup>45</sup> Even so, school enrollment numbers and population figures still reflected a large, permanent presence for Riverside’s Mexican-American community. Communities survived these years through a reliance on mutual assistance societies, neighborhood groups and churches, and each other.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, employment prospects picked up again, with a diversifying economy and the advent of defense-related work. With the US entry into World War II, the tide reversed, as California (and the country) faced a pressing labor shortage. Mexican workers were actively recruited through the Bracero Program. The population in Riverside saw a spike during the war years, including in Latino and ethnic-majority neighborhoods.

The 1930s brought an expansion of institutional offerings in ethnic neighborhoods. For example, in 1937, at Eighth and Franklin Streets in Eastside, Fire Station No. 4 was constructed, with designs by local architect G. Stanley Wilson. Based at Fire Station No. 4 was Captain Ed Strickland, the first African-American firefighter, engineer, and captain for the Riverside Fire Department. Born in Georgia in 1913, Strickland moved to Riverside with the family in 1918. He became known for his pioneering innovations in fire fighting equipment and technology.

Even so, municipal improvements and infrastructure remained lacking. In Casa Blanca, for example, as of 1940, only 42 percent of homes had sewer connections and only 34 homes reported the luxury of indoor plumbing.<sup>46</sup> Many families shared outdoor restroom facilities, in a shortage of services that would only be corrected in the postwar period. At the same time, rates of home ownership remained relatively high. Among 218 families surveyed, over 61 percent owned their homes, while 39 percent were renters.

**Figure 13** Saint Anthony's Church wedding, Isidro and Leonor Diaz, 1936 (left); Maria Chavez and family member at their Samuel Street home, Casa Blanca (right)



Source: Riverside Public Library, Shades of Riverside

**Figure 14** Photos, Riverside Latino families, 1920s through 1950s



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

*1941 – 1945: World War II: From Labor Surplus to Shortage*

As the war began, many Riverside Latinos enlisted in the US armed forces and were dispatched to serve in the war. At the same time, many new residents arrived, eager to participate in new defense-related employment opportunities. Long-time community leader and activist Simona Valero experienced this. The daughter of migrant farm laborers, Valero went to work for a base in San Bernardino assembling planes during World War II. This opportunity led to an administrative office job, and this office job ultimately led to positions with the Office of Economic Development and Riverside County Community Services Center in the postwar period.

Neighborhoods in Riverside had many challenges through this period, however. Between June and September 1943, the Community Settlement House conducted a survey of the Eastside neighborhood, for example.<sup>47</sup> A total of 50 women conducted the survey throughout Eastside, to over 300 homes. The survey area was Pachappa, Kansas, Eighth, and Pleasant Streets.

Among the survey area, approximately 56 percent of families rented their homes. Rents ranged from \$6.00 to \$40.00 a month, with the average of around \$16 a month. The average weekly income of the heads of household in Eastside was \$25.50 per week, nearly 50 percent less than the average weekly wage of industrial workers.

The Community Settlement House survey also offers a window onto the Eastside settlement boom during the war years. As of 1943, surveyors found that approximately one-third of families living in Eastside had moved to Riverside since 1940.<sup>48</sup> Along with this increased demand, however, some landlords started raising rents from 20 to 25 percent, “even though no improvements had been made” to the homes.

Indeed, another one-third of respondents noted that, if they could, they would relocate from Eastside; the main reason given was overcrowding in their homes. (Of course, the neighborhoods they could choose at the time were severely limited, due to official and unofficial housing discrimination.) Approximately one-third of the homes did not have adequate plumbing, and 10 percent did not have running water in their homes.

**Figure 15** Casa Blanca students support US troops through sales of War Savings Stamps, ca. 1944



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Metropolitan Museum

**Figure 16** Latino veterans of World War II, Our Lady of Guadalupe, circa 1945



Source: Courtesy of Phyllis Sotelo Salinas

### **THE BRACERO PROGRAM<sup>49</sup>**

The US entry into World War II brought another labor shortage to the United States. Policy reversed course, as repatriation in the 1930s turned to a renewed call for Mexican agricultural workers. In 1942, the US and Mexico launched the Bracero Program. Under the program, Mexican nationals would travel to the United States, under contract to work as agricultural labor:

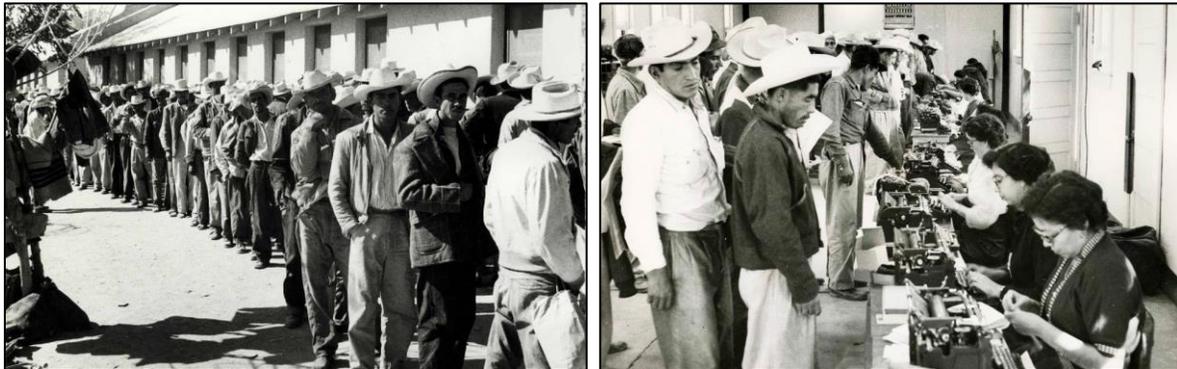
The turnaround from the labor surplus of the 1930s to the labor shortage of the 1940s had a special impact on agriculture and transportation. For help, the United States turned to Mexico, and in 1942 the two nations formulated the Bracero Program. From then until 1964, Mexican braceros were a regular part of the US labor scene, reaching a peak of 450,000 workers in 1959. Most engaged in agriculture; they formed 26 percent of the nation's seasonal agricultural labor force in 1960.<sup>50</sup>

The program promised housing, protections against discrimination, a guaranteed minimum wage, and complementary round-trip transportation. Due to poor federal oversight, however, many braceros were underpaid (or not paid at all). Mexican officials participated in selecting and screening men for the program. Workers knew they would be working in the United States, but would be assigned on an as-needed basis to "Washington for the apple crop, to Idaho and Montana for sugar beets, and to California for citrus and produce crops."<sup>51</sup>

The unintended consequence of the Bracero Program was ultimately a worsening of conditions for Mexican and Mexican-American farm workers, as wages dropped for all. Braceros were also prohibited from joining unions and going on strike, thereby depriving the workers of one available

remedy for demanding change. Another outcome of the program was an increase in the number of undocumented immigrants into California, which had more bracero workers than any other state. Ultimately, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) advocated for the end of the program. This era also ushered in a new backlash to undocumented immigrants, who were subject to widespread deportation in the early 1950s, in an operation called “Operation Wetback.”

**Figure 17 Bracero point of entry at Rio Vista Farm, El Paso County, Texas. Bracero workers awaiting processing (left) and completing work contracts (right)**



Source: El Diario, DF, Mexico, 4 March 2017

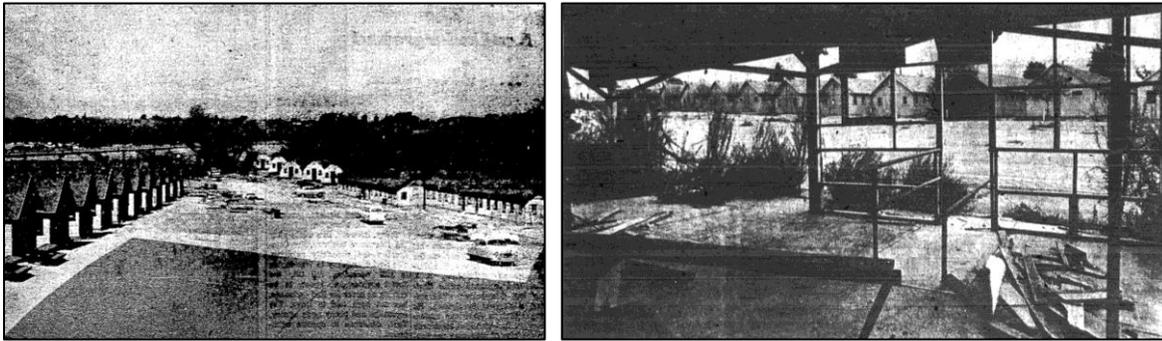
For braceros arriving to Riverside, the first stop was a government-run reception center in El Centro. The contract signed by braceros promised a minimum of 64 hours of work for two weeks, with deductions made for health insurance and housing. Given their varying work schedules, braceros were housed in temporary labor camps. Braceros appear to have been housed in a number of camps in Riverside. Although they do not appear extant, camps are said to have been located in De Anza Park and Fairmount Park. Casa Blanca was also home to a bracero camp, Campo Peralta, on Diamond Street. The organization of housing and kitchen facilities for braceros was handled by the Riverside Agricultural Association, a consortium of local packinghouses.

As of 1956, the City hosted nearly 500 braceros.<sup>52</sup> As noted in the *Riverside Independent Enterprise*,

The men now at the camp come from all parts of Mexico and are drawn from all walks of life. Whether taxi cab drivers, railroad engineers, carpenters or artists, all have come to California to pick citrus for one reason, to make money. Every two weeks, the average worker at the camp sends home between \$80 and \$100 to his family.<sup>53</sup>

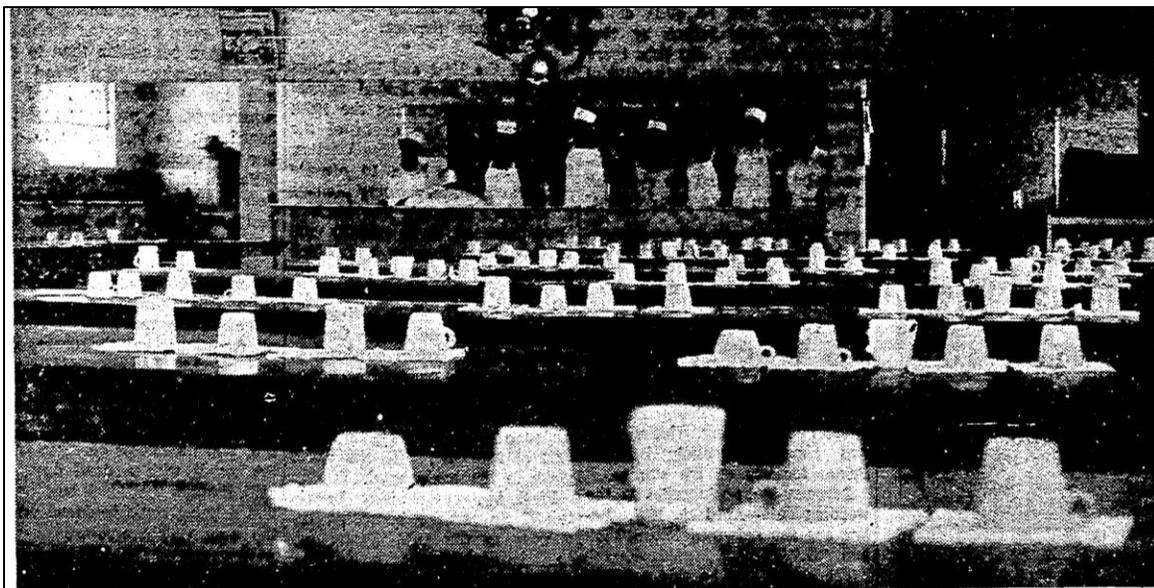
In 1954, one bracero work camp was relocated to an area just west of the City, at an 81-acre site near the corner of Jurupa and Van Buren Boulevards. Run by the Riverside Agricultural Association, the camp was constructed for an estimated \$25,000. Until 1971, after the Bracero Program ended in 1964, the camp continued to provide housing for workers in small bungalows, with showers and bathrooms, and a mess hall with accompanying cafeteria.<sup>54</sup> During the height of the program in the 1950s, the camp was filled to capacity, with 750 workers. Bracero contracts could run up to 18 months, after which the workers were required to return to Mexico for a given period of time. In the early 1950s, the minimum wage for braceros was 81-cents-per-hour. The men earned a minimum of \$8 a day, six days a week. “In Mexico, at that time, the farm laborers were getting about eight pesos a day, or about \$2,” says Rubio. Juan Virgen Diaz, a bracero who worked in Riverside’s citrus industry in the early 1960s, recalled earning \$8.00 a day, but paying an additional \$1.75 for room and board.<sup>55</sup>

Figure 18 Bracero Work Camp in Riverside, 1956 (left) and two years after its 1971 closure (right)



Source: Riverside Daily Enterprise, 18 March 1956 and 30 November 1973

Figure 19 New bracero work camp announced at Jurupa and Van Buren Boulevards, 1956



"Mamma" Chavez, center, and her kitchen staff have things spick and span again after serving breakfast to more than 480 men at the Mexican Nationals Camp mess hall. The men are served cafeteria-style in the new building which cost more than \$25,000. The mess hall can accommodate 300 men at one sitting.

**PICK RIVERSIDE NAVAL CROP**

**480 Laborers at New Mexican Nationals Camp**

By FORREST CRESS  
Some 480 men, helping Riverside area citrus growers bring in the current naval orange crop, are now housed at the new Mexican Nationals camp, north of Jurupa avenue near Van Buren boulevard.

The 81-acre camp, run by the Riverside Agricultural Association, was recently relocated from De Anza Park. The association's camp, under the jurisdiction of the fed-

teria-style in the mess hall by the kitchen staff.

Edward Boteler, association manager, and his office staff of four are located in the camp's small office building.

Although Mexican Nationals are used year-around to pick lemons, the camp more than doubles in population during the valencia and navel orange picking seasons.

The association draws its Mexican Nationals from a reception

are transported to the Riverside camp. The contract guarantees men a minimum of 64 hours work for two weeks, and deductions are made from their checks for health insurance. When they return to Mexico, the association pays for their transportation to the border.

**Time Limit**

The Mexican Nationals can work in the United States for a maximum of 18 straight months and then must return to Mexico for at

**Reuther New Horticulture Chief at CES**

Dr. Walter Reuther, former head of the University of Florida horticulture department, has been named chairman of the University of California's horticulture department at the Citrus Experiment Station here.

The nationally-recognized citrus authority joined the Riverside station last month as a horticulturist. In his new position, he succeeds I

Source: Riverside Independent Enterprise, 18 March 1956

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For workers, schedules were intensive, ranging from five to six days a week, with days starting with breakfast at the camp, and transport to the assigned packinghouse or field of the day. All workers were subject to a series of rules, with the punishment of deportation for noncompliance. For leisure, the workers had a television room and a small school, run by one of the workers: "He was not a very educated man, but he had a burning desire to pass on what he had learned to the other men."<sup>56</sup>

*1945 – 1975: Era of Expansion, Empowerment, and Engagement*

World War II represented a positive turning point for Latinos throughout California. The Great Depression "had left in its wake a population decline, devastated communities, and shattered dreams; the war brought population growth, resurgent communities, and rising expectations."<sup>57</sup> With the US entry into World War II, thousands of Latinos answered the call to arms. An estimated 500,000 Mexican-Americans served in World War II, earning 17 Congressional Medals of Honor.<sup>58</sup> One of the Medal of Honor recipients was Ysmael "Smiley" Villegas, a native of Casa Blanca who was killed in the Philippines one day before his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Villegas became the first Riverside County resident in history to receive the award for his valor and exceptional service.

World War II empowered a new generation of activists and community organizers, in Riverside and beyond. Returning veterans organized and actively asserted their rights to equal treatment and access, and the changes they helped bring about expanded their options in all areas of life, including settlement. In economic and sociopolitical terms, as well, World War II represented a turning point for the community. In California, Latinos made significant gains in employment and educational opportunities during and after World War II. In addition to a wider variety of jobs within reach for civilians, veterans qualified for assistance under the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, or the GI Bill. Through the postwar period, returning veterans from World War II, Korea, and Vietnam received educational subsidies and loans for housing and businesses. For some Latino veterans and their families, the GI Bill provided a viable path out of citrus and agricultural work.

On the national front, the adoption of federal legislation brought a number of changes in immigration and settlement patterns for Latino and other minority communities. These shifts came together to offer Latino families and workers new opportunities in employment, political representation and leadership, recognition, and access.

In 1964, the landmark Civil Rights Act was signed into law, outlawing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The law covered schools, places of employment, and public spaces and institutions. One year later in Riverside, in September 1965, a group of Latino and African-American parents and their allies presented a petition to the Riverside City School District for the immediate desegregation of city schools. The same evening, a fire was set at Riverside's segregated Lowell Elementary School. (A month before, in August 1965, the Watts Riots roiled Los Angeles, as frustration and anger over discrimination, unequal opportunities, and police brutality reached a breaking point in the African-American community in Los Angeles, resulting in a week of rioting.) These efforts led to districtwide desegregation in Riverside (a topic described in more detail below).

**Figure 20** Returning veterans parade in Eastside, circa 1945



Source: Courtesy of Phyllis Sotelo Salinas

**Figure 21** Ramona Sotelo, at the family home in the Streeter Tract, 2427 Pennsylvania Ave., 1952



Source: Courtesy of Phyllis Sotelo Salinas

Also at the federal level, in 1965, a new law was adopted that transformed US immigration policy. The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act established strict quotas for numbers of immigrants permitted from countries throughout the Western Hemisphere. However, with wages remaining low in Mexico, and with the Bracero Program ending in 1964, immigration (albeit undocumented) continued into the United States from Mexico and Latin America. In Riverside, the gradual erosion of farmland to housing tracts propelled many new immigrants out of farming and agriculture jobs and into manufacturing and the service sector. In some pockets of neighborhoods, people of color had more freedom to purchase and rent homes. At the same time, the arrival of neighbors of color triggered “white flight,” or “panic selling,” as in Riverside’s Eastside neighborhood in the mid-1950s.

As new generations arrived, Riverside’s majority Latino and ethnic neighborhoods came of age and into their own. Federal civil rights legislation from the 1940s through 1960s signaled the gradual rolling back of racially restrictive housing policies, both official and unofficial. With this, many Latino and African-American families were able to move into new neighborhoods. As of the early 1970s, some 20,000 Latinos lived in Riverside. As the Latino middle-class grew, Latino residents and families “began to move out of the Eastside and Casa Blanca areas to live in other parts of Riverside.”<sup>59</sup> As of 1972, the neighborhoods of Casa Blanca and Eastside had approximately 2,000 and 3,000 Latino residents, respectively, with most Latinos residing in other areas, such as Arlington Heights, La Sierra, Arlanza, and Northside.<sup>60</sup>

**Figure 22** Arlington resident, Mrs. Basilia Alvarez, “Mexican Mother of the Year,” 1960 (left); Wedding of Johnny Carrillo and Sally Soliz, Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, 1952 (right)

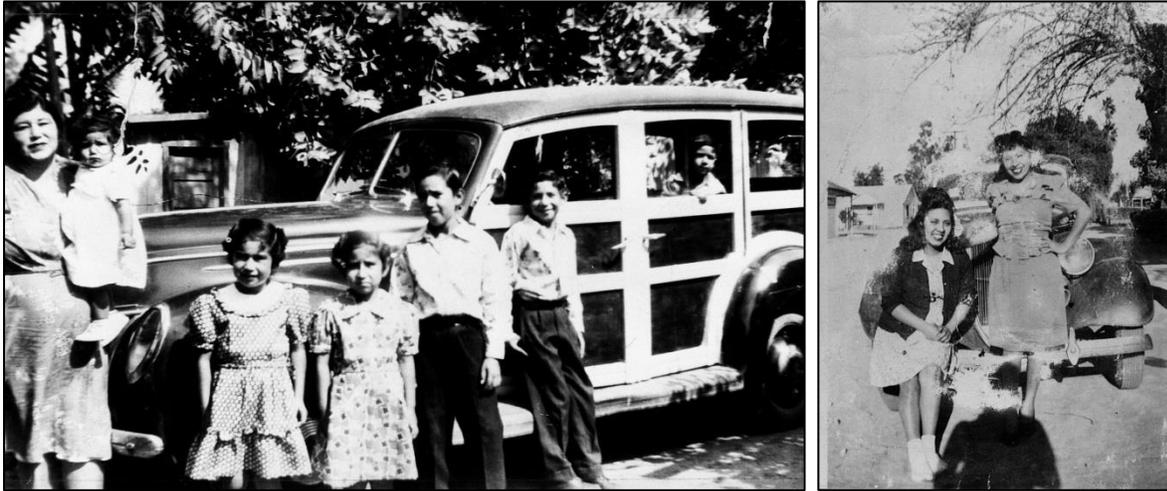


Source: Riverside Daily Enterprise, 10 May 1960 and Riverside Co. Mexican-American Historical Society

For its part, Riverside itself also expanded. Following three major annexations, the City nearly doubled in size, growing from 39 to 72 square miles between 1945 and 1964. By 1970, the population had expanded threefold, growing from just over 46,000 in 1940 to 140,000 by 1970.<sup>61</sup> Neighborhoods that had been the heart of Riverside’s Latino community for generations—Casa Blanca and Eastside—also changed. Casa Blanca’s relative isolation and citrus-grove setting shifted as expansive new housing developments were constructed in the 1950s. With the postwar housing boom and construction of the nearby freeway, by the 1960s, Casa Blanca was surrounded by new middle-class residential tracts. The core of the neighborhood continued to consist of about 400 homes, “established almost 40 years ago as a Mexican-American colonia.”<sup>62</sup> The neighborhood was

still predominantly single-family residential in character, with an estimated 90 percent of residents owning their own homes. Eastside had a higher rate of rentals and multifamily housing.

**Figure 23** Diaz family, ca. 1955 (left); Candelaria and Clementine, Casa Blanca, ca. 1950 (right)



Source: Courtesy of the Riverside Metropolitan Museum and Riverside Public Library

Casa Blanca itself still lacked the basics in infrastructure, with no sewer system, sidewalks or paved streets. In the postwar era, citizens joined forces, organized, and lobbied the City for much-needed municipal improvements to the neighborhood. These efforts were successful. After circulating petitions and securing funding for assessments, modern sewer lines, paved streets, sidewalks, and streetlights arrived in Casa Blanca in the early 1950s. In 1956, in a nine-part series by Harry Lawton, the *Riverside Press Enterprise* took note of these improvements – as well as lingering challenges – in Casa Blanca and other Latino and ethnic neighborhoods in the City. Through this series, Lawton explored many facets of postwar change and empowerment in the Latino community in Riverside:

During the war, many Casa Blancans found better job opportunities. And veterans returning home had a new sense of pride in their Mexican-American heritage. ...The changes which occurred in Casa Blanca can not be attributed to any one person's leadership or any one group. They represent combined efforts of a community, which has acquired a firm sense of civic responsibility.<sup>63</sup>

### *Post-1970 Demographic Shifts and Diversity*

The Latino community in Riverside has historically been (and remains) predominantly Mexican and Mexican-American. In the postwar period, the presence of other groups started to expand, with immigrants arriving from South and Central America, for example.

This pattern is reflected in the US overall, as the country's Latino population grew increasingly diverse beginning in 1970. Immigrants from Central America began arriving in higher numbers through the 1970s. In Los Angeles, for example, between 1970 and 1980 the populations of Salvadorans increased nearly ninefold, from 7,700 to 61,600. Similarly, the population of Guatemalans in Los Angeles increased sevenfold from 5,600 to 38,000 during the same period.<sup>64</sup> According to US Census figures, among 18,493,000 million Hispanic residents of the United States, a total of 86 percent entered the United States after 1980.<sup>65</sup> In subsequent decades, a total of 27 percent, 33.5 percent, and 7.8 percent entered in the 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s.

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For new immigrants from Mexico, the draw to the United States remained employment opportunities. Many immigrants were drawn to existing Latino neighborhoods, which provided a sense of community and familiarity. Between 1980 and 2000, among the 15 California counties with the highest Mexican populations, Riverside ranked 8<sup>th</sup> (1980) and 5<sup>th</sup> (in 1990 and 2000), following Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, and San Bernardino.<sup>66</sup>

As of 1970, the share of Latino residents in Riverside was estimated at 12.7 percent in the City overall, but 80.5 percent in Casa Blanca.<sup>67</sup> While Riverside's population had grown from 84,300 to 140,000 between 1960 and 1970, the population of Casa Blanca was stable, growing only 4.7 percent between 1960 and 1970.<sup>68</sup> Many newcomers from Latin America arrived in the Eastside neighborhood, and increasingly other neighborhoods with emerging Latino neighborhoods.

As of 1980, the population of Eastside was just over 11,000 residents, with most living in the neighborhood's eastern half. According to UC Riverside geography professor Paul Wright, this was due to the concentration of new residential development and construction in this area. New arrivals from countries throughout Latin America also helped raise the share of Latino members of Eastside.

Overall, in Riverside, as of July 2017, a total of 52 percent of Riverside's total population, estimated at just over 320,000, identify as Hispanic or Latino.<sup>69</sup> A vast majority of these residents are Mexican-American or Mexican natives.

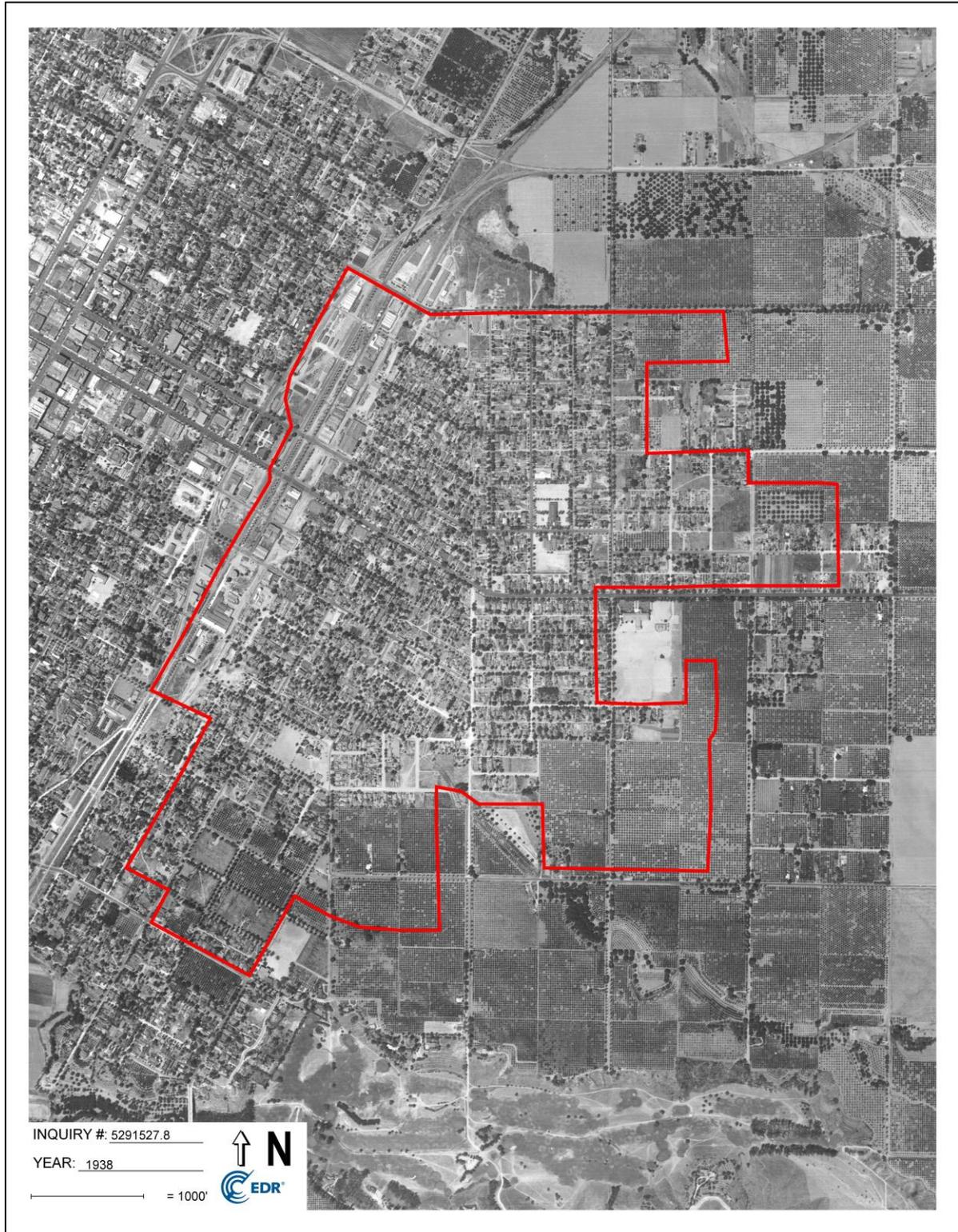
*Visual Overview of Casa Blanca, Eastside, Arlanza, and Northside, 1930s to 1960s*

**Figure 24** Agricultural fields give way to housing tracts and development in the postwar period, as shown in aerial photographs of Casa Blanca (enclosed in red), in 1938 (top) and 1967 (bottom)



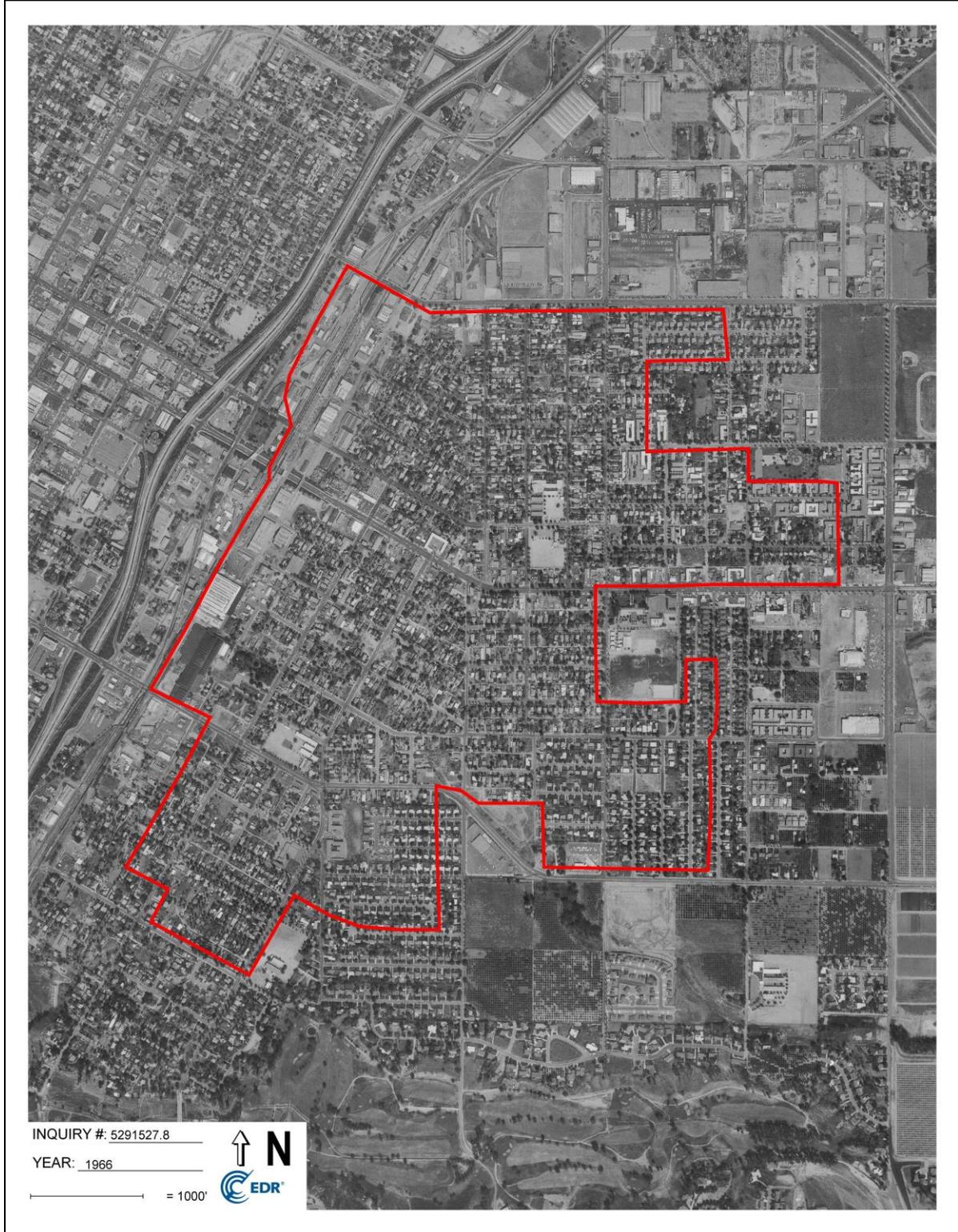
Source: Environmental Data Resources, 2018

**Figure 25** 1938 aerial photograph shows agricultural fields and groves around the Eastside neighborhood



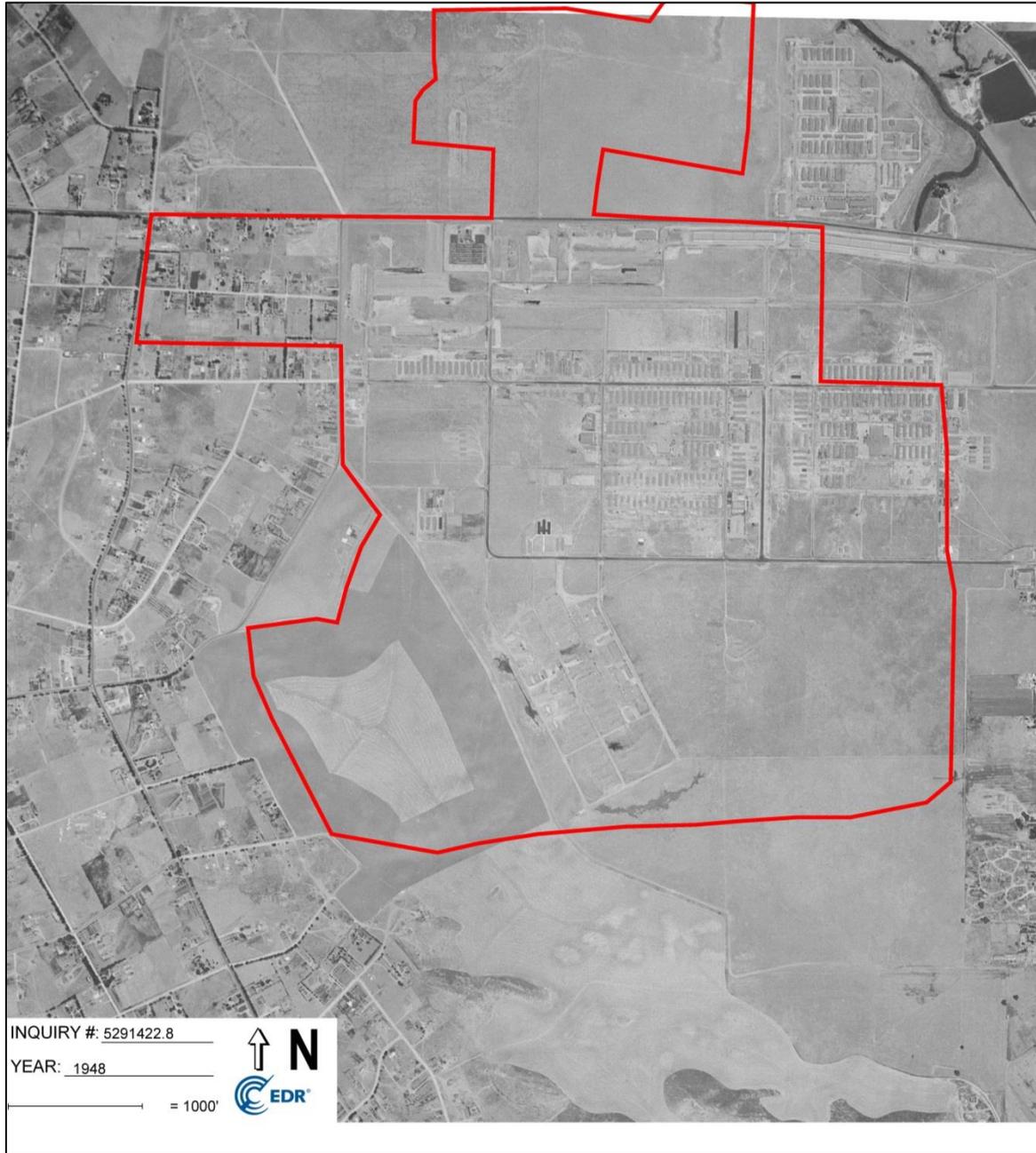
Source: Environmental Data Resources, 2018

**Figure 26** 1966 aerial photograph shows new construction and housing tracts in the place of former groves in Eastside



Source: Environmental Data Resources, 2018

**Figure 27 1948 aerial photograph of Arlanza, with Camp Anza as one of the neighborhood's earliest built resource environments**



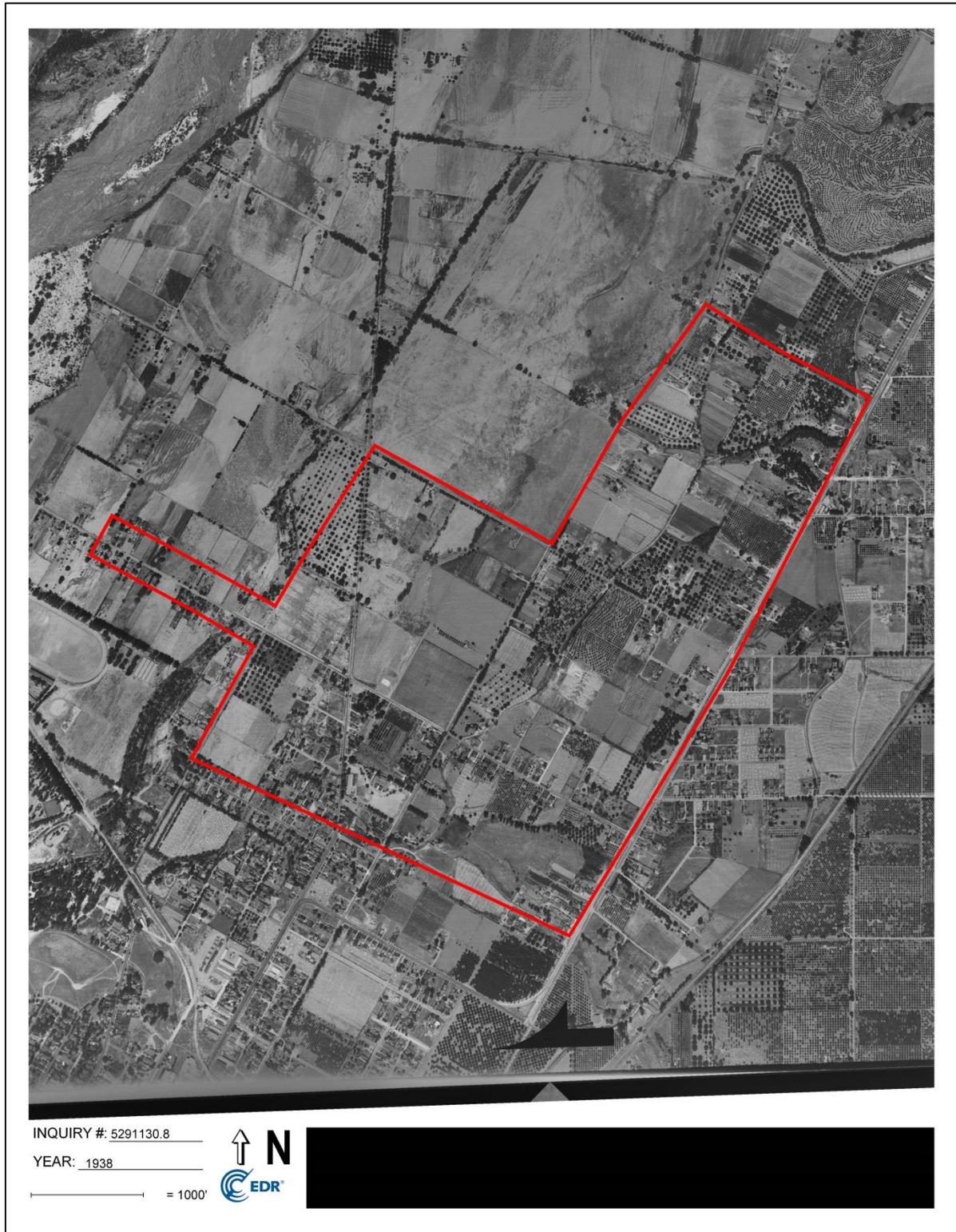
Source: Environmental Data Resources, 2018

**Figure 28 1959 aerial photograph shows Arlanza transformed by postwar housing boom**



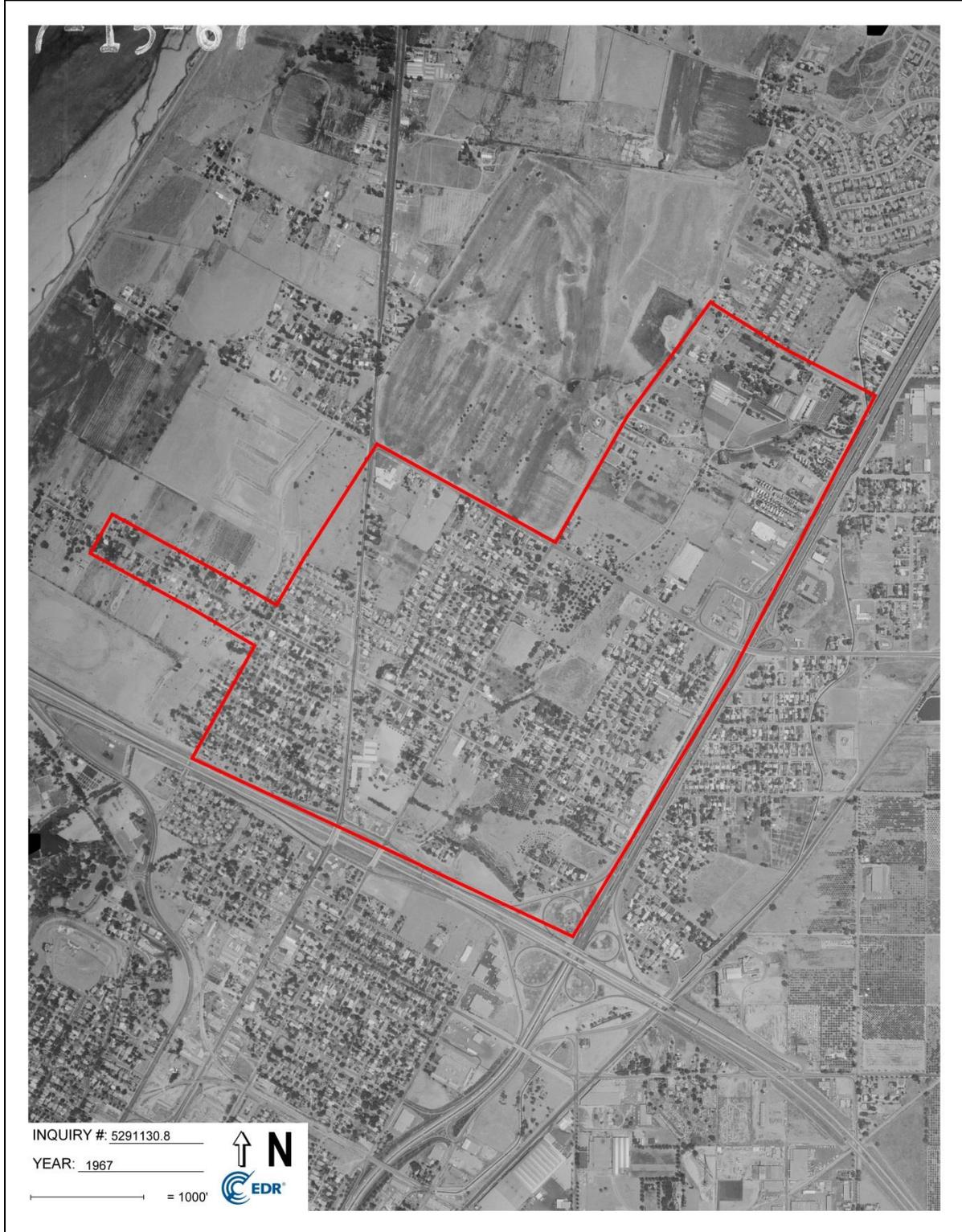
Source: Environmental Data Resources, 2018

Figure 29 1938 aerial photograph shows a sparsely developed Northside neighborhood



Source: Environmental Data Resources, 2018

**Figure 30** 1967 aerial photograph shows Northside neighborhood transformed by postwar housing and construction boom



Source: Environmental Data Resources, 2018

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## Subtheme #2: Community Building and Mutual-Assistance Organizations

“I am very much concerned about my fellow man and very much want to do something about our social problems, the problems we are confronted with daily.”  
— Jesse Ybarra, Community Settlement House Director, 1969<sup>70</sup>

In Latino neighborhoods throughout the United States, exclusion from the outside often translated into active community building efforts from within: “Barrios and colonias developed and survived through a combination of force and choice.”<sup>71</sup> As provisional settlements became permanent, self-contained neighborhoods, as Gilbert Gonzalez wrote, “The village was home, neighborhood, playground, and social center.”<sup>72</sup>

The focus became the extended family, church, and community social life. Latinos “developed communities that included churches, sports teams, entertainment groups, and *mutualistas* – mutual aid societies – which took care of the community members and helped provide funds for labor organizing.”<sup>73</sup> These descriptions aptly describe the development of Riverside’s Latino neighborhoods.

Throughout California, as well, numerous mutual assistance leagues and organizations emerged as the Latino community grew. Many groups were locally based, others were chapters of national groups, such as the Riverside branch of the Alianza Hispano Americana, which was founded in 1894. Among the many groups to emerge in the early twentieth century, membership and goals varied:

Some organizations were exclusively male or female; others had mixed membership. Most developed as representative of the working class, but others were essentially middle or upper-class, or reflected a cross-section of wealth and occupations.

Although each *mutualista* had its special goals, they all provided a focus for social life with such activities as meetings, family gatherings, lectures, discussions, cultural presentations, and commemoration of both U.S. and Mexican holidays.<sup>74</sup>

The range of assistance provided by mutual aid societies reflected the level and degree of need among the Latino community:

Most provided services, such as assistance to families in need, emergency loans, legal services, mediation of disputes, and medical, life, and burial insurance. Some organized libraries or operated *escuelitas* (little schools), providing training in Mexican culture, Spanish, and basic school subjects to supplement the inferior education many Chicanos felt their children received in the public schools.

Mutualistas helped immigrants adapt to life in the United States. Many mutualistas became involved in civil rights issues, such as the legal defense of Chicanos and the struggle against residential, school, or public segregation and other forms of discrimination. Some engaged in political activism, including support of candidates for public office.

At times, mutualistas provided support for Chicanos on strike. Coalitions of Chicano organizations were formed, such as *La Liga Protectora Latina* (Latin Protective League) and *El Confederación de Sociedades Mexicanas* (Confederation of Mexican Societies) in Los Angeles.<sup>75</sup>

In Riverside, with one of California’s oldest Mexican-American settlements, mutual aid societies were the bedrock for the community from its earliest years.<sup>76</sup>

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As elsewhere, mutual aid societies in Riverside served the dual purpose of providing a social network while also protecting and advocating for the rights of community members. Some were founded by people outside the community, such as the Community Settlement House, which arrived in Riverside in 1911.

As early as 1902, Mexican natives and Mexican-Americans in Riverside established a worker's union/mutual aid society, *Sociedad de la Vella Union de Trabajadores*. In 1907, the *Superior de la Unión Patriótica y Beneficia Mexicana*, "dedicated to aiding fellow Chicanos during hard times."<sup>77</sup> Overall, such mutual assistance organizations, clubs, and recreational institutions became part of the social fabric and a way of building community.

Through the 1920s, new groups included the Mexican Colonia of Casa Blanca, and the Mexican Honorary Welfare Commission. In Riverside, as elsewhere, mutual assistance organizations provided more than material support to the Latino community. As Vicki Ruiz noted, "Forming patriotic associations, mutual aid groups, church societies, and baseball teams, Mexican immigrants created a rich, semiautonomous life for themselves."<sup>78</sup> According to Ruiz, women became the central force behind community building and organizing efforts:

As farm worker mothers, railroad wives, and miners' daughters, [Mexican women] negotiated a variety of constraints (economic, racial, and patriarchal). ...Mexicanas claimed a space for themselves and their families building community through mutual assistance while struggling for some semblance of financial stability. ...Whether living in a labor camp, a boxcar settlement, mining town, or urban barrio, Mexican women nurtured families, worked for wages, built fictive kin networks, and participated in formal and informal community associations.<sup>79</sup>

Although the groups might diverge in goals and approach, mutualistas and other groups often joined forces in community events and fundraisers.

*La Alianza Hispano Americana (Hispanic-American Alliance)*

Mutual assistance societies helped fill the gap in material and social resources for many community members. One of the early groups, founded in 1920 in Riverside, was a branch of the national *Alianza Hispano Americana*, one of the largest and most prominent Mexican-American mutual aid societies in the American southwest. At a time when agricultural workers had no insurance or job security, one of the critical services provided by the *Alianza Hispano Americana* was employment and life insurance. Members paid monthly dues in return for a variety of benefits, including unemployment or funeral expenses.

During the Great Depression, the *Alianza Hispano Americana*, in conjunction with the Mexican Colonia of Casa Blanca, and the *Comisión Honorífica Mexicana* (Mexican Honorary Welfare Commission), staged parties and dances as fundraisers to aid the community. In a show of solidarity, the City waived permit fees for these events to maximize earnings. The *Comisión Honorífica Mexicana* also provided legal advice and economic assistance to farm workers.

Figures 31 and 32 Riverside Alianza Hispano Americana chapters, circa 1925



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Metropolitan Museum

*Sociedad Progresista Mexicana (Mexican Progressive Society)*

An important, long-term mutual assistance group in Riverside was the *Sociedad Progresista Mexicana*. With two groups in Riverside, Chapter No. 26 in Casa Blanca and Chapter No. 55 in Eastside, the *Sociedad Progresista Mexicana* provided a range of social and economic services to the community, including life insurance. As Simona Valero recalled, a branch of the *Sociedad Progresista Mexicana* was formed in Riverside

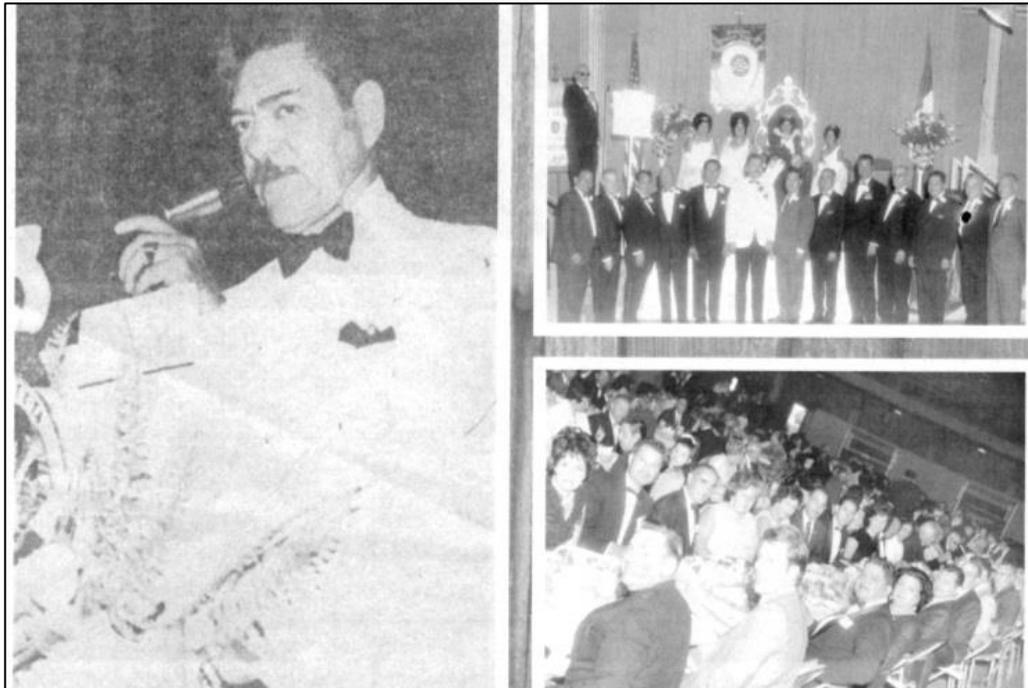
when our families, Mexican families, had no social life whatsoever. You just couldn't walk into any restaurant or even a barber shop. The motto of the Sociedad was “*Educacion, respeto y patriotismo*.” That's education, respect and patriotism.<sup>80</sup>

In this way, one of the organization's goals was preserving the language, customs, and traditions of Mexican culture. The group came together to offer charitable contributions to local causes, such as the City of Hope, and also provided yearly scholarships to Mexican-American students. As Valero recalled, the City had many mutual aid societies, but the *Sociedad Progresista Mexicana*

was one of the ones that really bloomed. There was a small death benefit to it, but the members only paid, let's say, like \$40 dollars or \$50 dollars a year and if the beneficiary died they received a thousand dollars. ...And we still have those members in Casa Blanca. I belong to it. We still have 32 members.<sup>81</sup>

For over 53 years, one local member of the group—and three-term state president—was John Valero. A native of San Luis Potosi, Mexico, Valero “found comfort in attending meetings of the *Sociedad Progresista Mexicana*” when he arrived in Riverside in 1942.<sup>82</sup> In Riverside, Valero met his wife Simona. Settling in Simona's native Casa Blanca, the couple raised four children. After working as a bracero in the 1940s, John spent many years as an employee of Riverside City College, working as a custodian. In 1970, Valero was elected state president of the *Sociedad Progresista Mexicana* at a time when membership spanned 68 chapters and 18,000 members.

**Figure 33 John Valero, president, and Chapter 26 of the Sociedad Progresista Mexicana**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

### *Community Settlement House*

Some important assistance organizations originated from outside the community. One example was the Community Settlement House, established in 1911 in Riverside. An outgrowth of the American Settlement Movement, Casa Blanca's Community Settlement House initially provided one volunteer social worker and a paid nurse to serve the community. The organization evolved and expanded through the years to encompass a wide range of services. As described by the Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society, the Community Settlement House was one of the most important spaces for the Latino community throughout its existence. It was where community members went to speak and read English, take classes in arts, crafts, cooking, and prenatal care. A well-baby clinic was also provided to the community.

In addition, the Community Settlement House offered tutoring as well as toy and book loans through a small library. Services offered for seniors included transportation to appointments, assistance with shopping and social services, as well as recreational and social events. (The Community Settlement House is described in more detail below.)

### *Postwar Mutualistas and Community Building*

During the postwar period, many Latino families in Riverside experienced gradual increases in standard of living, access to services, and political power. Greater resources also propelled more mutual aid societies and neighborhood improvement organizations into action. In 1956, the *Riverside Daily Press* took note of the range of groups in Casa Blanca. The Ysmael Villegas American Legion Post 838, established in 1949, "dedicated itself to a program of community services and has had an active role in almost every improvement effort" (described in more detail below).<sup>83</sup> In 1951, the Casa Blanca Welfare Association was formed to provide services "aimed at improving health of children and educating residents in health measures. The association has provided milk for school children and aided residents in meeting medical and dental bills."<sup>84</sup> In 1954, the Casa Blanca Improvement League was created.

In 1956, Casa Blanca neighborhood groups joined forces to author a response to a *Saturday Evening Post* article about their neighborhood entitled "The Slum That Rebelled."<sup>85</sup> Residents took issue with a contention in the article that changes to the neighborhood had come suddenly, and through the actions of a few residents. In a letter signed by Villegas American Legion Post 838, its auxiliary group Los Vagabundos, La Sociedad Progresista Mexicana, La Beneficia Sociedad, and the Mexican Association of United Workers, Casa Blanca residents explained the long history of community advocacy and improvements. The response by these groups served not just to correct the record but also to illustrate the cohesiveness already well established in the community.

### *Casa Blanca Home of Neighborly Services*

In 1956, the national organization, Home of Neighborly Services, opened its seventh California branch in Casa Blanca. The Casa Blanca Home of Neighborly Services opened at 7665 Railroad Street (currently, the primary address is 7680 Casa Blanca Street). The facility became an important center for social life and assistance in the community, with many educational programs and field trips for children. As of 2018, the organization still operates at 7680 Casa Blanca Street.

In the summer of 1957, the *Riverside Daily Press* featured a photograph of children from the Casa Blanca community heading for the organization's annual Play Day in Elysian Park in Los Angeles. The newspaper described the field trip and the activities of the Home of Neighborly Service:

City of Riverside  
**Latino Historic Context Statement**

The bus loads Casa Blanca youngsters for the second annual Play Day at Elysian Park in Los Angeles on Saturday in which Southern California's seventh Home of Neighborly Service centers took part. ...About 46 young people went from Casa Blanca last year. Registration this year was nearly 100. A modest fee is charged per registrant. Activities at Play Day are arranged according to age level and include hiking, games, singing and social dancing.

**Figure 34 Casa Blanca Home of Neighborly Service, 1957**



Source: Shades of Riverside, Riverside Public Library

**Figure 35 Casa Blanca Home of Neighborly Service, circa 1956**



Source: Shades of Riverside, Riverside Public Library

*Casa Blanca Community Services Center (Casa Blanca Opportunity Center)*

Funded through the County's Economic Opportunity Board, the Casa Blanca Community Services Center opened on 21 March 1966 as an anti-poverty agency, offering support and assistance center for the primarily Latino residents of Casa Blanca. Originally known as the Casa Blanca Opportunity Center, the office was an outgrowth of federal anti-poverty measures launched under the administrations of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. Between 1964 and 1968, the director of the federal Office of Economic Opportunity was Robert Sargent Shriver. In 1966, Shriver travelled to Riverside to visit community members and farm laborers in Casa Blanca, to learn more about their needs and to see the Office of Economic Opportunity's local projects in action.<sup>86</sup> With federal funding in jeopardy, Shriver also came to encourage citizens to take over the program at the local level, a step that was ultimately taken.

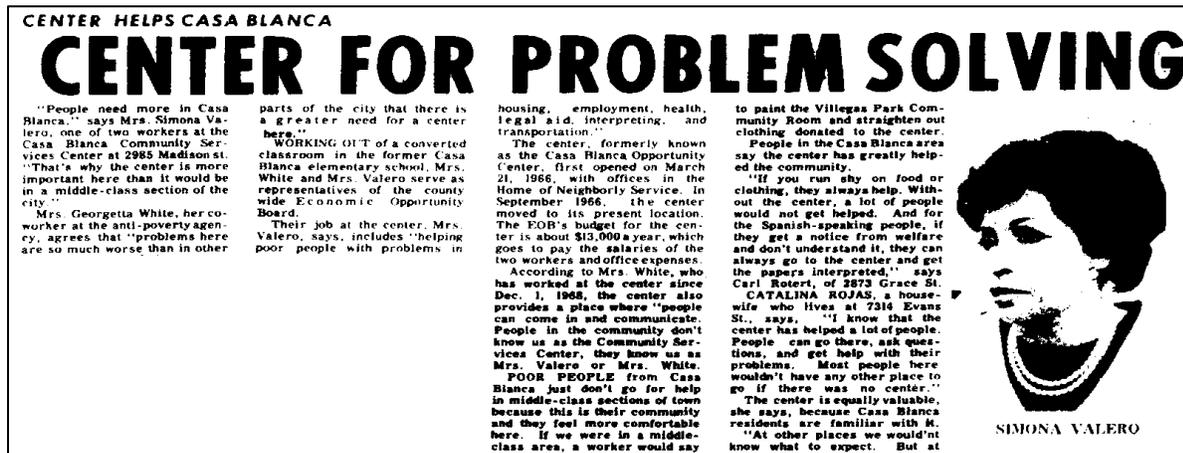
For many years, the Community Services Center was staffed by Simona Valero and Georgette White. The office was originally based out of the Home of Neighborly Service. It ultimately moved to an office in the Casa Blanca Elementary School. The office was funded through the Economic Opportunity Board, with an annual operating budget of \$13,000.

Ultimately, the success of the program rested with its staff members, Valero and White, who were engaged with and understood the community. As White said, "people in the community don't know us as the Community Services Center, they know us as Mrs. Valero or Mrs. White."<sup>87</sup> Casa Blanca resident Carl Rotert explained that, "if you run shy on food or clothing, they always help. Without the center, a lot of people would not get help. And for the Spanish-speaking people, if they get a notice from welfare and don't understand it, they can always go to the center and get the papers interpreted."<sup>88</sup>

While a number of other organizations provided support to the community, the Community Services Center was an all-purpose agency. In essence, the assistance they provided depended on what the clients needed:

Their job at the center, Mrs. Valero says, includes 'helping poor people with problems in housing, employment, health care, legal aid, interpreting, and transportation. ...I help people with any problem that they have.'<sup>89</sup>

Figure 36 Casa Blanca Community Services Center and Simona Valero, 1972



Source: *El Chicano*, 26 January 1972

*Spotlight on: Community Settlement House and Director Jesse Reyes Ybarra*

For over a century, the Community Settlement House in Riverside has served the Latino community. From 1959 through 1981, Jesse Reyes Ybarra served as one of the organization's most influential and respected executive directors.

The Riverside branch of the Community Settlement Association was founded in 1911 by Mrs. Kate Wheelock.<sup>90</sup> Wheelock was the wife of Arthur Wheelock, an early teacher of music and history in the Riverside City School District and later district supervisor from 1928 to 1941. The organization's mission was to assist foreign-born immigrants, mostly Mexicans working in the citrus groves, and their families, with their transition and the process of "Americanization."<sup>91</sup>

**Figure 37 Community Settlement House, 1917 (left) and 1920 (right)**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Co. Mexican-American Historical Society and Winship & Lazzaretto, 2016

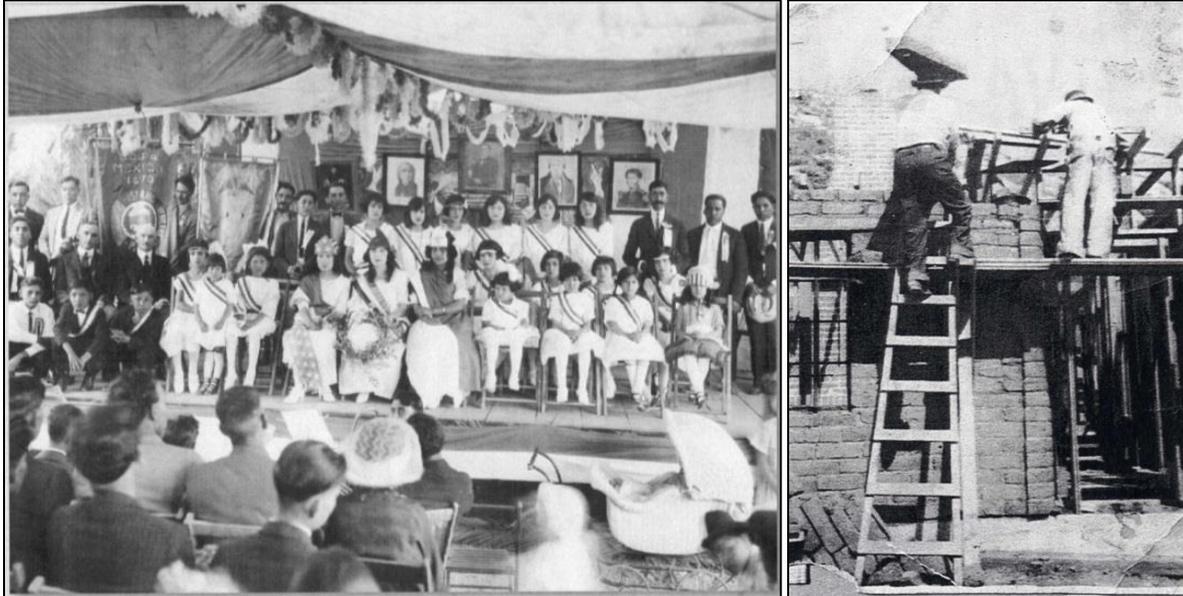
Upon opening in Riverside, the Community Settlement House provided one volunteer social worker and one paid nurse to serve the community. Services evolved and expanded along with the times to encompass a wide range of services for community members. As described by the Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society, the Community Settlement House was where people came to learn to speak and read English, to take classes in arts, crafts, cooking, and prenatal care. A well-baby clinic also provided services to the community. For children and students, the Community Settlement House offered tutoring and provided toy and book loans through a small library. Services offered for seniors included transportation to appointments, assistance with shopping and social services, as well as recreational and social events such as yearly celebrations and festival for Cinco de Mayo and 16 de Septiembre (Mexican Independence Day).

The first permanent location for the Community Settlement House was in a former Presbyterian mission on Fourteenth Street in Eastside. When it opened, "by newspaper accounts, the need was so great that over 1,000 people had come to the Community Settlement House for assistance."<sup>92</sup> By 1917, a larger, City-owned campus opened at 2933 East Thirteenth Street. As Riverside historian Tom Patterson noted in 1981:

The new facilities occupied a former pool hall, fish market, and store in Lincoln Park in the heart of Riverside's Eastside Community. The facilities included a nursery school, a clothing store, bathing facilities, laundry facilities, classrooms/recreation hall, a transient cottage, and a maternity cottage. All of these services were immensely popular; eleven babies were born in the maternity cottage between May and September of 1927 alone.

In 1932, the clothing store served 1,477 customers and stocked the racks with merchandise made or repaired by the primarily Latino women who participated in sewing classes at the Settlement House.<sup>93</sup>

**Figure 38** Cinco de Mayo at the Community Settlement House, ca. 1935 (left); Gregory Avila and community member building the new Community Settlement House building in 1947 (right)



Source: Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society and Riverside Metropolitan Museum

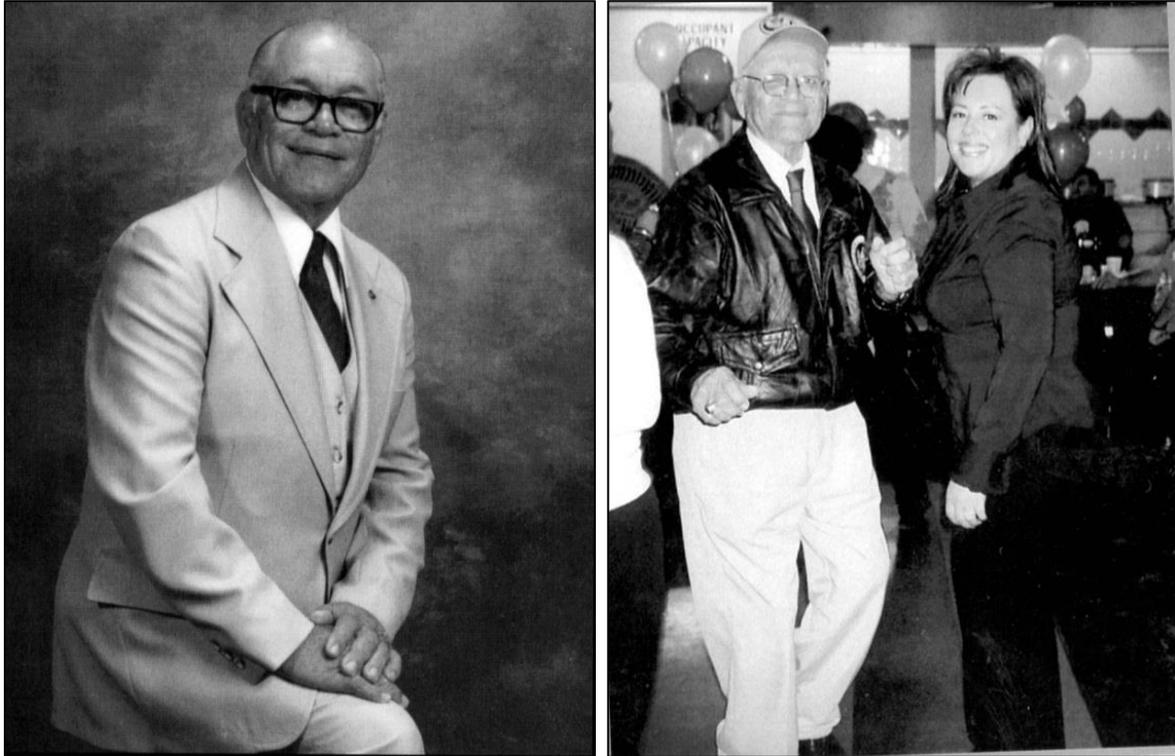
In 1941, city funding for the Community Settlement House was ended by Riverside Mayor Walter D. Davison. Mayor Davison also asked the organization to “vacate the City-owned buildings on Thirteenth Street in Lincoln Park. At that time, operations ceased and the Community Settlement Association was disbanded.”<sup>94</sup> Upon reorganizing in 1943, under new leadership, the Community Settlement House launched a survey of residents “to determine what services were most needed. The result of the study concluded that residents needed health clinics/prenatal care, sewing instruction, citizenship classes, and social etiquette classes.”<sup>95</sup>

After using a temporary building on the grounds of Irving Elementary School, the new Community Settlement Association board raised \$25,000 for a lot on Bermuda (formerly Mariposa) Avenue. “In 1947, the first adobe building, designed by architect G. Stanley Wilson opened for service. It housed the offices and served small programming needs.”<sup>96</sup> Although the facilities have since expanded, the 1947 adobe, located at 4366 Bermuda Avenue, survives.

In 2011, the Community Settlement Association “celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of service to the Latino community of Riverside.”<sup>97</sup> In December 2017, the 1947 building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its importance in ethnic heritage and for the Latino community in Riverside. The organization’s evolution and expansion through the 1950s was chronicled in the National Register of Historic Places nomination:

By 1957, funding for the Community Settlement House was coming from local businesses, individual donors, and regional foundations. It provided a wide range of community services including citizenship classes, sewing classes, a nursery school and parenting classes, a toy loan program, and many other services. The Community Settlement House was also the meeting place for various community groups such as Boy and Girl Scouts, numerous teen organizations, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In later years, services were expanded to include senior citizens programming, gang prevention programs, after-school programs, legal-aid clinics, job assistance, and crisis counseling.<sup>98</sup>

**Figure 39** Jesse R. Ybarra, decorated World War II veteran, community leader, and Community Settlement House director, shown in ca. 1975 (left) and ca. 2006 (right)



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society and Luana Ybarra Hernandez

### **JESSE R. YBARRA, DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY SETTLEMENT HOUSE (B. 1916, D. 2007)**

From 1959 to 1981, the director of the Community Settlement House was Jesse R. Ybarra, a beloved and well-respected civic leader throughout the Inland Empire (and beyond). Ybarra was “instrumental in giving the community direction” and assistance, working closely with City, county, police, health and school boards.<sup>99</sup> As Riverside County community relations specialist Andres Soto said, “One word to describe Jess is commitment... He cares not only about what happens to the Eastside but the city of Riverside.”<sup>100</sup>

Born in Texas in 1916, Ybarra was the son of Ascencion and Maria Ybarra. Ascencion was a mine worker who died in a mining accident when Ybarra was young. During World War II, Ybarra served as a medic in the 86<sup>th</sup> Infantry. On 13 April 1945, Ybarra’s division crossed the Rhine River into Hagen, Germany, in a fierce battle. For his exceptional valor and bravery, Ybarra received the Bronze Star.

Upon completing his service, Ybarra returned to Texas and finished his education. He attended college with support from the GI Bill, receiving his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. Ybarra worked at the Mexican Christian Association in San Antonio for many years until accepting the directorship of Riverside’s Community Settlement House. Ybarra moved with his wife, Velia, and two daughters, Luana and Azalia, to settle in Riverside, which he made his permanent home.

As director of this key institution for the community, Ybarra went above and beyond the call of duty to serve all community members: “Ybarra’s day, technically, runs from 9 to 5 but it’s a rare day that he isn’t still on the job long after five. People bring their problems to him throughout the day. They

come to him for everything from financial problems to what to do about a problem child, he said. Some just drop by his office to chat.<sup>101</sup>

One area of focus for Ybarra was on improving inter-racial and inter-neighborhood communication. As he said in 1969, “The big problem now is what can we do to better understand each other, how can we best live together as Americans regardless of racial or ethnic backgrounds.”<sup>102</sup> In order to address this issue through the Community Settlement House mission, Ybarra actively encouraged inclusion for staff and board members: “We have an integrated staff, an integrated board, working in an integrated community,” he said in 1969. “This is the only way we can solve our problems. Everyone must work together.”<sup>103</sup>

Ybarra designed initiatives to improve communication between the generations, with a youth group at the Community Settlement House called *Los Norteños*, (The Northerners), a co-ed group devoted to community service and social activities. As director, Ybarra took

a personal hand in all of the [organization’s] programs, from counseling to the children’s toy loan library. ‘He’s been the person that has really made the Settlement House run. He always wants to be helpful to the people he’s trying to serve. I don’t know what we’d do without him.’<sup>104</sup>

Assisting Ybarra throughout his tenure was Dorie Anderson. According to Linda Salinas-Thompson and Luana Ybarra Hernandez, Anderson was a “vital part of the community. She was aware of who needed help and was there for that person. ...These two leaders were such a big part of our lives... Many of us grew up at the Settlement House, it was our second home.”<sup>105</sup>

In addition to his work at the Community Settlement House, Ybarra served as chairman of the Brown Baggers, a Riverside-based Chicano civil rights group, and was an active member of the American GI Forum, MAPA, Eastside Community Action Group, American Civil Liberties Union, NAACP, and the American Legion Post 79, among others. As he said in 1969, “I work with all organizations in the community...It could be the most militant or the most conservative. My job is to work with the minority and the majority, to bring both groups together for the good of the community.”<sup>106</sup>

In terms of Ybarra’s own leadership style, he managed to be as outspoken as he was well respected. In circa 1971, Ybarra penned an editorial for the local *Press-Enterprise*, observing that “As a Mexican-American and a member of a minority group, there are a certain number of reservations I have about Riverside’s centennial celebration.”<sup>107</sup> The reason for his reservations, Ybarra said, was the ongoing discrimination and marginalization of Mexican-Americans, who had to “hyphenate our citizenship so as to identify ourselves and be recognized.”

His civil rights work included seeking equal opportunities for Chicanos and people of color. In the mid-1970s, he joined in calls for an investigation of the City’s hiring practices. The issue regarded the hiring of an Anglo-American director for the Riverside Parks and Recreation Department, after a Mexican-American interim director was passed over for the job. This effort was led by the Coalition de la Raza, a key civil rights group in Riverside that united a range of organizations. Through the Coalition de la Raza and the Brown Baggers, Ybarra and other Chicano leaders joined forces to write to the Equal Employment Commission. Joining this coalition was Alberto Chavez, director of UC Riverside’s Chicano Student Programs department.

By the time of his death in 2007, Ybarra was widely recognized and honored by leaders throughout the state for his work in community support, civic engagement, and civil rights work. Ybarra, a decorated veteran of World War II, was interred at the Riverside National Cemetery.

**Figure 40 Architect G. Stanley Wilson's Community Settlement House, 1947**

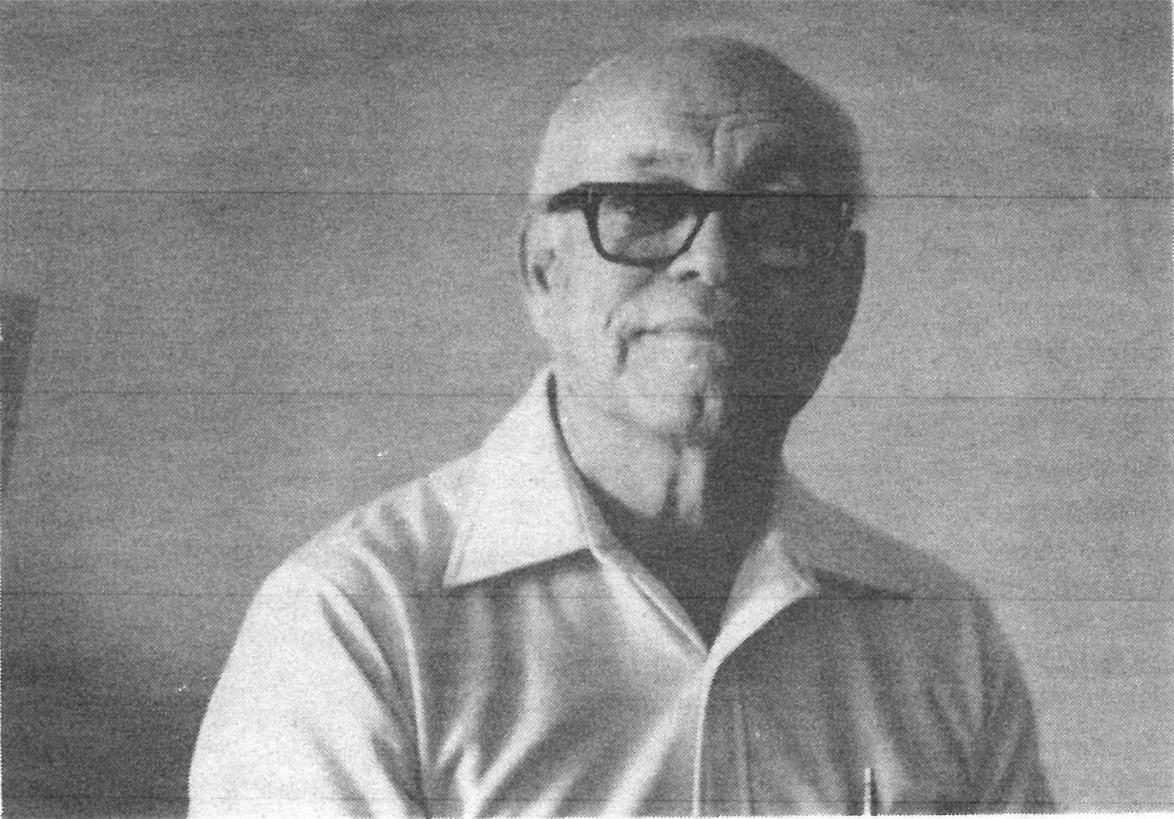


Source: Winship & Lazzaretto, 2016

**Figure 41 Jesse Ybarra, his wife Velia, and their two daughters, Luana and Azalia, 1959**



Source: Courtesy of Luana Ybarra Hernandez

Figure 42 Jesse Ybarra profile in *La Semana*, 21 October 1982


**Jesse R. Ybarra**

## Personality Closeup

*By Bill Medina*

This week's personality close up will be featuring Jesse R. Ybarra. Mr. Ybarra was born in San Antonio, Texas, September 18, 1916, the son of Asension y Maria Ybarra. Marrying Velia Gallegos in 1942, they later had two children, Azalia Hardy and Luana Hernandez who both are married and presently live out of town. Jesse Ybarra went to schools in San Antonio, dropping out of school in the eighth grade to pick cotton, he

community.

One of Mr. Ybarra's first hurdles in Riverside was the integration of it's schools. Jesse Ybarra was a member of a special committee formed during the sixties to bring about the integration of Lowell Elementary School in Riverside. He indicated that it was unfortunate that the RUSD (Riverside Unifted School District) headed by superintendent Miller at

Source: *La Semana*, 21 October 1982, courtesy of Luana Ybarra Hernandez

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## 4.2 Theme #2: Making a Living

### Subtheme #1: Citrus and Agriculture Workers

For many decades, citrus-related agriculture was the primary industry of Riverside, until residential and commercial development consumed most of the vast orange groves in the late 1940s and 1950s. The age of the orange began in Riverside in the 1870s, when Eliza Tibbets introduced the Washington Navel Orange. The crop transformed Riverside and the surrounding region. By 1880, an expansive citrus industry was already well established. Much of Riverside was covered or surrounded by orange, lemon, and lime groves. Citrus crops required vast areas of land, as well as a variety of support industries, including packinghouses, warehouses, labor camps, and the railroad lines.

As of 1882, among the half-million orange trees in California, an astonishing 50 percent were growing in Riverside.<sup>108</sup> As the citrus industry boomed, so did Riverside. In just one decade, between 1880 and 1890, orange production grew eighty-fold, from 19 train carloads in 1880 to over 1,500 carloads by 1890 (with an estimated 286 boxes of oranges per carload).<sup>109</sup> By the mid-1930s, the United States Department of Agriculture heralded the introduction of the navel orange as “one of the outstanding events in the economic and social development of California.”<sup>110</sup> The success was due to the skill of the farmers, the railroads, as well as boosterism of the region as an unrivalled “tourist destination and a livable community.”<sup>111</sup> Above all, the success of the citrus economy was due to citrus workers—large pools of low-wage labor, living nearby, and available on short notice for picking, sorting, packing, and grading.

From the beginning, citrus work meant long hours, physically demanding work, and low wages. The earliest citrus laborers in Riverside had been the local Native American population. By the 1880s, Chinese immigrants had become the main source of citrus labor, working as pickers, packers, and irrigators. As increasingly restrictive immigration laws first slowed then halted Chinese immigration, Riverside citrus producers turned to Japanese immigrants. Japanese citrus laborers began in the early 1890s. By 1900, nearly 3,000 Japanese laborers were employed in Riverside in the citrus industry alone. Riverside also had a sizable Korean workforce, who participated in citrus work and seasonal labor; the Korean settlement, on the edge of Eastside near Cottage and Pachappa, was one of the earliest Korean settlements on the US mainland. The original site of the Korean settlement, Pachappa Camp, is now a City Point of Cultural Interest, designated in December 2016.

In the early twentieth century, a new wave of anti-immigrant sentiment, this time aimed at the Japanese, drove them out of the citrus labor market throughout California. Mexican laborers came to replace Chinese and Japanese laborers as the majority workforce. In Riverside, these jobs were provided through the citrus industry and railroads, as well as nearby cement plants and rock quarries. By the end of the 1910s, Mexican immigrants had “replaced all other ethnic laborers in California’s citrus districts” and became “the nucleus of the industry’s workforce from 1919 up to the [late twentieth century].”<sup>112</sup> This influx suited the growers’ needs, as they had wanted a reliable, available, low-wage work force. In order to retain workers, the California Fruit Growers Exchange established an Industrial Relations Division to “oversee recruitment, housing, and Americanization programs among Mexican workers and their families. The Exchange and its manager intended to make this group of workers a permanent fixture on the citrus landscape.”<sup>113</sup> (Later, the California Fruit Growers Exchange also actively lobbied to maintain healthy levels of Mexican immigration, during World War I and following passage of the 1924 Immigration Restriction Act.)<sup>114</sup>

Figures 43 and 44 Arlington Heights groves (top) and citrus workers in Riverside (bottom), ca. 1910



Source: California Citrus Heritage Recording Project, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

### *Growth of the Latino Workforce in Riverside's Citrus Industry*

During the labor shortage of the 1910s, Mexican workers “were uniquely pursued as permanent labor” and “aggressively recruited by ranchers.”<sup>115</sup> In 1919, in the *First Annual Report of California Citrus Institute*, J.D. Culbertson described the ranchers’ view of their Latino workforce:

According to ranch managers, boards, tin, iron, canvas, sacks, and other materials found near the ranch quickly became walls, floors, and canopies in the resourceful hands of Mexican workers. Culbertson found it remarkable that out of the self-constructed ‘impoverished sordid-looking camp’ that preceded company-constructed housing the ‘best type’ of Mexican labor emerged each Monday morning. He described the laborers as ‘men with clean washed clothing—jumpers and overalls, as well as shirts and bandanas—showing the wholesome effects of soap and water. These men could be depended upon for a full-measure day’s work.’<sup>116</sup>

The push-pull factors of the Mexican Revolution (driving people out) and US policy and practice (attracting people in) impacted the character of the workforce. In California, by mid-1920s, Mexican and Mexican-American workers “constituted fully two-thirds” of the citri-culture work force and “citrus growers and other agribusiness groups swore that they could not do without their loyal, tireless, and reliable” Mexican workers.<sup>117</sup> Both men and women participated in this workforce, with men most often serving as pickers, and women working in packing and grading jobs. As noted by UC historian Catherine Gudis, through trade journals such as *The California Citrograph*, growers actively sought incentives to maintain “a cheap, dependable, and reproducible labor force. One [writer] advised readers to ‘encourage substantial home life of Mexican families so that there may be a more uniform supply of labor’ and another explained that having a home attracts ‘the reliable Mexican, who wants to make his home here permanently.’”<sup>118</sup>

The value placed on Mexican and Mexican-Americans as workers did not translate into generous benefits and treatment, however. In fact, in order to attract and retain Mexican workers, growers developed discriminatory housing practices that tied workers to the land and indebted them to their employers. In one example, at Sespe Ranch in Ventura County, white and Japanese workers were offered segregated residences for rent, ranging from \$6.00 to \$6.50 a month. Mexican workers, in contrast, “were required to build and finance the construction of their own houses,” thereby deliberately binding them to the ranch.<sup>119</sup>

**Figure 45** Riverside citrus packinghouse, ca. 1910 (left); citrus packers, Victoria Avenue Packinghouse, 1928 (right)



Source: Riverside Metropolitan Museum and California Citrus Heritage Recording Project, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**Figure 46 National Orange Company Packinghouse, 3604 Commerce Street, Riverside**



Source: California Citrus Heritage Recording Project, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

During this time, the United States Department of Agriculture joined calls for permanent settlements of citrus workers, given the threat of World War I labor shortages to agricultural output and productivity. In this way, for many ranchers, housing policy for workers ultimately became

a form of social control designed to enhance profits. What is remarkable, though, is the degree to which it forced the growers, however reluctantly, to recognize Mexican workers as permanent members of their own community, not floating aliens or homing pigeons.<sup>120</sup>

For citrus workers, establishing a fixed home base was feasible, given the extended work cycle. Compared with other crops, the citrus cycle was relatively extended, lasting up to eight months out of the year. This gave workers more time in one place, and more stability as a result. In citrus towns like Riverside, the result was the establishment of permanent citrus *colonias* or small neighborhoods. When the citrus season wrapped up for the year, “citrus families would often make the migrant circuit north picking grapes and cotton in the San Joaquin Valley or perhaps heading southeast to the rich agricultural fields near Coachella. However, they had a home and community awaiting their return.”<sup>121</sup>

Throughout California, the itinerant work schedule for farmer workers came about through the rancher’s wish to shift the economic risk of ranching to their laborers. Rather than employing (and paying) a stable workforce year round, ranchers opted for a large, flexible supply of low-wage laborers who could arrive with the harvest and move on when it was completed.

Given the unpredictability of agricultural production, this model helped lessen economic risks for farmers, though in turn it made the life of workers difficult and unpredictable: “As a consequence, the livelihoods of citrus workers were tied to a choreographed movement between the region’s agricultural crops.”<sup>122</sup>

**Figure 47 Jameson Packing Plant, Riverside, ca. 1940**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Public Library, Shades of Riverside

The migrant worker's life was described by Blas Coyazo, an Inland Empire citrus worker:

Sometimes we went up to Fresno to pick grapes, some years we used to do that. Stay a couple of months over there and pick grapes and finish the grape season, it's only about a month. And then from there...its time for the cotton in a place called Corcoran.... And that would keep us away for a couple of months, or maybe three months, in the meantime, the oranges were coming to season here again, and that's why we came back to wait for the season to start again and pick oranges.<sup>123</sup>

Long-time Riverside resident Steve Solis remembers a similar lifestyle. Solis and his family members worked in the packinghouses in Riverside. When the citrus season finished, Solis recalled, family members "would travel down to Orange County and work down there. If it was light around here, all my aunts and my uncles would travel up north and pick grapes. So, wherever there was any work, they would finish up and then they would go elsewhere."<sup>124</sup> Solis's grandfather, who emigrated from Oaxaca around the time of the Mexican revolution in 1910, was "a picker all his life. He picked in the orchard."<sup>125</sup>

For Latinos in Riverside, the itinerant schedule of the farm worker affected education, housing, and social integration. In response to the absence of students during portions of the year, the city school district instituted an attendance fee, which proved prohibitive for many Latino families. Apart from the itinerant schedule, the work itself was difficult and physically demanding. Ordinarily, men and their sons would head out to the fields by four o'clock in the morning each day:

Each picker took his picking sack and clippers. The clippers were usually modified to stay attached to his hand. He also took a canteen of water, often made from a hollowed out gourd, and a lunch of tacos...

**Figure 48** Members of the Venegas, Lozano and Vasquez families, working the apricot season in Hemet, ca. 1940 (left); Manuel and Robert Venegas, 2018 (right)



Source: Riverside Co. Mexican-American Historical Society and *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 16 July 2018

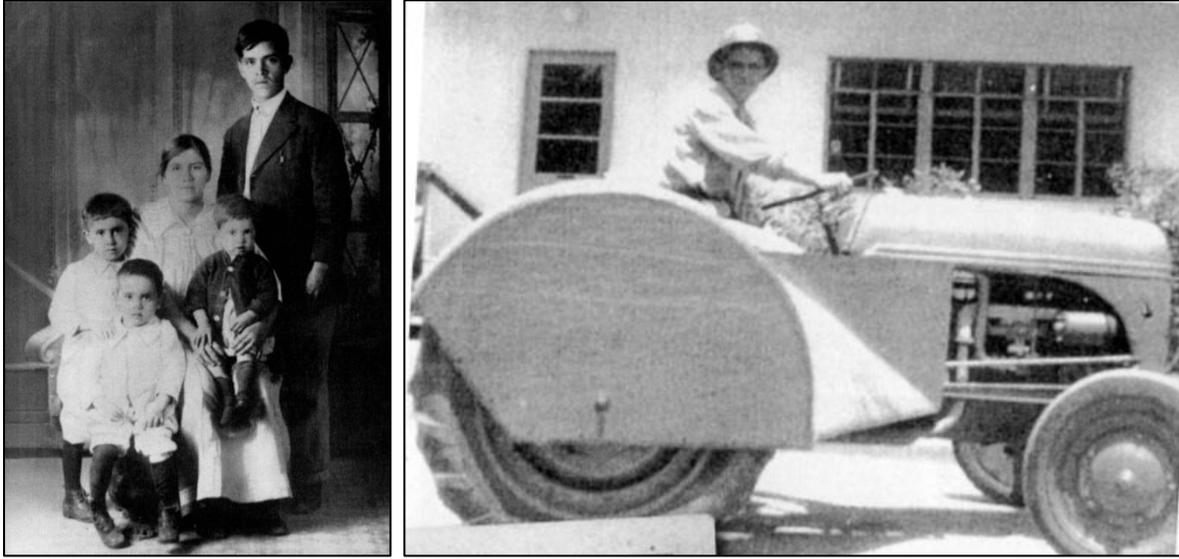
Upon arrival, which might take from fifteen minutes to two hours, someone was designated to ‘haler las brazas,’ or light a cooking fire. At lunch time, workers warmed their tacos by throwing them directly onto the embers.

Pickers worked at a furious pace, since they were paid by the amount of fruit picked. In the 1920s and 1930s, pickers received 3-5 cents per box of picked fruit. One full picking sack, weighing about fifty pounds, equaled roughly one box of fruit. On a day with good groves and good weather, most pickers averaged about 60 boxes of fruit. Some very fast pickers could fill 100 boxes per day. This exclusive group received the name ‘campeones,’ or champions.<sup>126</sup>

For many agricultural workers in Riverside, the citrus industry provided long-term employment spanning decades. Many Latinos, among others, earned a living and set the stage for the forward advancement of their families through agricultural work. Juan Jose Machuca, for example, worked as a citrus worker for over 40 years. Born in Mexico, Machuca came to Riverside as a young man. He was a member of the Lady of Guadalupe Shrine and the *Sociedad Progresista Mexicana*.<sup>127</sup>

Another long-time citrus worker in Riverside was Henry Bermudez.<sup>128</sup> A native of Mexico, Bermudez moved to the United States with his family in the late 1910s, at the age of seven. For over half a century, Bermudez worked for many ranchers in Riverside’s citrus industry, becoming well respected for the breadth of his experience and knowledge in all aspects of the industry. His first citrus job was at the Arlington Heights Packinghouse on Dufferin Avenue, Riverside. For a period of time, Bermudez worked as a grove irrigator during the days, and at night worked part-time at the Arlington Heights Packinghouse to make “fruit crates for the packing and shipping of oranges, lemons, and grapefruits.”<sup>129</sup> At times, this activity turned into a family event for Bermudez and his wife Maria: “Some evenings Maria would take the children, Linda, Dorothy, and Evelyn to help in assembling the wooden crates, mixing paste for the labels, and pasting the labels on the crates.”<sup>130</sup> For many years, Maria also worked in the citrus industry as a packer for the Blue Banner Packinghouse.

**Figure 49** The family of Henry Bermudez, before leaving Mexico for Riverside in the 1910s (left); Henry Bermudez at work in Riverside citrus industry, ca. 1950



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Another early agricultural and citrus worker in the Latino community was Jess Avila. After marrying in 1927, Avila and his wife Lupe settled in Eastside, at the corner of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Park Avenue.<sup>131</sup> From their home in Eastside, the Avilas raised four daughters and one son, Mary Lou Avila de la Torre, Catherine Avila Sanchez, Stella Avila Sanchez, Gloria Avila Vasquez, and Rudy Avila. Avila picked grapes and migrated according to crop rotations throughout the state. In his citrus farming work, Avila was in charge of planting and nursing orange seedlings for Blackman Ranch. In addition to advising ranchers on the optimal timing for harvesting and transplanting of trees, Avila prepared hybrid plantings for oranges, grapefruit, and lemons.

The examples of Bermudez and Avila show just a few of the many ways in which citrus workers could advance and distinguish themselves. Another means of advancing was becoming a crew chief or field foreman. Both positions required being bilingual as well as bicultural, to “effectively interact with both Euro American and Mexican pickers.”<sup>132</sup> From the 1930s through the 1950s, one of Riverside’s best-known field foremen was Melchor Rangel.<sup>133</sup> Melchor was a native of Guanajuato, Mexico, who came to Riverside in 1914 as a young boy with his family. Among crew chiefs, two well-known men were Alejo Chagolla (otherwise known as “Alejo grande,” or big Alejo) and his nephew Alejo Chagolla (“Alejo chico,” or little Alejo). The two relatives “pooled their resources, bought two flatbed trucks, and became crew chiefs.”<sup>134</sup>

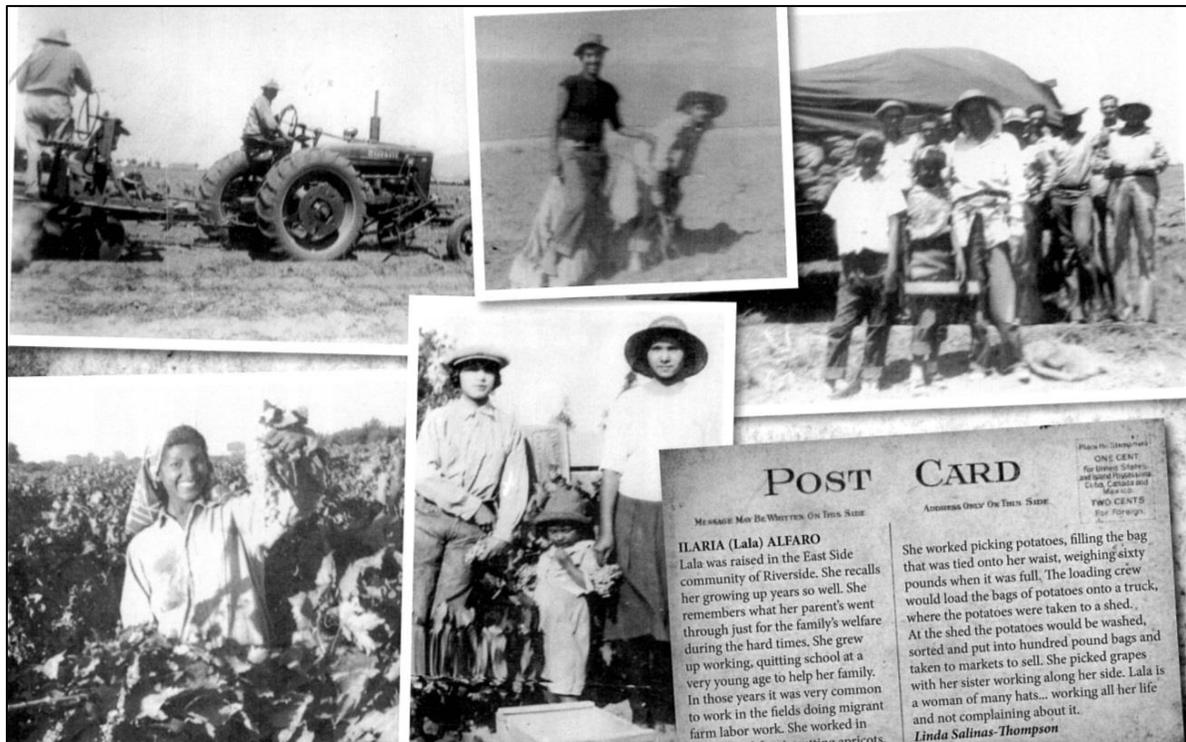
For women, jobs in the packinghouses were “highly prized [among] newly arriving immigrant families. ...Some women became champion packers, earning the right to pack the best grades and sizes of fruit.”<sup>135</sup> With the need to lift heavy boxes, and the highly repetitive nature of the work, many women suffered back injuries or repetitive strain illnesses. The most desirable job in the packinghouse was as a grader, a position paid by the hour rather than by the piece. In this way, a hierarchy emerged along racial lines for citrus workers in the early twentieth century. Typically, Italians and Italian-Americans pruned trees and supervised Mexican and Mexican-American pickers. In Arlington in the 1920s, an Italian-owned citrus packinghouse opened at Dufferin Avenue and Harrison Street.

With numerous nearby employers offering consistent work, many Riverside Latinas worked in packinghouses for decades. One long-time packinghouse worker was Virginia Rodriguez Solorio.<sup>136</sup> Born in 1916 in Casa Blanca, Solorio was the second eldest daughter of Zeferino and Guadalupe Rodrigues. After attending Chemawa Middle School, Solorio worked for over half a century as a packer at Victoria Avenue Packinghouse, Arlington Heights Packinghouse, and Royal Citrus Packinghouse.

Although Latinas were most often selected to work as graders and packers in citrus packinghouses, many also took to the fields to work as pickers. One such long-time field worker in Riverside was Ilaria (Lala) Alfaro. Born in the Eastside community in 1930, Alfaro stopped attending school at a young age in order to help support her family. As a child, she started working in the fields. Over the years, her work took her to nearby Hemet, where she cut and gathered apricots. She also worked in the grape orchards and potato fields, “filling the bag that was tied onto her waist, weighing sixty pounds when it was full.”<sup>137</sup>

From these beginnings, Alfaro advanced to become an assistant and inspector with the United States Department of Agriculture.<sup>138</sup> In the postwar period, Alfaro left agricultural work and began over two decades working in an electronics supply warehouse. Alfaro passed away in 2012 at the age of 81, survived by her children, many grandchildren, and extended family members.<sup>139</sup>

**Figure 50 Long-time Riverside agricultural worker, Ilaria (Lala) Alfaro (b. 1930, d. 2012)**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Although ranchers actively sought Latino labor, the community at large proved reticent at best to accept Latinos into society. Open discrimination against Mexicans and Mexican-Americans was rampant in Riverside during this period. As long-time Arlington residence Vince Arellano recalled, though citrus work was plentiful, “picking oranges was the only job to be had” for Latinos in Riverside.<sup>140</sup> In his 1939 book, *Factories in the Field*, pioneering historian Carey McWilliams noted the social and economic stratification that emerged around the citrus industry:

Throughout the citrus belt, the workers are Spanish-speaking, Catholic, and dark-skinned, the owners are white, Protestant, and English-speaking. The owners occupy the heights, the Mexicans the lowlands. ...The whole system of employment, in fact, is perfectly designed to insulate workers from employers in every walk of life, from the cradle to the grave, from the church to the saloon.<sup>141</sup>

This “insulation” included every area of life for Mexican and Mexican-American laborers, from schools, to housing, to churches, whether official or de facto segregation (a topic explored in more detail below). (At the same time, Japanese and Italian farm laborers had less trouble leaving citrus work and integrating into larger society, in terms of employment, education and housing.)

In the 1920s, the continuing citrus boom further fueled the growth—as well as permanent roots—of Riverside’s Latino community. In 1921 alone, approximately \$121 million worth of fruit was sold to the wholesale trade by the California Fruit Growers Exchange. The 1920s and 1930s became the citrus industry’s most expansive decades. The strong citrus industry helped buoy the economy during the hard times of the depression.

Beginning in the 1930s, and accelerating during World War II, new employment opportunities started to open up, providing a path out of agricultural work. This translated into a labor shortage for ranchers. Faced with this crisis, ranchers throughout the United States advocated for creation of the Bracero Program, which was established in 1942. For Riverside citrus growers, the Bracero Program “quickly proved a godsend.”<sup>142</sup> By 1945, the number of Mexican nationals working as braceros in local citrus farms had reached over 3,200. In addition to helping ranchers with the citrus harvest, braceros cost less than their Mexican-American counterparts, though, as historian Paul A. Viafora pointed out, “Chicano wages had never been high.”<sup>143</sup>

**Figure 51 Riverside citrus workers, ca. 1940**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

**Figure 52** Mary Bermudez and coworkers at Riverside packinghouse, ca. 1950



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

In the postwar period, Riverside citrus groves remained productive but were gradually scaled back. As throughout California, in Riverside, Cold War-era investment in the aerospace industry, coupled with a pressing housing shortage, led to a construction boom, and many acres of former agricultural lands gave way to large-scale housing tracts.

Even with the postwar housing boom, Riverside remained a center for citrus ranches and therefore citrus workers. As of 1952, a number of packinghouses had been constructed, including the Blue Banner Company Fruit Packinghouse (3165 Fourth Street), the Blue Goose Growers (3040 East Ninth Street), the Evans Brothers Packing Company (3345 Commerce/Pachappa Avenue), the McDermont Fruit Company (3141 Ninth Street), and the Riverside Consolidated Growers Packinghouse (3302 Commerce and 3069 Fourth).

Ultimately, the citrus industry did contract, and employment opportunities diversified for Latinos. For example, as of 1936, an estimated 90 percent of ethnic minorities living in Riverside worked in agriculture. By 1948, just 12 years later, just 33 percent of ethnic minorities living in Riverside reported working in agriculture. By 1956, this number dropped again to just 20 percent.<sup>144</sup> In a series by the *Riverside Daily Press*, a variety of jobs were noted among Eastside residents, including civil service jobs, construction work or industrial work and manufacturing.<sup>145</sup>

The postwar decline of the itinerant work schedule was reflected in school enrollment. Historically, at the Latino-majority Casa Blanca Elementary School, “We used to open school in September with one third of the pupils registered...the rest were away in harvest camps, working,” Principal Madden explained to *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1956. “This year we opened with four hundred and ten pupils, our full attendance. Casa Blancans are no longer transients.”<sup>146</sup>

### *Citrus-Related Expansion and Construction in Riverside*

Citrus packinghouses, along with other associated buildings, became the predominant built forms of the citrus industry early Latino neighborhoods such as Casa Blanca, Eastside, and Arlington Heights. Typically, large packinghouses were located near major transportation routes, such as the Santa Fe railroad line. For example, in Casa Blanca in the 1890s, even a partial list of packinghouses reveals the strength of the industry and its influence as a local employer.

According to City of Riverside Directories from 1893, packinghouses present in Casa Blanca included:

- The Earl Fruit Company Orange Packinghouse (at the corner of Pliny and Evans Streets)
- Indiana Avenue Orange Packing Company Storage (at the corner of Pliny and Evans Streets)
- B.S. Moulton's Orange Packinghouse (at the corner of Madison and Evans Streets to the southwest of the Casa Blanca railroad station)
- Keystone Orange Growers Association Orange Packinghouse (corner of Cary and Evans Streets), and
- The Pattee & Lett Company Orange Packinghouse (at the corner of Madison and Evans Streets at the railroad tracks)

This same year, in 1893, the Arlington Fruit Association and the Arlington Heights Orange and Lemon Company formed the Arlington Heights Fruit Company. The combination of the two companies formed the largest packinghouse in the area. Brands packed by the company included *Black Hawk*, *Spanish Girl*, *Barbara Worth*, *Squirrel* and *Superfine*. By 1903, several new packers and shippers had arrived in Casa Blanca, including the Victoria Avenue Citrus Association.

Similarly, with its location near transportation lines and citrus groves, the Eastside became a leading packing and shipping center for agricultural products. Citrus packinghouses, along with other associated buildings, became the predominant built forms of the citrus industry associated with the Eastside. The large packinghouses were located near major transportation routes, such as the Santa Fe and Union Pacific railroad lines. According to Sanborn maps and City Directories, by 1893, Eastside also had become home to many fruit packers and shippers, including:

- J.Z. Anderson Fruit Company, F.B. Devine, and Porter Brothers Company (Eighth Street between Pachappa and Vine Street)
- Brown & Raley, Cook & Langley and Earl Fruit Company (Pachappa Avenue and Ninth Street)
- California Fruit Company (Thirteenth Street and Pachappa Avenue)
- Ford & Tasker, Silver-Brown Fruit Company and Twogood Fruit Company (Seventh Street and Pachappa Avenue)
- Germain Fruit Company (corner of Pachappa and Eleventh Street)
- Griffin & Skelly (Pachappa Avenue and Twelfth Street)
- Orange Growers Packing Company (Pachappa Avenue and Fourteenth Street)

In the opening years of the century, new packinghouses came to Riverside. For example, by 1908, over a dozen additional packinghouses had been constructed in Eastside along the Santa Fe and Union Pacific railroad tracks and depots, thus creating a "packinghouse row." Among those packinghouses were the Sutherland Fruit Company Packinghouse (132 East Fifth Street), La Mesa

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

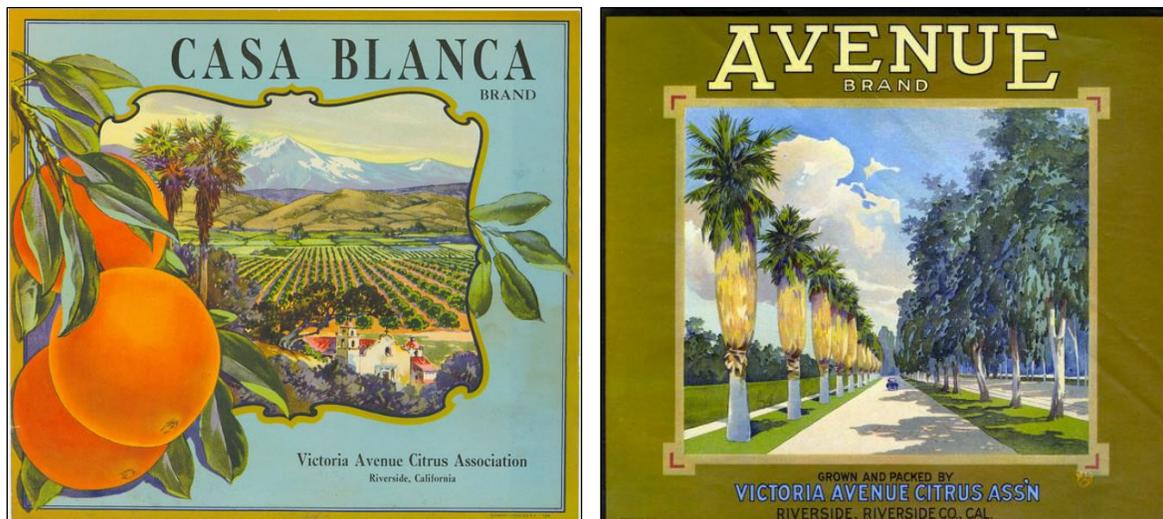
Packinghouse, later called Monte Vista Citrus Association (103 Fourth Street), and the Independent Fruit Company Packinghouse (136 East Seventh Street).

With citrus expansion in the 1920s and 1930s, much of the land in and around Riverside was covered in groves. As noted in topographic maps of the area, even into the 1940s much of Casa Blanca remained rural with citrus groves planted adjacent to the community. Groves extended from Lincoln Avenue past Victoria Avenue on the south and stretched as far north as Arlington Avenue.

By the 1950s, with the postwar residential and industrial expansion, the gradual decline of the citrus industry is noted on available Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps and other historic maps and aerial photographs. Most of the packinghouses had been removed or replaced by fewer, more dominant, citrus companies. By 1952, eight packinghouses remained in Casa Blanca; this number still represented a solid employment base, but it was a marked decrease from earlier years. By this time, the Victoria Avenue Citrus Association had taken over the entire corner of Evans and Pliny Streets.

By 1952 in Eastside, packinghouses included the Blue Banner Company Fruit Packinghouse (3165 Fourth Street), the Blue Goose Growers (3040 East Ninth Street), the Evans Brothers Packing Company (3345 Commerce—now Pachappa—Avenue), the McDermont Fruit Company (3141 Ninth Street), and the Riverside Consolidated Growers Packinghouse (3302 Commerce Street).

**Figure 53 Casa Blanca's Victoria Avenue Citrus Association, citrus labels**



Source: Riverside Public Library Citrus Label Collection

## Subtheme #2: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education

In the early twentieth century in Riverside, Latinos had severely limited job prospects. Large pools of low-wage labor were needed for agricultural work and for constructing the railroads and the cities themselves. As Riverside's Latino community became established, opportunities gradually became more diverse. This shift was not due to a rollback in discrimination, but rather due to the grit and resourcefulness of early entrepreneurs to capitalize on opportunities and establish a greater degree of independence from citrus work.

In Riverside's Mexican-American and ethnic neighborhoods, many residents co-opted and adapted spaces to start businesses and offer goods and services. In neighborhoods like Casa Blanca, one factor facilitating the flowering of local shops and vendors was the relatively high rate of property ownership. Citrus farmers had sold lots to workers in Casa Blanca at extremely low prices, to encourage them to establish permanent roots near the groves and packinghouses. This level of ownership made it possible for early entrepreneurs to adapt and use portions of the family home or property as they wished, for shops or homegrown businesses. In this way, the spaces reflecting these stories might be modest (or no longer extant), but they represented significant first steps for many families toward economic independence and upward mobility.

The expansion into new areas of employment was mirrored for Latinos in California in the early twentieth century. For example, between 1910 and 1940, Mexican-American workers in the state "entered nearly every occupation classified as unskilled or semi-skilled" and, during the 1920s, they "constituted up to two-thirds of the work force in many industries."<sup>147</sup> Apart from agricultural work, "manufacturing, transportation, communications, and domestic and personal service had become the other major sectors of Chicano employment. ...They also held blue-collar positions in construction, food processing, textiles, automobile industries, steel production and utilities."<sup>148</sup> This expansion, was seen as part of the overall "Mexican problem," however, in particular during the Great Depression. Overcoming employment discrimination would be a decades-long battle for Latinos in Riverside and beyond.

In early twentieth-century Riverside, one major employer was the Crestmore Cement Company in Rubidoux, adjacent to Riverside. Prior to World War I, the Crestmore Cement Company employed "a small colony of Italians, a contingent of Armenians, and about two hundred Mexicans."<sup>149</sup> A 1914 *Riverside Daily Press* article, titled "How Cement Plant Cares for its Mexicans" highlighted the company's workers' camps, which offered family housing, running water, bathing facilities, and stoves. It is worth noting that, among the 200 Mexican laborers employed by Crestmore Cement in 1914, most were "of American birth" and lived in the workers' camp with their families. The *Riverside Daily Press* commented that, at the worker's camp,

the Mexicans...preserve their traditions and mode of life of the land whose language they still speak. Their camp is built in grounds enclosed by a spiked fence, the house forming the sides of a square. In the center is a band stand which forms a social center, where all Mexican national holidays and religious festivals are observed with characteristic gayety. Little gardens such as are seen beside every school house nowadays are nearby and enclose beds of lettuce and radishes and patches of beans which each tenant has the right to cultivate.<sup>150</sup>

Back in the City itself, Latinos had already established permanent, cohesive communities and neighborhoods by the 1910s. Shops, restaurants, and small commercial areas emerged along principal thoroughfares and near places of employment. Often times, forays into business meant utilizing available spaces in the family property or home. Such was the case for Simona Valero's

father, who had arrived in Riverside's Casa Blanca neighborhood in 1911. Mr. Valero grew up on a hacienda in Mexico, where he learned how to cut hair and play the violin, among other skills. He worked in the citrus industry, in irrigation, but also operated the first barbershop in Casa Blanca for many years out of the family home. As Valero's daughter Simona recalled, "half of [the living room] was a barber shop and then the other half was our living room."<sup>151</sup> In the 1930s, a similar enterprise was located at 7526 Evans Street, where a residence had been converted to accommodate a cantina, pool hall, boarding house, and store. The building later reverted to use as a private home.

**Figure 54 Victor Mendoza and his wife Lola, owners of Mendoza Market**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

One pioneering Latino attorney in Riverside in the late 1910s was Miguel Estudillo.<sup>152</sup> A native of San Bernardino, Estudillo had an ancestry with roots in the Spanish era of Alta California. His grandfather was Don Jose A. Estudillo, who held a number of civic and political posts in California from the 1820s through the early 1850s. Estudillo was born in San Bernardino but educated in San Diego, where he served as Deputy Court Clerk. In 1893, following the establishment of Riverside, Estudillo was appointed Clerk of the Board of Supervisors. Soon thereafter, he became a practicing attorney. In 1904, Estudillo was elected to the California State Assembly, and in 1908 to the California State Senate. During his time serving in the state legislature, Estudillo secured funding for the Agricultural Experiment Station near Mt. Rubidoux. He was also a vocal supporter of the establishment of Yosemite National Park, for which he earned the praise of John Muir. Estudillo's tenure as City Attorney in Riverside spanned two different appointments across decades. He was appointed in 1918 and again in 1941. He retired in 1949.

### *Commercial Boom of the 1920s*

By the 1920s, Riverside's growing Latino community had put down permanent roots in all areas of life and commerce. Faced with discrimination from the outside, Latino neighborhoods became stand-alone, self-sufficient communities, with a variety of shops, restaurants, bars, and other services. With the rise of the automobile, a number of garages and other auto-support businesses were established. Throughout Casa Blanca, commercial areas emerged near the intersections of Madison and Evans, along Pliny and Cary Streets, as well as adjacent to packinghouses near the railroad tracks. The businesses along Madison and Evans Streets, which included Mendoza Market, Ahumada Market, a barbershop, a billiard hall, and restaurants, formed the "hub" or downtown of Casa Blanca. As facilities opened, they often became multi-functional spaces for community gatherings, meetings, and celebrations.

One of the earliest and longest running Latino-owned grocery stores in Riverside was Mendoza Market, established in 1920 by Victor Mendoza. Mendoza came to the United States from Michoacan, Mexico, in 1913. He married his wife Lola in 1914, and the two opened their first market on Bunker Street in 1920. Two months later, the Mendozas converted a residence at 7450 Evans Street for use as Mendoza Market, where it remained for 25 years. As he adapted the residence, Mendoza constructed an extra room for the neighborhood's first post office.<sup>153</sup> In 1945, Mendoza Market moved to 3199 Madison Street, near the train tracks (the building currently operates as El Amigo Market). Mendoza Market was one of the earliest and longest-running Latino-owned shops in Riverside, serving the children, grandchildren, great grandchildren of long-time patrons for over half a century.

In the Eastside neighborhood, another pioneering Latino business owner in the 1920s was Frank Lozano, who opened his first business, a gas station, on Park Avenue between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets (the building does not appear extant).

**Figure 55 Frank Lozano Service Station, ca. 1925.**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

### *Great Depression and World War II Era*

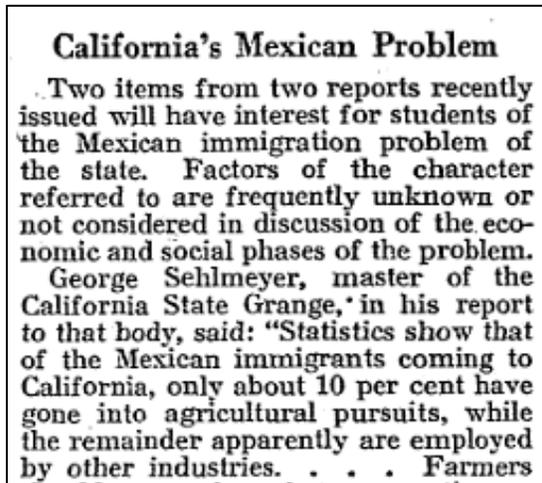
After the boom of the 1920s, the Great Depression reversed many of the economic and professional gains made by Latino families. Riverside's first Mexican-American City Council member, Johnny Martin Sotelo, recalled that, during the Great Depression, his family lost the grocery store they had founded and operated in the Eastside neighborhood. Following this loss, Sotelo's family "joined a growing stream of itinerant farm workers, harvesting crops throughout California."<sup>154</sup> Repatriation resulted in many Latinos leaving Riverside, voluntarily as well as involuntarily.

Latino-owned businesses suffered as a result of repatriation. In 1936, Mendoza Market in Casa Blanca nearly closed. Victor Mendoza was deeply in debt at the time, with many customers either gone or unable to pay their bills. The store was saved as "friends came forth to help him. After the Depression, business started growing again, people started coming back from Mexico. After WWII, everyone was working, people had money, business really started picking up."<sup>155</sup>

In this climate, Mexican natives and Mexican-Americans were actively restricted from moving out of agricultural labor, in particular during the Great Depression. Commenting on the “Mexican problem” in the *Riverside Daily Press*, an editorialist wrote that

Farmers should remember that every time a Mexican displaces an American workman the buying power of labor is broken down just that much... If it is absolutely necessary, as contended, that in some sections in California this type of labor is necessary to harvest farm crops, measures should be taken which would prevent this labor which may come into California from entering other industries.<sup>156</sup>

**Figure 56** Riverside’s “Mexican Problem” and employment restrictions, 1931



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 14 January 1931

Although the Great Depression brought setbacks, the decade ultimately brought a wider variety of employment opportunities. Employment with the Works Progress Administration, which had an office in Riverside, provided a path out of agricultural work for some members of the Latino community. Community leader and activist Josephine Lozano left agricultural work in the late 1930s to take a position as a seamstress for the Works Progress Administration in downtown Riverside. This position led to a supervisory role, and the experience helped spark a career of civil rights organizing and activism for Lozano in the postwar period.<sup>157</sup>

As Latino entrepreneurs opened businesses, several areas became commercial hubs. In Eastside, along Park Avenue and University Avenue, a small concentration of Latino- and African-American-owned businesses had emerged by the 1940s. One early Mexican-American owned business along Park Avenue was Chavarrias Store, at 4098 Park Avenue (now Tony’s Market). From 1939 to 1985, the store was owned and operated by Tony and Mary Chavarrias. A native of Mexico, Tony Chavarrias came to the United States with his parents as a toddler. He opened the store with the help of his father. For many years, at Christmas, Chavarrias “would insist that children living in the Eastside area should receive a Christmas stocking full of hard candy, nuts and an orange. This tradition continued until he retired in 1985.”<sup>158</sup>

One block away from Chavarrias Market, at 4120 Park Avenue, Checkie’s Café was a popular restaurant in the 1940s, run by Checkie and Helen Hernandez. Neighborhood restaurants provided important social and gathering spaces for the community. A similar gathering place in Casa Blanca was Manuel’s Café, owned by Manuel Reyes, Sr. In the late 1930s, Reyes established the shop at the corner of Cary and Evans Streets, on a lot Reyes purchased from World War II veteran and community leader Augustine Flores. Manuel’s Café became a popular meeting place in Casa Blanca.

In his early years, Reyes worked as a crew supervisor for the Blue Banner Company. Reyes was an active community leader, serving for many years on the Sociedad Progresista Mexicana. After moving to Eastside in the mid-1940s, Reyes worked for the City of Riverside, from which he retired after 20 years of service.<sup>159</sup>

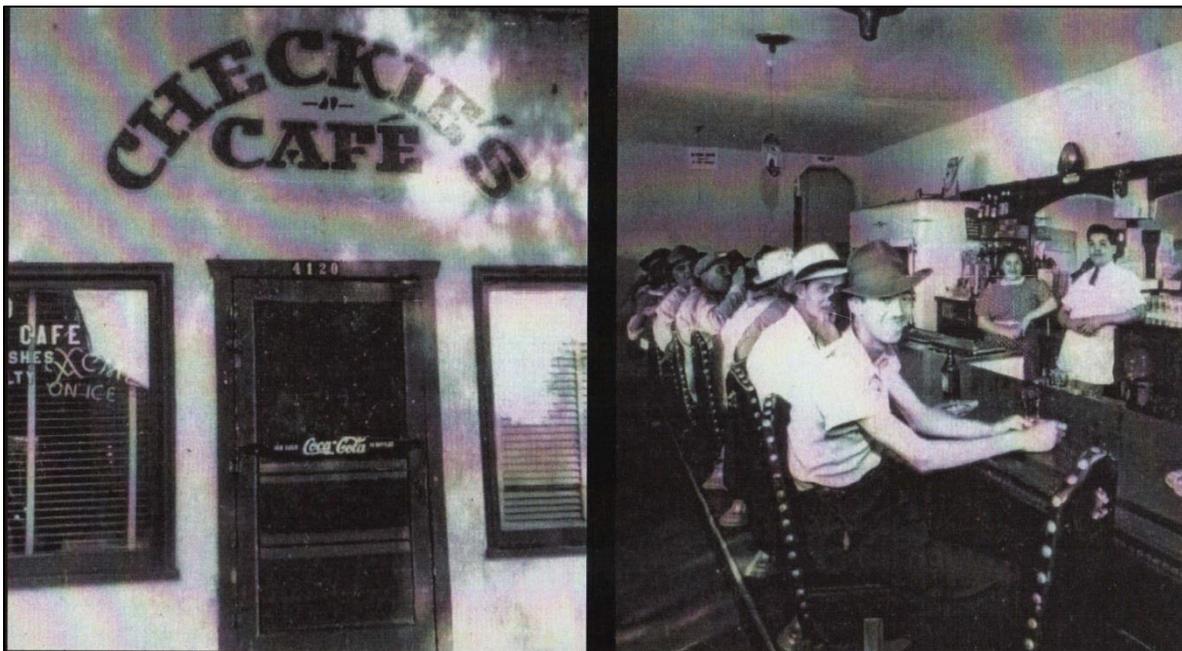
As modest as the enterprises may appear, the flowering of Latino-owned businesses in the 1920s through 1940s in Riverside was significant on a number of levels. First, it reflected a time of transition, when more people managed to leave the confines of citrus and agricultural work and gained more personal and professional autonomy. Second, it reflected the emergence of businesses in the community, for the community, at a time when Latinos were widely excluded from frequenting Anglo-American establishments throughout Riverside.

**Figure 57 Chavarrias Market, 4098 Park Avenue (now Tony's Market), ca. 1950**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

**Figure 58 Checkie's Café, with Helen Hernandez and the café cook behind the counter, 1946**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

**Figure 59** Manuel Reyes and his wife Jesse (left and lower right), Manuel's Café



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

In the early 1940s, new employment opportunities started to provide a path out of agricultural work. As the war drew thousands of recruits—but also triggered industrial expansion—the labor shortage worsened. “Chicanos thus managed to gain entry to jobs and industries that had been virtually closed to them in the past. These new opportunities liberated many Chicanos from dependence on such traditional occupations as agriculture.”<sup>160</sup>

In Riverside, expansion of war facilities at nearby March Army Air Field, for example, brought many new jobs. In present-day Arlanza, Camp Anza was constructed in 1942. The base served as a staging area and point of embarkation during World War II, with over 625,000 troops passing through the base. (In the 2010s, a portion of the decommissioned base, including the 1942 Officers’ Club, was restored and preserved as the Home Front at Camp Anza project, offering affordable housing and services to veterans. The project won the California Governor’s Preservation Award in 2016 and the California Preservation Foundation award in 2017.)

In addition to defense-related work on the home front, employment opportunities were opening up in a number of nearby industries, such as Kaiser Steel in Fontana, the Food Machinery Corporation, and Hunter Engineering, which experienced a significant expansion of its Riverside facilities in this period.

As has been well documented, the war prompted a significant labor shortage throughout the United States. In the popular imagination, stories of “Rosie the Riveter” are well known, as women throughout the United States stepped in to fill the labor shortage, thereby securing a new degree of personal and professional freedom. Similarly, in this era, many Latinos (and Latinas) were able to obtain employment that, just a few years prior, had largely been largely out of reach.

In this way, as war-related production geared up, “for the first time, large numbers of ethnic Mexican men were hired in relatively well-paid industrial jobs, many in the defense industries.”<sup>161</sup> In Riverside, this included positions at nearby March Army Air Field and Camp Anza, among other defense-related facilities. At the same time, as more Mexican men joined the armed services, this opened up new work opportunities for Mexican women in war-related industries, “especially in textile, aircraft, ship building, and food processing plants.”<sup>162</sup> Many women found employment at Camp Anza and Camp Hahn outside of March Army Air Field as warehouse and supply workers.

**Figure 60** The “Camp Anza Girls,” ca. 1944 (left); Restored Officers’ Club, 2016



Source: Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society and City of Riverside

In addition to defense-related jobs, thousands of Latinos from Riverside joined the call to defend the United States as part of the armed forces (a topic described in more detail below). For Latinos, serving their country during World War II gave them tremendous pride in their identity as Americans and Mexican-Americans. For a generation of Latinos, service during World War II awoke a new sense of empowerment and inspired many to work for—and expect—equal treatment and equal rights.

Ultimately, this shift opened up opportunities in all areas of life. Among the scores of Riverside Mexican-Americans who belonged to this generation, John Martin Sotelo captured the sentiment in 1956 for the *Riverside Daily Press*. Sotelo was a native of the Eastside neighborhood, born in 1925 to farm laborers. He cited his experience serving in World War II as formative for his life: “We proved something during [WWII]. We worked together, Mexican-American and Anglo, and we had a nice team. I found out for the first time that I was as good as Anglos.”<sup>163</sup> Indeed, as Sotelo recalled to a reporter in 2008, “When I got back from World War II I felt much more American.”<sup>164</sup>

He also noted that greater opportunities were available for Latinos following the war: “The fellows that came back [from World War II], some went to school on the GI Bill and they got into halfway decent positions away from picking oranges... When we got back from World War II, this gave us the feeling to try to get more involved in the community, so we took part in things.”<sup>165</sup>

Indeed, by 1963, Sotelo had been elected as Riverside’s first Mexican-American city councilperson, a post he held for a decade (a topic described in more detail below).

### *Postwar Boom and Upward Mobility*

As elsewhere throughout Southern California, Riverside experienced a postwar population and construction boom. Although agriculture remained a large part of the economy, Riverside had become a metropolis by the postwar period. In one snapshot from 1956, for example, the City had become home to “more than 95 industries that hire in excess of 9,000 people” as well as “two daily newspapers, three hospitals, ninety churches,” as well as five bus lines, three railroads, and two airlines.<sup>166</sup>

Industrial concerns that arrived or expanded in this period included Bourns Incorporated, Rohr Corporation, and Lilly Tulip Corporation, all of which “greatly augmented job opportunities for local Chicanos,” eventually leading to “an exodus from the barrios and a diffusion of Chicano residential patterns.”<sup>167</sup> This level of growth, along with an emerging civil rights movement and new sense of

empowerment, slowly translated into expanded employment and business opportunities for Riverside's Latino community.

While 1945 ended outright hostilities, it ushered in a long and costly Cold War with the Soviet Union. During the Cold War, vast sums were invested in defense and military spending throughout the United States, in particular in regions with existing manufacturing and aerospace industries. Communities throughout Southern California and the Inland Empire saw tremendous growth due to defense-related spending. Following 1945, as economic diversification accelerated in and around Riverside, pre-war agricultural fields gave way to curvilinear streets and large-scale housing tracts.

Although agriculture remained a large-scale employer, the numbers of Riverside Latinos employed in the fields and farming dropped dramatically. The decline of the citrus industry also opened "new job opportunities in the public and private sectors" and "liberated the Chicano from citrus domination."<sup>168</sup> Along with the new job opportunities came a "modicum of social change," though it was "at times superficial, sporadic, and painfully slow for Chicanos."<sup>169</sup> As the *Riverside Press Enterprise* noted in 1972, in the pre-World War II era,

In employment as well as education, the chicano was confined by segregation, limiting him to jobs in the fields and packinghouses. Consequently, Mexican-Americans had become well-entrenched as the farm labor force for Riverside and surroundings areas by the 1920s. Few of them were able to break out of this pattern to enter skilled or professional jobs.

'All a Mexican could do was work in the fields,' said an older Mexican-American man who picked oranges for 15 years before becoming an insurance salesman. 'There was nobody working in offices or working as a doctor or lawyer. Nobody. Not even a Mexican working as a garbageman for the city. So you got to be 15 or so and you went to work in the fields because there was nothing else for a Mexican to do.'<sup>170</sup>

By the 1950s, the *Riverside Daily Press* had taken note of, and began chronicling, the changing landscape for employment among Riverside's Latino and minority populations. For example, as of 1956, in a survey of professions held by Eastside residents (still a predominantly Mexican-American and African-American community at the time), the *Riverside Daily Press* noted a variety of employment options, including civil service jobs, construction work or industrial work and manufacturing.<sup>171</sup> This overall trend was mirrored throughout California. Between 1930 and 1970, the rate of Latinos employed in professional or technical positions more than tripled (from 4 to 13.7), and the rate of Latinos employed as managers, proprietors, or officials doubled (from 3.7 percent to 7.2 percent).<sup>172</sup> Although the numbers remained low, the upward trend was significant.

In terms of earning power, upward mobility among some members of Riverside's minority groups was also becoming apparent: "We knew minority group members had improved their living standards greatly in recent years, but even so the extent to which this had happened surprised us," said Juan Acevedo, director of the Riverside Community Settlement Association.<sup>173</sup> (A well-known community leader, Acevedo was a one-time member of the Youth Authority Board for the State of California as well as a founding member of the American GI Forum in Riverside.) In just one metric, family incomes had risen from an average of \$100 a month in 1948 to \$4,000 to \$7,000 annually.

As incomes rose for Latino and ethnic communities, more businesses were established. By the 1950s, for example, the Eastside's local commercial enterprises included general stores, retail clothing businesses, gas and oil companies, restaurants, machine shops, warehouses, and storage facilities. Many of these businesses were locating in one or two story wood-framed or concrete buildings of utilitarian design along Park Avenue and University Avenue.

Later, as immigration diversified, between 1960 and 1980, median incomes of Latino residents in Riverside showed an uncommon decrease.<sup>174</sup> As of 1960, the income of Latino families in Riverside stood at approximately 74 percent of the citywide median. As of 1980, this number had dipped to 50 percent. For families in Eastside, this annual salary translated into an average of \$11,720, or 56 percent of the citywide median of \$21,075.<sup>175</sup> According to Professor Paul Wright of UC Riverside, this drop in income was reflective of the volume of new arrivals from Latin America and their relatively lower wages initially earned upon arriving in the United States.

In Riverside, in the postwar period, the Latino community in neighborhoods such as Arlanza and Northside increased. By the 1970s and 1980s, immigration also started to increase from Central and South America, among other places. With this expansion, many new Latino-owned businesses, as well as entrepreneurs, educators, civil servants, and civic leaders emerged. The following presents just a few of the countless Latino businesses and professionals during the postwar period.

One early Latino-owned business still operating in Arlanza is Mars Barbershop. The barbershop was established by long-time community member, Mars Macias, in a former Camp Anza building. Mars Barbershop continues to operate out of its original location on Cypress Avenue. For over four decades, Macias has been not just a barber in Arlanza, he has been *the* barber in the community: “Everyone seems to know Mars, and he has cut the hair of most of the men in the neighborhood for over 40 years. His barbershop is located in what is believed to be the Camp Anza finance office building.”<sup>176</sup>

**Figure 61 Mars Macias and Mars Barbershop, Cypress Avenue, Arlanza**



Source: Teurlay, *Riverside's Camp Anza and Arlanza*, 2008, p. 123, and Google Earth

In the postwar period, the former Camp Anza was home to another successful Latino-owned business, Leo and Mela's Market. In 1951, Leo Thomas Lueras and his wife Mela opened the grocery market in a converted Camp Anza barracks building. The young couple adapted a portion of the building for their family home, and used the front portion for their store. With Arlanza's residential settlement expanding dramatically, the store thrived, quickly becoming a neighborhood institution. The store also served as Arlanza's first US Post Office substation. In 1960, Leo and Mela expanded their shop into a new building at 8041 Cypress Avenue. Born in 1924 in New Mexico, Leo Lueras was raised in Los Angeles, where he met and married his wife Mela. The young couple moved to Riverside in 1948.<sup>177</sup> In the 1950s, Leo and Mela expanded their work into real estate, initially acquiring investment properties, then establishing a highly success real estate company, Leo T. Lueras Real Estate. The Lueras couple became well known as real estate professionals and developers as well as community leaders in Riverside. Leo served as a commissioner of the Arlanza Fire Department, chairperson of the Riverside Urban Redevelopment Board, and as a senior member of the Riverside Board of Realtors. He also founded the Business Association of Arlanza.

**Figure 62** Mela and Leo Lueras, at their Arlanza real estate office, ca. 1960 (top); Leo and Mela's Market, Cypress Avenue, Arlanza (bottom)



Source: Teurlay, *Riverside's Camp Anza and Arlanza*, 2008, p. 118

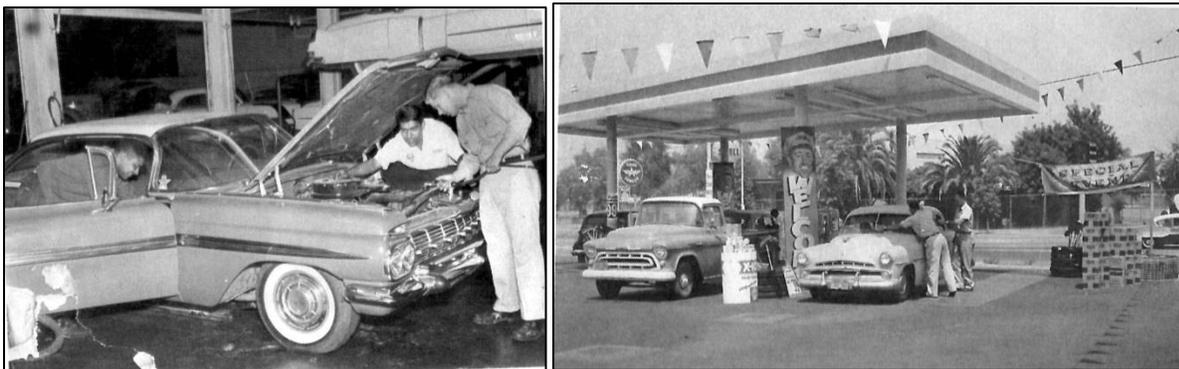
In the early 1950s, Eastside native and World War II veteran John Martin Sotelo established the Victoria Shell Station and Victoria Towing Company at 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Victoria Avenue (now an Arco Gas Station, with the original building and service island extant). For nearly 50 years, Sotelo managed the gas station and towing company, which he expanded in a facility on Prospect and Vine, until his retirement in 2004. Sotelo also became the first Latino business owner to join the “Jaycees,” or Junior Chamber of Commerce in Riverside (Sotelo is described in more detail below).

Another long-time Latino-owned business in postwar Riverside was Carlos’s Market.<sup>178</sup> Owned and operated by Jesus (Jess) Carlos, the shop occupied the property at 2993 Fourteenth Street. For a number of years, the Carlos family lived in the attached residence. Born in Zacatecas in 1911, Jess Carlos moved to the United States in 1917. By the postwar period, Carlos and his family had settled in Riverside, where he purchased the supermarket.

Prior to his ownership, the property had been occupied by Ferias Market and Ramirez Market. Carlos’s Market carried Mexican staples and specialties, such as dried chili pods and *pan dulce*. Also active in civic affairs, Carlos was the first Mexican-American elected to serve as the president of the Community Settlement Association. Between 1961 and 1968, he served as a member of the City’s Parks and Recreation Commission.<sup>179</sup>

In Casa Blanca, another long-time establishment since 1950 is Leon’s Mexican Restaurant (7778 Evans Street), a grocery store and restaurant run by Richard Leon and his family. Another staple in Casa Blanca was the Ahumada Market and Restaurant, originally located on Madison Street.

**Figure 63 John Martin Sotelo and the Victoria Shell Station and Victoria Auto Towing, ca. 1960**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Among the many Latino-owned businesses in the postwar period, one that became a community-wide institution is Zacatecas Café. Founded in 1963 by Oscar and Josephine Medina, the café was originally located at the corner of Park and University Avenues. The café quickly became a favorite with the Latino community and an important gathering place not only for meals and celebrations, but for community organizations, political meetings, and other gatherings. In 1979, famed *New Yorker* writer Calvin Trillin praised Zacatecas Café as offering some of the best Mexican food in the United States.

In 1985, Zacatecas Café moved to 2472 University Avenue, where it remained for over twenty years. In 2016, Zacatecas Café moved to its current location at 3767 Iowa Street. The café continues to be run by the Medina family.

In the professional services industry, one entrepreneur who turned a home-run business into a half-century old institution in Riverside is Richard Leivas.<sup>180</sup> Born in 1933, Leivas’s mother came to the United States from Mexico in the 1920s, his father was a second-generation American of Mexican

heritage from Blythe, Arizona. In 1951, at the age of 17, Leivas convinced his parents to allow him to volunteer with the US Army Airborne division. His parents agreed, and Leivas joined the army just as the Korean War was entering its second year. In 1952, after volunteering to serve, Leivas arrived in Inchon, Korean, where he advanced to the position of Battalion Ammunition Sergeant.

After returning to the United States, Leivas settled in Riverside in 1956. He attended college through the GI Bill and began an extended career in the grocery business. At the same time, Leivas had become adept at tax return preparation. After starting out by helping friends and family with their tax returns, Leivas quickly built up a clientele throughout Riverside, San Bernardino, and Colton. In 1956, Leivas started a tax return preparation service out of his home, with his 13-year-old daughter Susan assisting and learning the business.

The family business flourished and expanded into one of the most established tax preparation and bookkeeping companies in Riverside. Leivas's daughter Susan, who still runs the business in Riverside, has also served as the treasurer of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

**Figure 64** Zacatecas Café (left) and owners Oscar and Josephine Medina (right), circa 1970



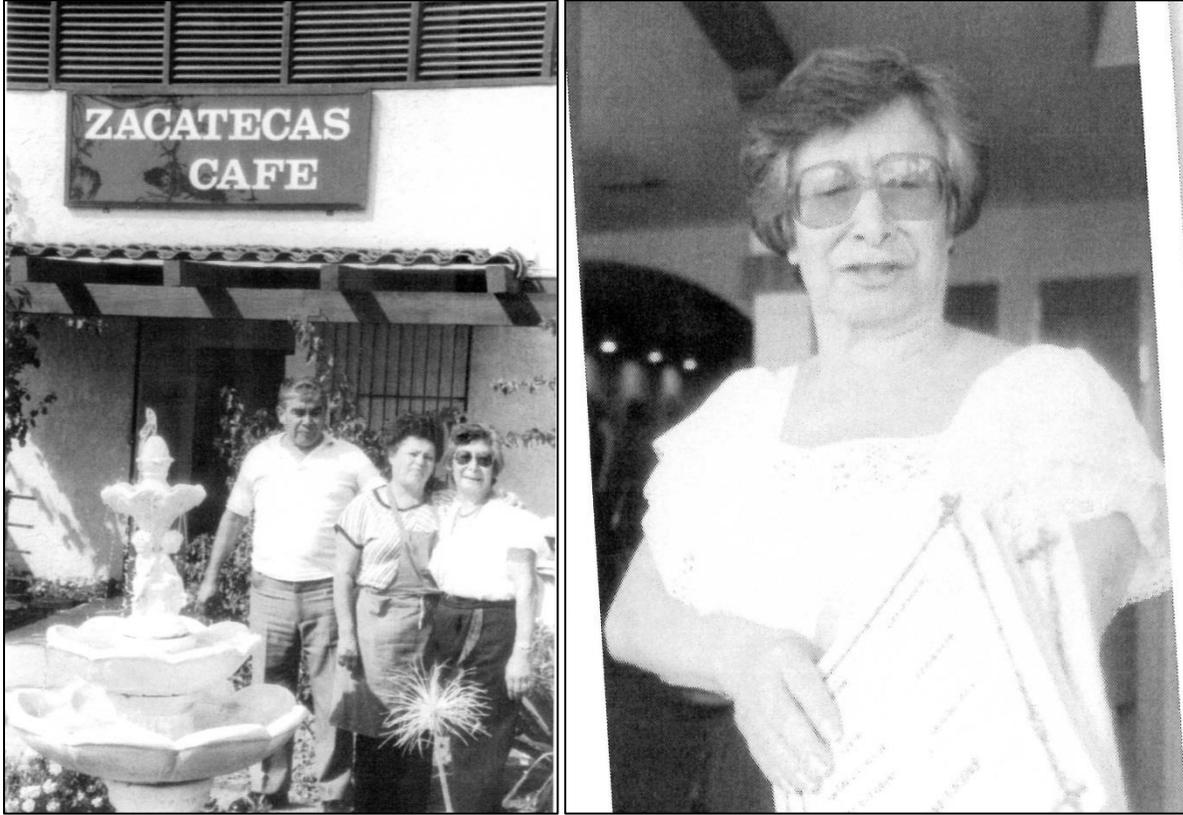
Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 24 April 2013

**Figure 65** Jess Carlos (left); Huell Howser, Raymond Buriel, and Eusebia Buriel at Zacatecas Café, 2007 (right)



Source: Riverside Co. Mexican-American Historical Society & "Road Trip with Huell Howser," 2007

**Figure 66** Oscar and Josephine Medina, with Josephine's sister Olga, Zacatecas Café (left); Josephine Medina (right)



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society



### Spotlight on: Professor John Raymond Buriel

Dr. John Raymond Buriel was a pioneering scholar and professor of psychology and Chicano Studies at Pomona College. Born in 1948, he was born and raised in the Eastside neighborhood. His mother Eusebia came to Riverside in 1922 and worked in citrus packinghouses for many years. At the age of 20, Dr. Buriel enlisted in the US Marine Corps and served in Vietnam. After returning to Riverside, with help from the GI Bill, Buriel completed bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees at UC Riverside. In 1977, Buriel joined Pomona College for what was initially a two-year appointment. In 2008, he recounted that "I figured this will pay for the bills for two years while I get some publications. [Campus administration ultimately] said, 'This is what we had always been wanting for Chicano Studies. Why don't you stay and we'll make you a tenure-track professor in Chicano Studies, the first one.'"<sup>181</sup>

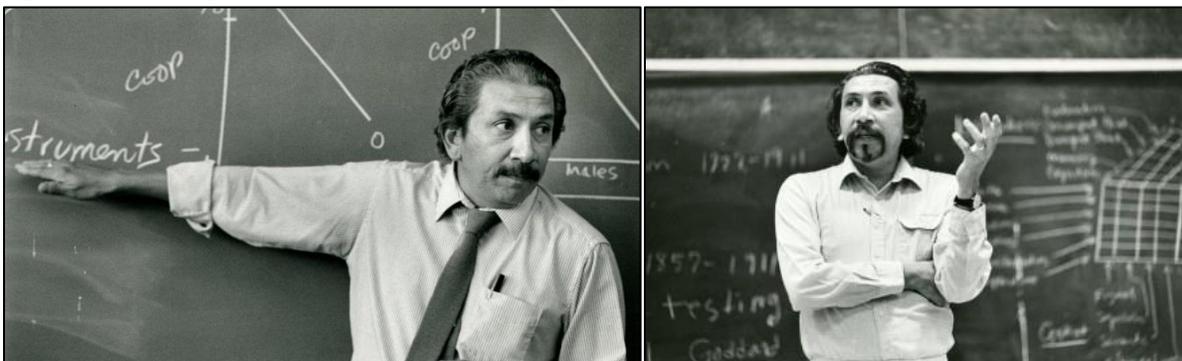
For the next 39 years, Dr. Buriel served on the faculty of Pomona College, becoming a pioneer in the field of Chicano psychology and behavioral sciences. On 21 June 2017, Dr. Buriel passed away after a battle with cancer. In its tribute to Dr. Buriel upon his death, Pomona College wrote:

A beloved mentor and inspiring educator...Buriel was a two-time recipient of the Pomona College Wig Distinguished Professorship Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1991 and 2007. ...He was among the earliest and most ardent advocates for diversity initiatives at Pomona College, serving on a number of committees and task forces and establishing himself as an indispensable mentor to diverse groups of faculty, staff and students.<sup>182</sup>

In a tribute published in *The Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, William Perez described the contributions of "trailblazing researcher, teacher and mentor" Raymond Buriel:

Dr. Raymond Buriel made significant contributions to the study of acculturation and adjustment of Mexican immigrant families, with a special emphasis on the characteristics of immigrant students that are conducive to academic success. His seminal and widely cited publications on the psychological development of children who serve as language and cultural brokers for their families were among the first to illustrate the myriad of developmental assets of immigrant students. Buriel's reputation as a mentor and advocate for countless undergraduate students, graduate students, and early career scholars was legendary. Affectionately referred to as "Papa Buri" by his Latinx undergraduate students, his legacy will continue to be felt in psychology and education. Many of his students now hold academic, research, policy, and administrative positions in major institutions and are leaders in their fields.<sup>183</sup>

**Figure 68** Dr. Raymond Buriel, Pomona College



Source: Pomona College, 2017

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### Subtheme #3: Latinos in the Military

“We proved something during [WWII]. We worked together, Mexican-American and Anglo, and we had a nice team. I found out for the first time that I was as good as Anglos.”

—John Martin Sotelo, *Riverside Daily Press*, 15 August 1956

Throughout the United States, Latinos have played a “long and distinguished role in military history, serving in the American Revolution and in every military operation since then.”<sup>184</sup> In World War II, an estimated 500,000 Mexican-Americans served in the conflict.<sup>185</sup> Given the community’s over century-long presence in Riverside, scores of local Latino residents have served in conflicts extending back to World War I. During World War II, as veteran and long-time resident of Arlington Henry Robles recalled, “nearly 94% of those able to serve from Arlington’s Mexican-American population did so, and four men returned as Purple Heart recipients.”<sup>186</sup> This applied throughout the City, as well, as “virtually every Mexican-American family in Riverside had sons in World War II and Korea.”<sup>187</sup>

The service and patriotism of Latino veterans has been well documented. Among books exploring the topic are *Legacy Greater Than Words*, based on oral histories with over 400 Latino veterans; *Undaunted Courage: Mexican American Patriots of World War II*, including profiles of 500 veterans; *Among the Valiant: Mexican Americans in WWII and Korea*; and *Piloto: Migrant Worker to Jet Pilot*, about a migrant farm worker who becomes a pilot in the US Air Force. As illustrated in these narratives, Latino heroism was “especially prominent during World War II.”<sup>188</sup> In World War II and other conflicts, numerous Latino veterans returned home with awards for bravery and exemplary service. Many of these Latino veterans were from Riverside.

**Figure 69** The Diaz family, Casa Blanca, ca. 1915. Isidro (far left) served as a private in the US Army during World War I

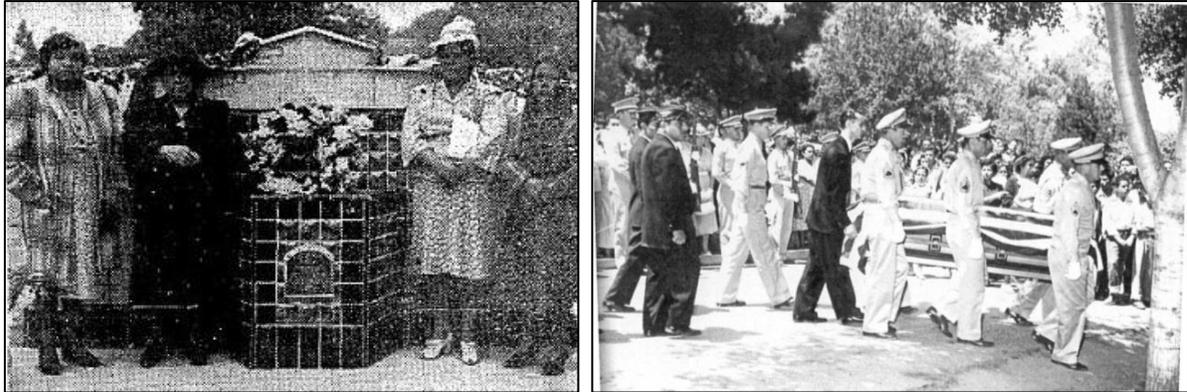


Source: Riverside Public Library and Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

At the same time, Latinos lost children, friends, and family members in the war. Indeed, Latinos “suffered a disproportionate number of casualties” in World War II and other conflicts.<sup>189</sup> In Los Angeles, for example, Latinos represented just one-tenth of the total population but one-fifth of all war casualties.<sup>190</sup> In Riverside, five fallen soldiers from the Eastside neighborhood are memorialized at Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine: Dario Vasquez, Ventura Macias, Gus Cabrera, Manuel Rangel, and

Theodoro Molindo. On July 21, 1945, a memorial for these five soldiers was inaugurated at Lincoln Park in honor of fallen Eastside soldiers. The *Riverside Daily Press* was on hand for the event, along with Gold Star Mothers Maria Mollindo, Elizabeth Rangel, Delfina Vasquez, Inez Cabrera, and Cornelio Macias. Casa Blanca native and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Ysmael “Smiley” Villegas was among those who died in battle during World War II (described in more detail below). After the war, American Legion posts were named for Dario Vasquez, who died in North Africa in 1943, and Villegas, who died in the Philippines one day shy of his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

**Figure 70 Gold Star Mothers in Lincoln Park, 1945 (left); Smiley Villegas, burial at Riverside National Cemetery, 1978 (right)**



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 21 July 1945 and Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Serving the United States catalyzed a generation of young Latinos in Riverside—and throughout the country—into political action. Their experiences in World War II empowered veterans to assert their rights for equal treatment:

The distinguished record of military service by Mexican Americans—combined with virulent racism during the war—heightened their drive to protect and expand civil rights. As a result, in the 1940s and 1950s, the Latino struggle for equality expanded rapidly and took multiple forms—from grassroots organizing to litigation. These efforts produced major court victories, progress in Latino electoral influence, and new organizations.<sup>191</sup>

In terms of the “virulent racism” during this era, two events in Southern California highlight the challenges facing Latinos. The first was the 1942 Sleepy Lagoon case. In this case, a group of 22 Mexican-Americans were unjustly accused, in an argument based on racism, and sentenced for the murder of a youth named José Diaz. As noted in Los Angeles’s *Latino Los Angeles Historic Context Statement*, “During the trial, the press portrayed the defendants as Mexican thugs, while police captain Ed Ayres characterized ethnic Mexicans as biologically criminal and prone to violence.”<sup>192</sup> In 1944, the case was overturned.

The second event involved the notorious Zoot Suit Riots in Los Angeles in 1943. This event spanned ten days in which “thousands of white servicemen and civilians roamed the streets of downtown, physically assaulting and tearing the clothes off zooters.”<sup>193</sup> Rather than protect the Mexican-Americans who were being attacked, the police arrested more than 500 Mexican-Americans; many who had been attacked were charged with “disturbing the peace or vagrancy.”<sup>194</sup>

Fueled by such events and ongoing racism, returning veterans became more assertive and vocal in fighting for equal rights: “Returning Chicano servicemen refused to accept the discriminatory practices that had been the Chicanos’ lot. The GI generation furnished much of the leadership for postwar Mexican American civil rights and political activism.”<sup>195</sup>

### *Latino Heroism and Military Honors*

Among Riverside’s Latino community, nearly every family had children or relatives who served in the armed forces through the major conflicts of the twentieth century. While numerous veterans served, this section recounts a few stories of veterans from World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.<sup>196</sup>

**Figure 71 High Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine for the safe return of World War II soldiers, 1945 (left); Victory parade including Latino veterans (right)**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Metropolitan Museum and Riverside Public Library, Shades of Riverside

#### **STAFF SERGEANT SALVADOR J. LARA, WORLD WAR II, MEDAL OF HONOR**

A native of Casa Blanca and one of five siblings, Staff Sergeant Salvador J. Lara served in the US Army during World War II. Born in 1920, he attended school in Riverside before enlisting in the US Army in his early twenties. During World War II, Lara served in Unit 602d Ordnance Armament Maintenance Battalion, 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. In 1944, his division was dispatched to Italy.

During a battle in Aprilia, Italy, Staff Sergeant Lara fought valiantly and was wounded in action. He subsequently passed away in September 1945. His remains are buried at the Lorraine American Cemetery and Memorial in Saint-Avold, Moselle, France.

In March 2014, President Barack Obama posthumously bestowed the Medal of Honor on Staff Sergeant Lara, in recognition of his exemplary performance and valor during a battle in Aprilia between May 27 and 28, 1945. Lara’s brother Alfonso accepted the award on his brother’s behalf. Lara also received Bronze Star and Purple Heart medals for exceptional service and bravery.<sup>197</sup> The Casa Blanca Branch of the Riverside Public Library is named for Staff Sergeant Lara.

**Figure 72** Salvador Lara, circa 1944 (left); Alfonso Lara and President Barack Obama, 2014 (right)



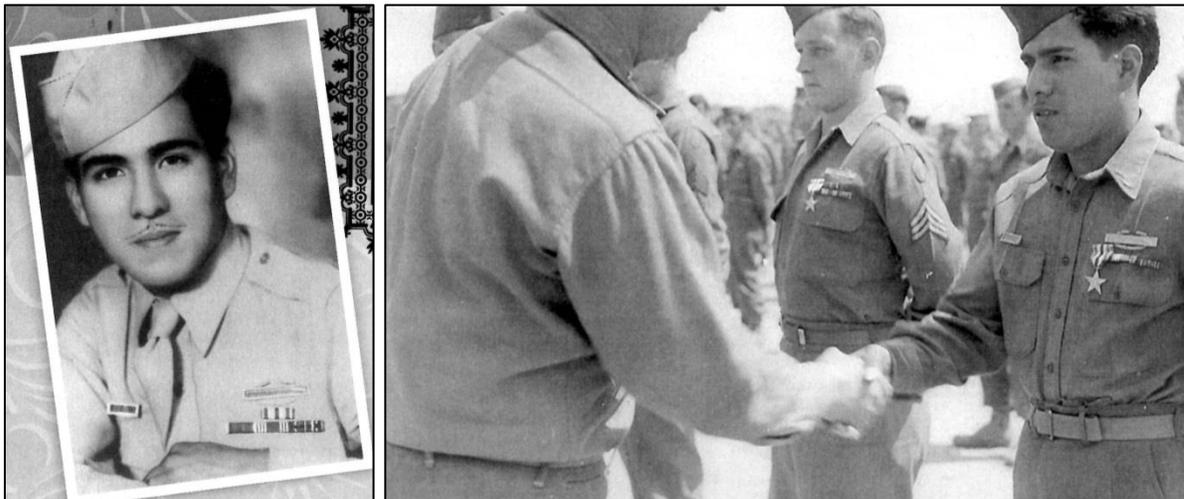
Source: American Battle Monuments Commission and Riverside Co. Mexican-American Historical Society

**ANDREW MELENDEZ, SR., WORLD WAR II, SILVER STAR, PURPLE HEART, AND BRONZE STAR**

Born in 1924 in Casa Blanca, Andrew Melendrez Sr. attended Casa Blanca Elementary School and Chemawa Junior High School. Orphaned at an early age, raised by an aunt and uncle, Melendrez worked as a migrant farm worker and citrus picker until joining the US Army during World War II. Between 1943 and 1945, Melendrez Sr. served in Company H, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. His division served in France, Germany, England, Belgium, and Holland.<sup>198</sup> Part of his service was spent in Belgium at the Battle of the Bulge, which last for six weeks between December 1944 and January 1945. Melendrez Sr. was awarded the Silver Star, the second highest military honor, for his bravery during this battle. Melendrez Sr. was also honored with a Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

Melendrez's son Andrew, Jr., went on to become a well-known local businessman and respected Riverside City Councilmember, currently representing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward Eastside district. For many years, Councilmember Melendrez has represented the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward Eastside District once led by John Sotelo.

**Figure 73** Andrew Melendrez, Sr., US Army, World War II



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

### **CORPORAL DARIO G. VASQUEZ, WORLD WAR II, BRONZE STAR AND PURPLE HEART**

Born in 1919, Dario G. Vasquez and his family moved to Riverside when he was a boy. Corporal Vasquez was one of seven children born to Porfirio and Delfina Vasquez, who had immigrated to the United States in the early 1910s during the Mexican Revolution.<sup>199</sup> After settling in Riverside, the Vasquez family acquired a lot in the Eastside neighborhood, where Porfirio built the family home on 11th Street. In addition to his construction and carpentry skills, Porfirio was a highly skilled gardener and landscaper. Porfirio's son Gilbert recalled that his father preferred working for himself. With his landscaping, gardening, and varied contracting skills in high demand, Porfirio was able to run a successful landscaping business out of his home for many years, serving clients throughout Riverside.

Corporal Vasquez attended Longfellow and Irving Elementary Schools and University Junior High School, where he was class president. By the time he graduated from junior high, the Great Depression was underway, and Vasquez spent his teenage years working to help his family.

In 1941, three months prior to Pearl Harbor, Vasquez enlisted in the US Army. His younger brother Gilbert was just eight years old at the time. In December 1941, Gilbert recalled his brother coming home for a visit after completing basic training. It was 7 December 1941. Gilbert recalled that Vasquez was outside washing his car, listening to the radio, when the announcement came that all enlisted men should report for service. Vasquez went inside and got ready, and the family drove him to the train station in Colton to say goodbye.

Once Corporal Vasquez was deployed in Europe, the family was able to track his whereabouts through letters home. His division spent time in Ireland before being deployed to North Africa. His unit, the 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry, was fighting German troops to protect the Suez Canal. Less than two years after enlisting, on 2 April 1943, Corporal Vasquez was killed in fierce fighting against the Germans. Word of his death arrived a month later, and it would take many years for the family to learn where he was laid to rest. His burial place and memorial are located in Tunisia, at the North African American Cemetery in Carthage.

For his valor and bravery in battle, Corporal Vasquez received the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, American Defense Service Medal, American Campaign Medal, European-African-Middle East Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, and Combat Infantryman Badge.

**Figure 74 Corporal Dario Vazquez (left); at the gardens of the family home (right), ca. 1941**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

### **YSMAEL “SMILEY” VILLEGAS, MEDAL OF HONOR, AND DARIO VILLEGAS**

Born just one year apart, in March 1924 and June 1925, Ysmael (better known as “Smiley”) and Dario Villegas were natives of Casa Blanca. The Villegas family roots in Riverside extend back to 1910, when the family patriarch arrived at the age of 12. A native of Michoacan, Mexico, Villegas had come to the United States to escape the unrest of the Mexican Revolution. He earned a living as a picker in the citrus groves and as a musician in a local band. In the early 1940s, Dario and Smiley enlisted in the US Army and left Riverside to serve in World War II. After training at Camp Roberts, the two brothers departed for the Philippines.

On 20 March 1945, Smiley Villegas was killed in the battle of Luzon in the Philippines, the day before his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday and only six months prior to the end of the war. The details of his death reflected extraordinary valor and bravery:

On March 20, 1945 his unit was in a forward position when they clashed with a strongly entrenched unit of the Japanese Army. Move from man to man, while under scathing and direct fire, he encouraged his men to drive forward. Smiley took the initiative himself and in a rapid succession made direct frontal attacks on six fox holes containing Japanese gunners.

He was on his way to the sixth [fox hole] when a hail of enemy bullets killed him. Inspired by his gallantry, his men gained the crest of the heavily defended hill and swept the Japanese from the field.<sup>200</sup>

For his heroism, Villegas received the Congressional Medal of Honor. He became the first Riverside County recipient of this honor. In 1949, based on his mother’s request, Smiley Villegas was brought home from the Philippines

in a flag-draped casket guarded by a military escort. The body lay in state at the Casa Blanca Elementary School Auditorium. A rosary was said for Smiley at a memorial service held in the school auditorium with family and friends remaining with his body throughout the night. Saturday morning his body was taken to St. Anthony’s Catholic Church, in Casa Blanca, for a high requiem mass. The forty-man detail included a 24-man honor guard, a seven-man firing squad, a three-man color guard, and six staff sergeants carrying Smiley’s body to the grave.

Smiley’s friends and school classmates were named by the Villegas family as honorary pallbearers. They were Modesto Escalera, Marcelino Macias, Eleuterio Medina, Fred Garcia, Felix Negrete, Tony Castro, Andrew Melendrez, Sr., and Augustine Flores.<sup>201</sup>

Villegas was initially interred at Olivewood Cemetery in Riverside. In 1978, the US Army asked the family if they would permit Villegas’s remains to be interred as the first soldier laid to rest in Riverside’s National Cemetery. The family agreed, and the service took place on 11 November 1978.

In addition to the Villegas grave site in the National Cemetery, Villegas’s exemplary service and sacrifice are memorialized for a school, a park and recreational fields, and an American Legion Post carrying his name. A mural of Villegas survives at Villegas Park in Casa Blanca. In 1995, a bronze statue of Villegas was unveiled in downtown Riverside. In 2004, the City of Riverside named Smiley Villegas’s birthday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, as Staff Sergeant Ysmael Villegas Day.

Following the war, Dario returned to Casa Blanca. He recalled the neighborhood as having grown busier and more populous, as new residents continued to arrive in Casa Blanca. Braceros settled in the neighborhood with their families. At the time, most of the residents of Casa Blanca were farm workers. Dario recalled that it was very difficult for Mexican-Americans to obtain jobs in any field other than agriculture, due to discrimination. For his part, Dario enjoyed participating on the Casa

Blanca Aces baseball team, “the only team in the history of Riverside to be undefeated.”<sup>202</sup> Upon leaving the army, Dario worked in civil service at San Bernardino Norton Air Force Base, a position he held for 35 years until retiring.<sup>203</sup>

While Dario was also a decorated World War II veteran, he focused his efforts through his lifetime on securing and memorializing his brother’s legacy. In the 1990s, the family succeeded in commissioning a memorial and bronze statue of Smiley at Riverside City Hall. Dario Villegas passed away in March 2009.

**Figure 75 Dario and Smiley Villegas, circa 1942 (left); Staff Sergeant Villegas gravestone, Riverside National Cemetery (right)**



Source: Riverside Metropolitan Museum and Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

**Figure 76 Memorial service for Staff Sergeant Villegas, Casa Blanca School Auditorium, 1949**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

### **SERGEANT JESUS S. DURAN, VIETNAM WAR, MEDAL OF HONOR AND BRONZE STAR**

One Riverside youth who enlisted to serve in the US Army in the Vietnam War was Eastside resident Sergeant Jesus S. Duran. Born in 1948, Duran was a native of Juarez, Mexico, the sixth of twelve siblings born to Librada and Crescencio Duran, Sr.

After moving to the United States when Duran was a boy, the family settled in Riverside's Eastside neighborhood in 1963. Duran attended North High School and, in 1968, was married in a ceremony at the famed Mission Inn. That same year, Duran joined the US Army's Company E, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion.

For his heroism in the Vietnam War, the Medal of Honor was bestowed on Duran posthumously by President Barack Obama. In the award bestowed to Duran's daughter, Tina Duran-Ruvalcaba, in his honor, Duran was praised by President Obama for his "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty":

Specialist Four Jesus S. Duran distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while serving as an acting M-60 machinegunner in Company E, 2d Battalion, 5th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) during combat operations against an armed enemy in the Republic of Vietnam on April 10, 1969.

Specialist Four Duran's extraordinary heroism and selflessness above and beyond the call of duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.

After returning from the war, Duran worked as a corrections officer at a juvenile detention center, "dedicating personal time to mentoring youths."<sup>204</sup> Duran passed away in 1977 at the age of 28. Survived by son Jesus Jr. and daughter Tina, Duran is buried at Olivewood Memorial Park in Riverside.

**Figure 77 Jesus S. Duran, circa 1968; Duran's daughter Tina and President Barack Obama, 2014**



Source: Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

### 4.3 Theme #3: Making a Life

Since the earliest years, Latino neighborhoods in Riverside have forged their own distinctive social, religious, and cultural groups and organizations. This included everything from meeting halls and club buildings, churches, parks and recreational spaces. Resourcefulness was key, as available spaces were adapted and used by many different groups. Early Latino residents of Arlington, for example, recalled transforming dirt courtyards into festive sites for parties, as well as appropriating a building on McKenzie and Andrew Streets for “wedding receptions and Army send-off parties.”<sup>205</sup> Also in Arlington, a small field at Indiana Avenue and Van Buren Streets became known as “The Diamond” and provided a popular space for baseball games.

As civic and institutional services and buildings were added in Latino and ethnic communities, these spaces provided important venues for cultural and community events, parties, and political meetings. New institutions added in the 1920s such as churches and schools—even as they reflected the era of segregation—ultimately benefited the community and fostered cultural and social life.

In his groundbreaking study of citrus workers in nearby Corona, scholar José Alamillo noted a similar pattern for Mexican-Americans in that town:

In spite of the hardships of life in this single-industry town, Mexican men and women challenged, transformed, and expanded the arena of leisure for their own purposes. Leisure spaces included saloons, pool halls, baseball clubs, churches, Cinco de Mayo festivals, and movie theaters. Employers, city officials, and social reformers all made concerted efforts to control the lives of working men and women in the community, including how and where they spent their leisure time. Despite these efforts, Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans used certain leisure activities to build ethnic and worker solidarity and forge relations with employers, city officials, and Anglo residents to achieve greater power in the community.<sup>206</sup>

The following sections explore three areas of Making a Life: (1) Religion and Spirituality; (2) Recreation and Sports; and (3) Cultural Development. Limited information is available on some of these topics; as additional information becomes available, through research or collection of oral histories, these sections can be expanded as needed.

#### **Subtheme #1: Religion and Spirituality**

As noted in the 2015 study, *Latinos in Twentieth Century California*:

The Latino experience of religion and spirituality in California over the course of the twentieth century has been varied and nuanced. Though the majority of Latinos to this day are Catholic, it is not the only religion practiced by the different nationalities that make up the community. Mainline Protestantism, as well as more evangelical and charismatic denominations, has attracted Latinos.<sup>207</sup>

This diversity of faith is reflected in Riverside. While Catholicism was embraced by a majority of Latinos, a number of other faiths and churches have also contributed to spiritual, social and cultural life. This religious diversity was a natural byproduct of settlement patterns, which assembled followers of many different faiths, resulting in numerous churches. Residences and meeting halls often served as the first home to religious institutions. Through the first half of the twentieth century, it became common for each neighborhood to have its own church, and usually several.

Spanish Colonial Revival, Mission Revival, and Gothic Revival were the predominant architectural styles of church buildings.

Religious groups and churches that served the Latino community in Riverside typically served a multitude of purposes. Churches and parish halls offered a place to gather for worship, but they were also adapted for a range of community needs. They became spaces for community meetings, fundraisers, dances, movie nights, and gathering places for the PTA and charitable organizations. In terms of cultural life, churches, parish halls, and church grounds became the sites for significant annual events, including Easter celebrations, Cinco de Mayo and 16<sup>th</sup> de Septiembre festivals, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and posadas and Christmas-related events.

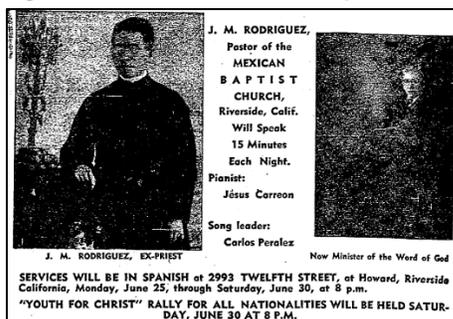
While the following sections focus on long-term churches that are represented in the available literature, Latino neighborhoods throughout Riverside are sure to have had additional religious institutions that served their communities in a similar fashion. Subsequent research, including oral histories with community members, will continue shedding light on groups, organizations, and churches that contributed to religious and spiritual life in Riverside's Latino community.

### *Churches in Latino and African-American Neighborhoods*

In the Eastside neighborhood, the extraordinary number of religious buildings was a result of the religious and cultural diversity of its residents. Christian denominations included Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, and various evangelical sects. The church was a major source of inspiration among Latino and ethnic communities, often serving as a focal point for social life and support in segregated communities. Some of the churches serving the Eastside community included Saint James Church of God in Christ (2843 Eleventh Street), Saint Ignatius Church (4482 Grove Avenue), and the Iglesia Apostolica Church (2995 Cottage Street).

Other religious institutions located in Casa Blanca included a church constructed at 7442 Diamond Street in 1933. Still in operation, the building served initially as a Pentecostal Mission. Over the years, the church name changed to the Church of God of Prophecy. With services offered in Spanish, the church was started by early Casa Blanca residents Jose Jimenez and his wife Concepción. Through the years, the Jimenez couple was widely known as leaders of the Church of God of Prophecy, preaching throughout California and in Mexico. The couple had 10 children, three of whom followed them into church service as bishops and ministers.<sup>208</sup> Other Casa Blanca churches included the Mexican Presbyterian Church (7539 Emerald Street) and Mexican Baptist Church (7247 Marguerita Avenue), both of which had active congregations. In the postwar period, the Friendship Baptist Church offered services behind a residence at 7414 Diamond Street. Among several Catholic parishes in the City, Arlington was home to St. Thomas Catholic Church on Jackson Street and Magnolia Avenue (the building has since been replaced and is no longer extant).

**Figure 78 The "Mexican Baptist" Church, Eastside, 1945**



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 23 June 1945

By the postwar period, Riverside was home to two Our Lady of Guadalupe Churches: the shrine in Eastside (though officially known as Saint Francis of Assisi until 1957) and a church in Arlington on Indiana Avenue, which offered all services in Spanish.

Latinos in neighborhoods throughout Riverside established and participated in numerous centers for religious life, both through formal institutions and smaller, community- and home-based centers. In this way, churches contributed not just to the spiritual life but also the social and cultural life of parishioners.

Over the years, the role of the church in Latino society shifted. In the postwar period, more second and third generation Latinos more easily identified “with American culture rather than the culture of their home country,” or their parents or grandparents home country.<sup>209</sup> The churches in Riverside adapted to these changes, creating special events, such as dances and movie nights, and support groups for teenaged boys and girls.

In the 1960s, another shift took place during the Chicano Civil Rights Movement: young Chicanos and activists were American and felt American, but they also began to revisit and embrace all aspects of their heritage, including religious customs and traditions, which became “a point of pride and means of forging a unique identity.”<sup>210</sup>

### **CALVARY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

In addition to Saint Anthony’s Church (described below), an early long-term religious institution in Casa Blanca was Calvary Presbyterian Church, located at 3187 Madison Street. Leading the Calvary Presbyterian Church for many years was director and Pastor Alejandro Trujillo. Ordained as an elder of the Presbyterian Church in 1924, Trujillo began at Calvary Presbyterian Church in 1936. In 1944, he was ordained as a reverend, in a ceremony led by Reverend Paul L. Warnshuis, “superintendent of Mexican churches.”<sup>211</sup> From 1921 until well into the postwar period, the Calvary Presbyterian Church and school remained an important institutional anchor and source of community activities and support (the building has since been demolished). In 1938, Calvary Presbyterian Church was expanded to include a House of Neighborly Service.

One of the young residents mentored by Reverend Trujillo who followed him into the ministry was Casa Blanca native Tony Hernandez.<sup>212</sup> Hernandez attended school during the Great Depression. With the encouragement of Trujillo, Hernandez completed his education in Riverside schools, then applied to and was accepted at the Chicago Theological Seminary, from which he graduated after four years of study. Upon his ordination, in the early 1940s, Hernandez was appointed pastor of a Spanish-speaking congregation at the First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino. In addition to this mentorship of young congregants, Reverend Trujillo participated in initiatives to bring together congregations of color in Riverside. At an “interracial breakfast” in June 1945, Reverend Trujillo delivered an address at the Eastside Second Baptist Church at Twelfth and Howard Streets.

### *Latinos in the Catholic Church*

Extending back to the Spanish era, the principal religion among the Latino community was Catholicism. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries throughout California, the Spanish established Catholic missions not only to convert Native Americans but also to assert their political power and military presence. Missions became local engines for economic growth through the Spanish era, until secularization in the 1830s during California’s Mexican era.

The role of the Catholic Church underwent another shift, following the Mexican-American War and California’s entrance into the United States. With more Anglo-Americans arriving in California, early

Mexican-American natives of California, or *Californios*, slowly became a marginalized minority group. Because the Catholic Church “made little effort to minister to Mexican-Americans” during this period, this community “maintained a separate religious identity,” with traditional customs, often practiced in homes or makeshift neighborhood sanctuaries.<sup>213</sup>

In the twentieth century, the pressure was building for the Catholic Church to address the increasing diversity of its congregations. In the Latino community throughout California, congregants requested services that more closely reflected their heritage and religious traditions, including services in Spanish. Often times, however, these requests were rebuffed: “In the early part of the century, as nativism became heightened in the face of increased Mexican immigration, the Church was hesitant to affiliate itself with Spanish-speaking priests out of fear that this would make it appear foreign and therefore undesirable to the Anglo population.”<sup>214</sup> In this environment, segregation was common.

Even so, the Roman Catholic faith remained the focal point of family and social life for a majority of Riverside Latinos. Religious holidays were celebrated, and people throughout the community marked the major milestones of family life with First Communion, confirmation, and marriages in the church.

In the late nineteenth century, many Catholic parishioners in Riverside attended St. Francis de Sales, extant as of 2018 at 4268 Lime Street. Founded in 1886, St. Francis de Sales is the oldest parish in Riverside.

**Figure 79 St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church, Lime Street**



Source: Diocese of San Bernardino, 2018

Until the 1920s, Catholic residents of primarily ethnic neighborhoods such as Eastside, Arlington/Arlington Heights, and Casa Blanca, among others, would have to make the trek to St. Francis de Sales by foot, in the days before automobile ownership was the norm or before public transportation was available. Apart from the logistical inconvenience, there were also significant cultural differences in how Catholic Mass was practiced in traditionally Anglo-American and Latin-American congregations.

Within the Latino community, momentum started gathering for new neighborhood churches and services that more closely reflected their religious traditions, customs, and language. From outside the Latino community, discrimination and the wish for segregation provided another factor in the establishment of separate churches.

The 1920s would bring construction of several Catholic churches in Latino neighborhoods: Saint Anthony's Church, dedicated in 1927, and Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine Church, opened in 1929. By the postwar period, another church in the Arlington neighborhood dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe was located at 9398 Indiana Avenue. Through the 1950s, Arlington's Our Lady of Guadalupe had an active congregation, with many yearly festivals and fund raisers and all services in Spanish. The church was led by Pastor Edmund Krolicki for a number of years.

With the opening of Catholic churches in Latino neighborhoods, a host of festivals and celebrations reflective of Mexican traditions started to flourish throughout the City. The yearly feast for Our Lady of Guadalupe was celebrated at multiple locations each December. Spanning several days, these events typically included a great feast of *comida mexicana*, dancing, games, the naming of a royal court, and culminating in high mass. In addition, the churches themselves offered important community spaces for other celebrations, such as Cinco de Mayo, 16<sup>th</sup> de Septiembre (Mexican Independence Day), and other events. Neighborhood churches also facilitated the establishment of Catholic Youth Organization branches, which offered opportunities for young people for social gatherings and mutual assistance.

**Figure 80** Arlington's Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Indiana Avenue, 1953 and 1954



Source: Riverside Independent Enterprise, 11 December 1953 and 12 December 1954

**SAINT ANTHONY'S CONGREGATION AND CHURCH, 1924**

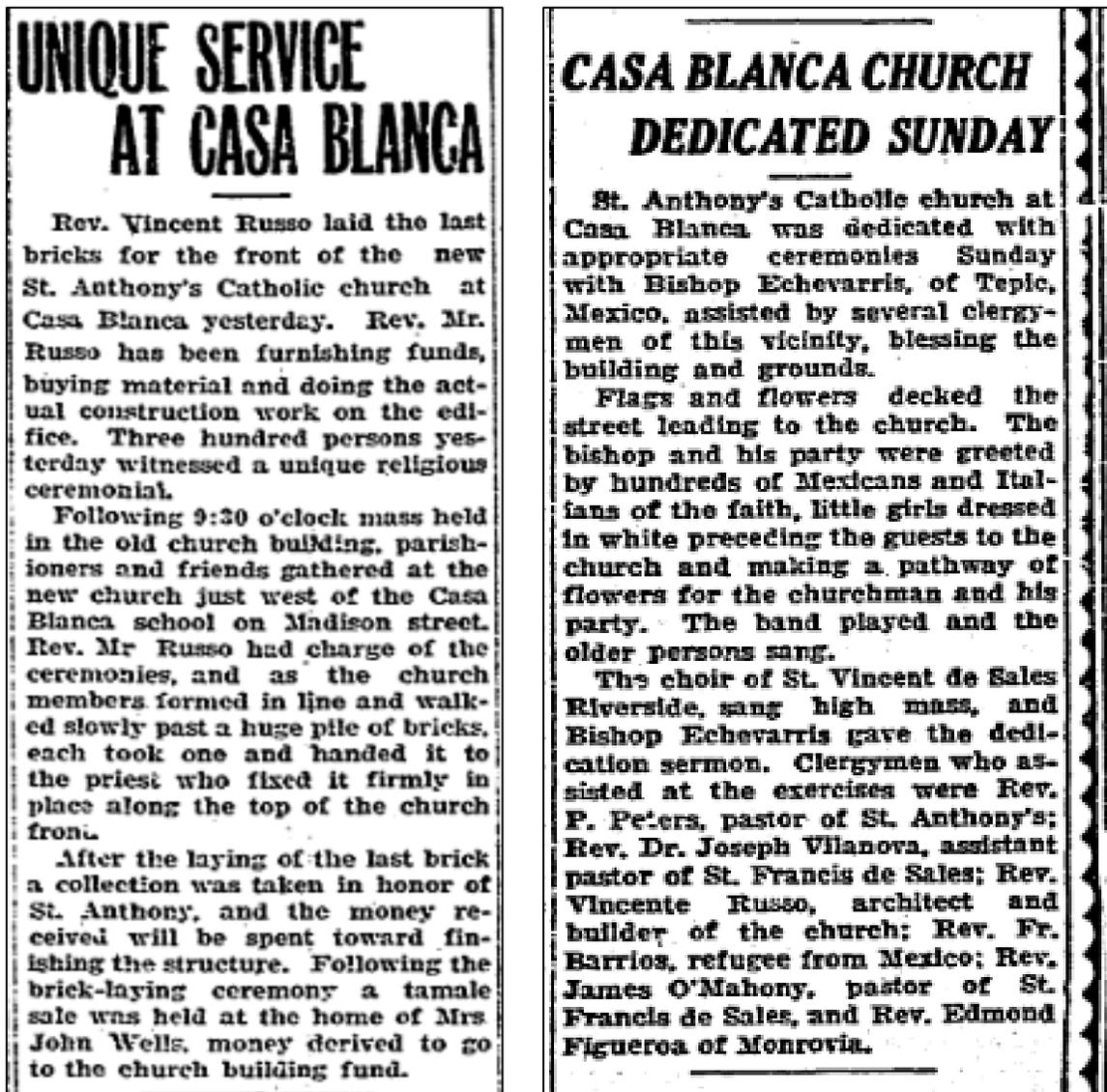
Saint Anthony's Church is one of the oldest surviving churches built for and located within a Latino neighborhood in Riverside. Located at 3056 Madison Street, the congregation was established in 1921. In the next few years, fund raising and drafting of architectural plans were led by Reverend Vincente Russo, with a high degree of community participation. Finally, in 1924, the first brick was

laid for construction of the new Mission-Revival style parish and church. The *Riverside Daily Press* noted the "unique" service celebrating the laying of the church cornerstone:

Three hundred persons yesterday witnessed a unique religious ceremonial. Following...mass held in the old church building, parishioners and friends gathered at the new church just west of the Casa Blanca school on Madison Street. Rev. Mr. Russo had charge of the ceremonies, and as the church members formed in line and walked slowly past a huge pile of bricks, each took one and handed it to the priest who fixed it firmly in place along the top of the church front.<sup>215</sup>

Three years later, on 1 November 1927, Saint Anthony's Church held its opening mass and became one of Riverside's earliest Catholic sanctuaries serving a primarily Mexican-American (but also Italian-American) community in Casa Blanca. (The original church was demolished and replaced by the current modern building in 1975-1976.)

Figure 81 *Riverside Daily Press* announcement for laying of St. Anthony's Catholic Church cornerstone, 1924 (left) and dedication ceremonies, 1927 (right)



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 25 February 1924 and 1 November 1927

Dedication ceremonies brought together church leaders from Riverside, Monrovia, and Mexico, as well as the choir of nearby St. Vincent de Sales. To assist in the ceremonies, Bishop Echevarris from Tepic, Mexico travelled to Riverside, “blessing the building and grounds.” Leading St. Anthony’s Church at the time was Reverend Paul Peters. Assisting Peters at the dedication ceremonies were Reverend Dr. Joseph Villanova of St. Francis de Sales, Reverend Vincente Russo; Reverend Father Barrios, “refugee from Mexico,” among others.

Flags and flowers decked the street leading to the church. The bishop and his party were greeted by hundreds of Mexicans and Italians of the faith, little girls dressed in white preceding the guests to the church and making a pathway of flowers for the churchman and his party. The band played and the older persons sang.<sup>216</sup>

From its earliest years, Saint Anthony’s became the spiritual center for Catholic life and practice in Casa Blanca. The location chosen for the church was Madison Street, in the center of the Casa Blanca community. In 1975, the 1923 church was demolished, and a new building constructed.

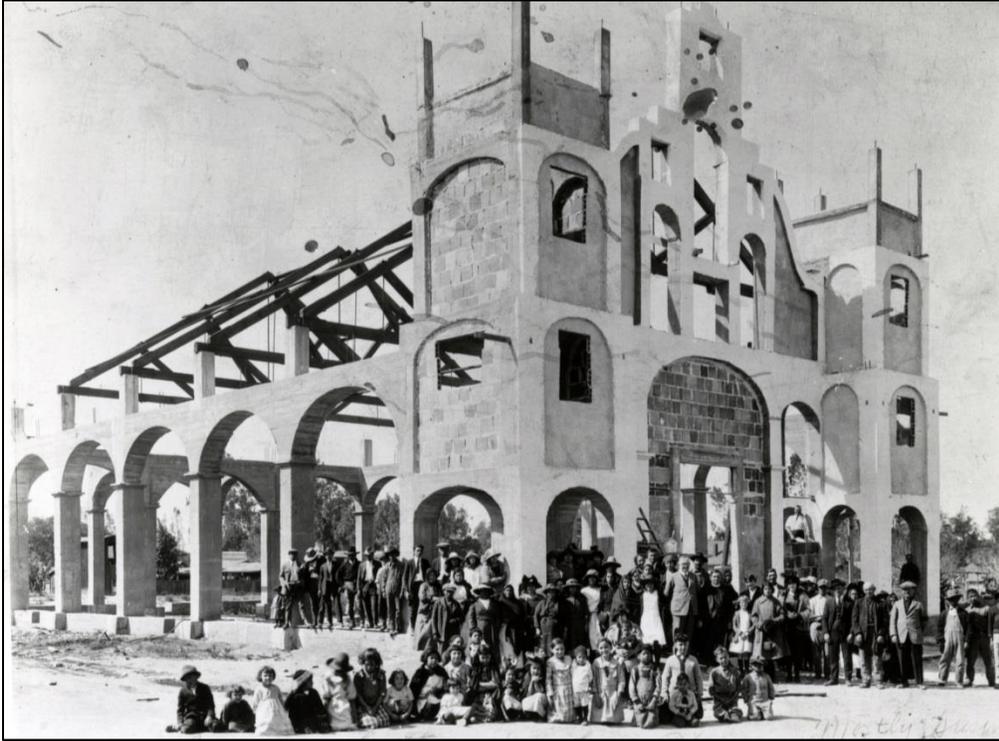
St. Anthony’s Church also offered residents a more convenient neighborhood venue for family celebrations and ceremonies, such as weddings, first communions, baptisms, and funeral services. Through the first half of the twentieth century, Saint Anthony’s Church became a significant community gathering place for church as well as social events and celebrations, including a yearly Easter festival, Cinco de Mayo festival, youth dances, music performances, and *jamaicas* or charity bazaars, throughout the year. Early parishioners were primarily Mexican-American and Italian-Americans from Casa Blanca.

In the partnerships seen so often in Riverside Latino communities, the parish hosted a wide variety of gatherings and meetings for community organizations. The Catholic Youth Organization held local and regional meetings in the church parish hall, as did the Casa Blanca Improvement League and PTA. In the postwar period, Saint Anthony’s hosted gatherings for youth associations, teenage girls and boys, Las Venturias (for girls) and Los Vagabundos (for boys).

One long-time figure at St. Anthony’s Church who became well respected and engaged in the community was Reverend Luis Grimaldi Balderas. Reverend Balderas led the congregation at St. Anthony’s for a number of years in the postwar period.



**Figure 84 Saint Anthony's Church under construction, ca. 1925**



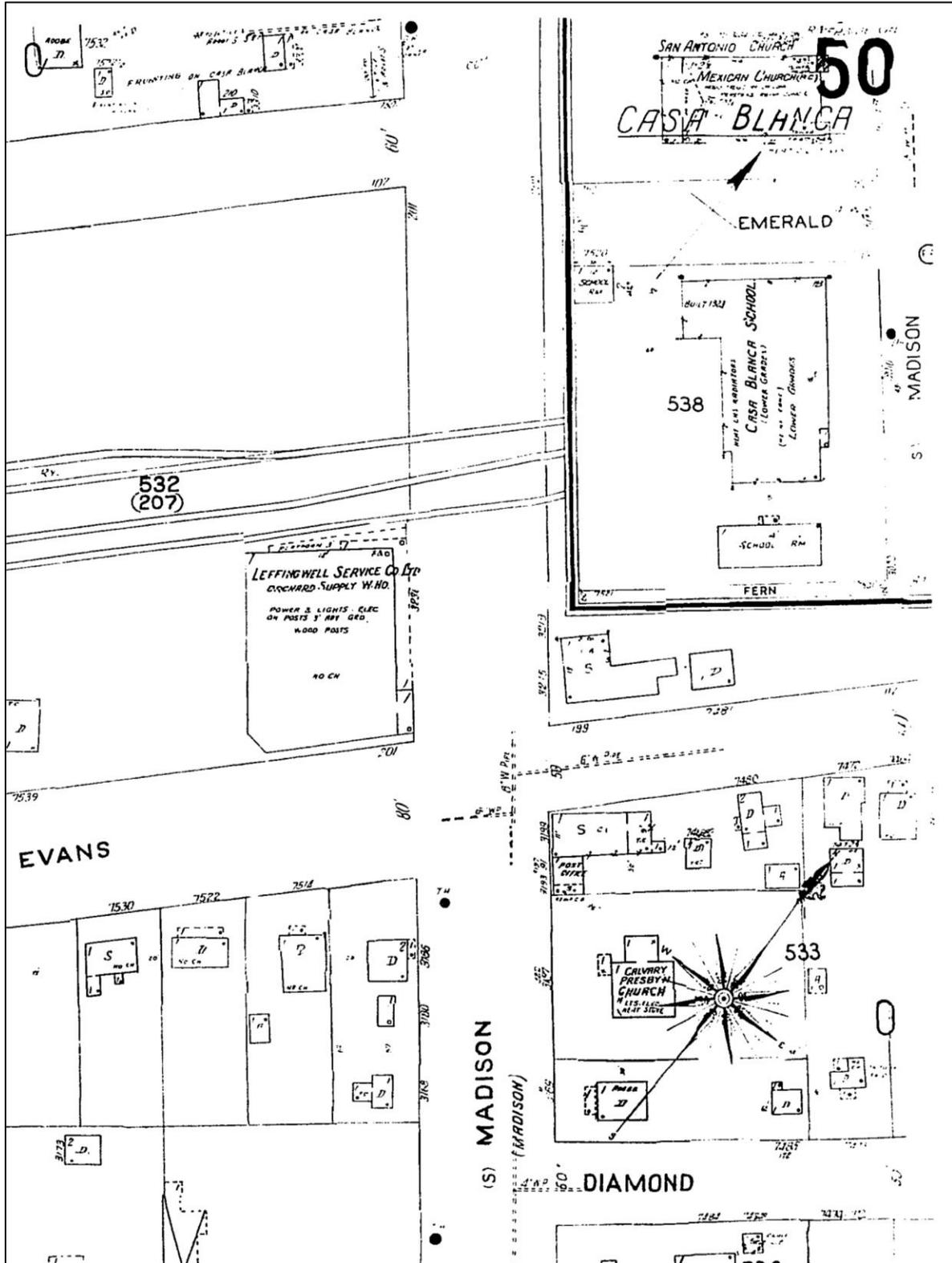
Source: Riverside Metropolitan Museum

**Figure 85 Saint Anthony's Church confirmation class, circa 1930**



Source: Riverside Public Library, Shades of Riverside

Figure 86 "San Antonio Mexican Church" and Casa Blanca School appear in inset, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1952. Calvary Presbyterian Church is north of Madison and Diamond Streets



Source: Los Angeles Public Library

## **CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE SHRINE (ORIGINALLY ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI), 1929**

The Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine has been a significant center for religious, cultural, and social life for Riverside's Latino community for nearly a century.

Located at 2858 Ninth Street in Eastside, the church broke ground in 1929, after years of lobbying for a sanctuary honoring the Virgen de Guadalupe, patroness of the Mexican people. In 1927, based on community support and the continuing migration of Mexican citizens to Riverside, Los Angeles Bishop John J. Cantwell agreed to establish a Roman Catholic Mission in the Eastside neighborhood.<sup>217</sup> Based on the wishes of an early donor, the church was originally (officially) named St. Francis of Assisi, though it was best known among congregants as Our Lady of Guadalupe. This name was made official in 1957, when the church was sanctified as a national shrine and pilgrimage site.

One of the earliest steps toward establishing a sanctuary for the Virgen de Guadalupe occurred in 1921. During a visit to Riverside's St. Francis de Sales by Bishop Cantwell, Cantwell "received the women of the parish and blessed a beautiful new statue of 'Our Lady of Guadalupe' for the Mexican people. This statue was recently purchased by the Mexican society."<sup>218</sup> The statue would subsequently be relocated to Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, where it remains.

In 1927, permission was granted for construction of the new church, but Bishop Cantwell attached the caveat that parishioners must raise the money (rather than assume a debt) for its construction. The community came together, "raising money by selling food, donations when possible, and Saint Francis de Sales had already volunteered to sponsor the new mission church."<sup>219</sup> Two years later, in 1929, ground was broken.

In January 1931, as finishing touches were still being completed, the bells of Our Lady of Guadalupe were blessed in a ceremony officiated by Reverend Monsignor Manrique y Zarate, bishop of the diocese of Hueptia, Mexico, and Reverend Father Federico Martinez, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe.<sup>220</sup> Hundreds of congregants attended the ceremony. In 1957, the church was officially renamed Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, making it a national and international pilgrimage site. From the earliest days, services were offered in Spanish.

From the earliest days, Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine served a variety of social, cultural, and religious needs for the community. In the postwar period, the parish opened a private school nearby (the school closed in the late 1960s). Starting in 1955, the yearly Fiesta Ranchera event raised funds for the school (though the school is no longer in operation, the yearly Fiesta Ranchera continues).

According to Nati Fuentes, an Eastside native and community leader who worked with the Office of Economic Opportunity, the construction of Our Lady of Guadalupe was a significant event for the Latino community. Prior to the construction of the church, parishioners who attended St. Francis, as Fuentes said,

did not always feel welcome at the church. At some point, some of the members chose to leave the church and took the statue of the Lady of Guadalupe. The statue was kept in a private home until a new church was built and then the statue was taken to the church.<sup>221</sup>

Fuentes is the daughter of Otilia Morales, from Guanajuato, and Porfirio Fuentes, from Jalisco, Mexico. According to Fuentes, "the family's life revolved around the church and its community."<sup>222</sup>

**Figure 87 Construction of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, circa 1929**



Source: Riverside Metropolitan Museum

**Figure 88 Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine**



Source: Diocese of San Bernardino, 2018

Among Eastside residents who helped raise funds for construction of Our Lady of Guadalupe was Mrs. Eusebia Vásquez de Buriel, who moved to Riverside with her family in 1922. In 2008, Mrs. Buriel recalled how Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine had been

at the center of her life for over sixty years. She recalled how the Mexican neighbors chipped in to build their own church in the middle of the Depression. ‘We worked real hard to have our church...the people were all poor, worst than we are now, but everything came up real nice, so we are very proud of...that church.’<sup>223</sup>

In 2007, journalist and television personality Huell Howser toured Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine with Eusebia Buriel and her son, Dr. Raymond Buriel, Eastside native and long-time professor of psychology and Chicano Studies at Pomona College. During the tour, Dr. Buriel recounted the story of the church to Howser, explaining how its construction was a community project from the earliest years:

For the longest time, [residents of Eastside] wanted to have their own church in their own community. ...It was very hard but they pulled together and started to build this church on their own. They didn’t take out any loans—the understanding with the Bishop was that it had to be paid for in cash.<sup>224</sup>

Women in the community went door-to-door selling food and held jamaicas to raise money for materials. On the weekends, the men would come to work on the church. As Dr. Buriel explained, “The drivers of the trucks who used to drive the workers to the citrus fields used those trucks on the weekend to go the river bed, pick up sand, and bring it back here. And this was how they built everything on their own.”<sup>225</sup>

Throughout her life, well into her nineties, Mrs. Buriel continued to come to the church every morning to help prepare for the day.

**Figure 89** Huell Howser, at Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine with Raymond and Eusebia Buriel, 2007



Source: Road Trip through California, Riverside, with Huell Howser, 2007

While having a local neighborhood church was an obvious benefit to the community, new churches in Latino neighborhoods also reflected ongoing segregation and discrimination. In the 1920s, one early congregant of St. Francis de Sales was community leader and activist Josephine Lozano. Lozano recalled that, in the early days, “Although we were segregated as to residence, we weren’t

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

separated in church. All Catholics attended St. Francis de Sales Church. I was furious when [the] Monsignor announced in Mass one Sunday that a new colonia church was erected and that henceforth all Mexicans would attend ‘their’ church!”<sup>226</sup> As she later recalled, Lozano interpreted this to say, “We don’t want you here.”<sup>227</sup> This experience proved formative for Lozano, who became active in politics and civil rights.

In 1938, Reverend Father Joseph R. Nuñez was appointed pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine. One year into his term, Nuñez helped plan a major fundraiser that brought Anglo-American Catholics and residents to Our Lady of Guadalupe for the first time. Held in July 1939, the event was a widely publicized “Mexican Supper,” open to members of the community, with proceeds going to the church’s charitable work in the community. The event was well attended and covered by the *Riverside Daily Press*, who praised the “real Mexican tamales and enchiladas” offered at the supper:

The tamales were especially good and we learned from Father Joseph Nuñez, who was on hand with Señor Quiróz to welcome patrons of the benefit affair, that the padre’s mother, who recently came from Mexico City to visit him, took a hand in their preparation.<sup>228</sup>

Attended by many of the City’s Anglo-American civic leaders, the event also offered some of the first glimpses of Our Lady of Guadalupe by members of the City’s Anglo-American community. After dinner, the group stopped in to admire the church’s shrine:

As it was our first visit we were much interested in the altar... In spite of the fact that the church is named for St. Francis of Assisi, the alter honors that favorite patron of all Mexican people, Our Lady of Guadalupe... The little church is lovely in its simplicity and at night the altar was very pretty as it reflected the colored lights surrounding the statue of Our Lady.<sup>229</sup>

**Figure 90 May 1940 confirmation class at Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine Church**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

**Figure 91** Festival and parade at Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, ca. 1957



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Metropolitan Museum

**Figure 92** Our Lady of Guadalupe Fiesta Ranchera celebration, 1959



Source: Riverside Daily Enterprise, 6 August 1959

**Figure 93** Gilbert Reyes and candidates for Sweetheart of 1959, Janet Espinoza, Emelda Castro, and Virginia Rodriguez, Our Lady of Guadalupe Summer Dance



**SWEETHEARTS** — Gilbert Reyes greets Janet Espinoza, Emelda Castro and Virginia Rodriguez as the girls, candidates for Sweetheart of 1959, launch ticket sale for Saturday night's dance at the parish hall of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine Catholic Church, 2858 Ninth St. Proceeds will go to further

the parish youth program. Abbe-Chavez and his orchestra will play for dancing. Gilbert will be master of ceremonies. There will be Mexican food and refreshments, according to Mrs. Jess Reyes, general chairman.

Source: Riverside Daily Enterprise, 8 July 1959

## Subtheme #2: Recreation and Sports

Throughout the twentieth century, Latino men and women throughout California have distinguished themselves in all areas of athletics. As in other aspects of their lives, this required effort and perseverance, not just in terms of training:

Though the Latino presence in sports increased over the course of the twentieth century, as a group, they often faced racism and discrimination. ...Latinos in turn used sports as a way to counteract these negative portrayals and reach success not otherwise available to them. Sports...became a medium for Latinos to prove their worth in the face of racism.<sup>230</sup>

In the postwar period, Latino athletes started to have better access to both facilities and professional opportunities. With the emergence of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement, “Latinos demanded more equality on the playing field. In the 1960s and later, they became increasingly recognized as professional players with real talents, and the first professional star players emerged.”<sup>231</sup> In the early years, Latinos participated in a wide range of sports, as members of amateur leagues and as competitive athletes. Athletics provided a venue in which Latino athletes could receive recognition for their efforts and achievements. The City’s English-language newspaper routinely publicized news about games and victories of Mexican-American athletes and teams.

Although Latinos still experienced discrimination, it is interesting to note how the English-language press in Riverside covered Mexican-American athletics. In the *Riverside Daily Press*, for example, what stands out is the frequency and level of coverage of Mexican-American teams during an era that was otherwise marked by segregation, rampant discrimination, and repatriation. A review of local newspapers through the 1920s and 1930s, for example, shows numerous articles celebrating the victories of local Latino baseball teams and boxers in a relatively neutral manner. In this way, athletics provided a rare opportunity for Latinos to receive recognition.

The level of coverage, as well as the number of teams and tournaments, for children and adults, also sheds light on how important athletics became for the Latino community. During the first half of the twentieth century, one sport in particular stood out: “Baseball has been called the American game. A religion. For Mexican Americans in the first half of the 1900s, it was that and more. ‘Along with family and religion, baseball was an institutional thread uniting the community.’”<sup>232</sup>

Athletics provided a venue not only for challenging negative stereotypes but also for gaining a range of leadership and management skills. The skills acquired as managers and coaches, for example, easily transferred to other areas of life. Participating in sports, either as spectator or athlete, was also an enjoyable, accessible form of physical activity and socializing. In Riverside, Mexican-American communities organized boxing and baseball leagues, with teams formed with the sponsorship of sports clubs, mutual-aid organizations, and employers, such as the citrus farmers and packinghouses in Riverside. As teams competed, “families and communities often traveled with their teams; this created a method for socialization and community reinforcement.”<sup>233</sup>

Latinos also participated in a wide variety of other sports as part of citywide leagues and school teams as well as in traditional activities and events. One example is *la charrería*, a popular type of rodeo organized by the local charro association. In the early 1950s, the American Legion’s Mexican-American chapter used sports and social clubs to address a rise in gang activity. One successful initiative in this respect was the establishment of *Los Vagabundos* (the Vagabonds), an automobile enthusiast’s club for young men aged 17 to 25. With the leadership of local resident Frank Salazar, among others, *Los Vagabundos* branched out “into baseball, basketball, and community service activities” and spun off two additional clubs, *Los Águilas* (the Eagles) and *Los Drifters*.<sup>234</sup>

**Figure 94** The LV Brown Packinghouse Baseball Team, Highgrove, 1928



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

**Figure 95** The Carrasco brothers, Henry, Fernando and Sebastian (front row, on the right) and their Eastside Baseball Team, ca. 1935



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Figure 96 Press coverage of winning Casa Blanca baseball teams, adult and children's leagues

SPORTS

### J. E. TRACK TEAM AT AZUSA SATURDAY

**Howard and Nordenson  
Only Casualties;  
Strother Ready**

Riverside Junior college yesterday opened preparations for its initial Orange Empire conference dual track and field meet at Azusa Saturday afternoon with the Citrus Union Owls.

In excellent physical condition and nearer mid-season form than in recent history, Coach Bill Neufeld's Bengal outfit is a prime favorite to knock over the Citrusites. It also stands a splendid chance of winning its following dual meets to retain its conference championship.

The local jaycee's chief point winners will open scheduled competition in a confident but not self-satisfied mood, having reaped a golden

### CASA BLANCA TIGERS BEAT BATESMEN 4-3

The Casa Blanca Tigers defeated the Bates Sporting Goods nine for the second time Sunday, but it took them 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> innings to gain a 4-3 decision. Castorena pitched shut-out ball in nine innings, the Batesmen scoring three runs in the fourth inning. Strickland hurled good ball for the losers.

Two runs in the ninth enabled Casa Blanca to tie the score and they went ahead to win in an extra session. Claremont plays at Casa Blanca next Sunday.

The box score:

|               | A         | B        | R         | H        | E        |
|---------------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Pia, cf       | 6         | 0        | 2         | 0        | 0        |
| Johnny, lf    | 5         | 0        | 2         | 0        | 0        |
| Castorena, p  | 5         | 0        | 1         | 0        | 0        |
| Garela, c     | 5         | 1        | 0         | 0        | 0        |
| Rocha, ss     | 5         | 0        | 2         | 2        | 2        |
| Sam, 2b       | 4         | 1        | 1         | 1        | 1        |
| Rivera, rf    | 3         | 0        | 0         | 0        | 0        |
| Scholder, 1b  | 4         | 1        | 2         | 0        | 0        |
| Velasquez, 3b | 4         | 1        | 1         | 0        | 0        |
| x Medina      | 1         | 0        | 1         | 0        | 0        |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>42</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>13</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>3</b> |

### CASA BLANCA BOYS WIN CHAMPIONSHIP

Following Wednesday's game, in which it was pitted against Irving school, Casa Blanca emerged as the winner of the championship in the elementary school baseball contest, waged for the past several weeks.

Casa Blanca, coached by Principal M. B. Madden, won 19 straight practice games in the competition. Martin Cortez acted as umpire throughout.

The first game was with Independiente, which lost to Casa Blanca 1 to 0. The second game, with Liberty, also resulted in a win for Casa Blanca, the score being 13 to 3. Irving was defeated Wednesday by a score of 10-2.

Playing for Casa Blanca were the following: Ernesto Romero and Ernesto Reyes, pitchers; Joe Mezola, rf; Jesus Pacheco, lf; Thomas Magdaleno, 1b; Louis Zamora, cf; Terru Hatta and Henry Torres, 2b; Nello Medina and Massho Hatta, 3b; Tony LaRocca, c; Reyes Juarez, Sam Meyola, Joe Romero and Herman Gomez, substitutes.

Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 7 March 1933 and 1 June 1932

Baseball<sup>235</sup>

As noted above, baseball—whether softball, fast pitch, or hardball, for children and adults, men and women—became a focal point for recreation and socializing for the Latino community. A recent study of Mexican-American baseball in the Inland Empire summed up the importance of the sport:

From the early 20th century through the 1950s, baseball diamonds in the Inland Empire provided unique opportunities for nurturing athletic and educational skills, ethnic identity, and political self-determination for Mexican Americans during an era of segregation. Legendary men's and women's teams...served as an important means for Mexican American communities to examine civil and educational rights and offer valuable insight on social, cultural, and gender roles.<sup>236</sup>

Originally, in the founding years in Riverside (and beyond), baseball was one of the activities used to "Americanize" newly arrived immigrants, including Mexican workers:

Social reformers attempted to Americanize immigrants by turning them away from traditional Mexican activities such as bullfighting and towards 'American' forms of recreation and sports. According to historian José Alamillo, these efforts were often directed towards school-age children in order 'to mold them into a submissive working class with Anglo-Protestant and middle class values.' ...Baseball, as the quintessential American sport, was viewed as one of the primary means to this end."<sup>237</sup>

In Riverside in the early twentieth century, local citrus growers and packinghouses, including the California Fruit Growers Exchange, encouraged and sponsored the formation of baseball teams. In addition to an interest in Americanization, citrus growers invested in athletics to "increase worker

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

productivity and foster company loyalty.”<sup>238</sup> Teams were often named for packinghouses. The LV Brown Packinghouse baseball team, for example, was known as “Mahula,” taking their name from the packinghouse’s specialty brand of orange. While the initial objective might have been Americanization, Mexican Americans widely embraced the sport and, in the process, ultimately “redefined the meaning of baseball”:

For some, baseball was one of the few recreational activities they could afford with their low wages from agricultural, railroad, factory, and packinghouse jobs in the Inland Empire. They spent much of their weekends recuperating by playing and watching baseball with family and friends. The team names, jerseys, nicknames, and championship titles conveyed a sense of pride from which they could gain strength and confidence that would extend to other arenas in life.<sup>239</sup>

On the surface, it seems baseball was merely a recreational pastime, but for some, it became a vehicle towards empowering themselves and their communities. Mexican American baseball teams generated a positive image of their community under siege from repatriation campaigns, racial segregation, and negative press coverage from the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>240</sup>

In his pioneering study *Making Lemonade Out of Lemons*, scholar José Alamillo recounts the story of Tito Cortez, who played with the Corona Athletics. Although agricultural work was physically exhausting, as Cortez recalled, “Working inside the [citrus] groves, carrying a heavy sack, climbing up and down the ladder, using a quick eye to pick lemons helped with my pitching and [baseball] training. Everyone used to comment how we would work like a dog all week picking lemons, then played baseball all day on Sundays.”<sup>241</sup>

In Riverside neighborhoods like Casa Blanca, baseball also provided an opportunity for multi-cultural recreation and socializing, as well. In Casa Blanca, as Dario Villegas recalled,

‘we had teams playing baseball with the Mexican teams and the Italian teams...Parents started coming out of their homes to see the games... The streets were all dirt covered roadways which were the baseball playing field. Then we started playing at the Casa Blanca Elementary School ground... The baseball field there was the best back then.’<sup>242</sup>

Villegas said that “When the Italian team won, the Mexican team mothers would make tortillas to give to the Italian team. When the Mexican team won, the Italian team mothers made bread to the Mexican team families. Both teams felt they were always winners for they all looked forward to the tortillas and bread being awarded.”<sup>243</sup>

In the early twentieth century, Riverside Latinos also joined their Anglo-American counterparts and formed their own teams and leagues, eventually competing in inter-city games and tournaments. As early as 1910, the Arlington Heights Baseball Club and Casa Blanca team were already in existence and playing cross-town matches. Baseball teams included age-classified leagues for children, as well as women’s and men’s teams. Night-time baseball leagues were also very popular. As of 1938, for example, over two dozen teams participated in the Eastside Athletic Union Nightball league.

Local Latino business owners and leaders often provided financial support and sponsorship for teams. One such business leader was Carlos Cano, owner of the Eastside Service and Garage. Cano came to Riverside from El Paso, Texas, in 1930, eventually becoming a business owner and member of the Riverside Junior Chamber of Commerce. For many years, Cano contributed to youth athletics and sponsored an Eastside team in the city league. In the era of segregation, early venues for baseball included school playing fields, as well as the sheltered baseball diamonds of Lincoln Park,

installed in the 1920s. In Casa Blanca, local baseball teams from around Riverside County used the baseball field behind Casa Blanca School for weekly events. Leagues for children, teenagers, and adults hosted games and tournaments throughout the City.

According to the Latino Baseball History Project of California State University San Bernardino, one legendary baseball player and coach from Riverside between the 1930s and 1950s was Ernest “Ernie” Benzor. Born in 1925 in Arizona, Benzor moved with his family to the Casa Blanca community in 1935, during the Great Depression. After attending Riverside schools, Benzor served in World War II in the US Army, as part of the 32nd Infantry Regiment. His military service included combat in Okinawa during World War II.

When he returned to Riverside, Benzor began playing for, then managed and coached, various Casa Blanca fast-pitch softball teams, including the “All Stars” and “Los Vagabundos.” For nearly 40 years, Benzor worked for the Riverside Unified School District. After working as head custodian for Casa Blanca Elementary School and Polytechnic High School for many years, Benzor became the Director of Maintenance for the school district. Benzor also worked with the Riverside Parks and Recreation Department at Villegas Park and served as Casa Blanca PTA president for a number of years. His service included developing and leading programs to help youths at risk, through sports and community service. Benzor passed away in 2007.<sup>244</sup> His wife Clara was an active community member as well as secretary for Casa Blanca Elementary School for many years, eventually working for the school district itself. She passed away in 2010.<sup>245</sup>

**Figure 97 Casa Blanca Comets, circa 1949, Ernie Benzor, back row, second from right; (left); Casa Blanca Vagabonds, City Champions, 1959 (Benzor appears second from right, back row)**



Source: Santillán, Ocegueda, and Cannon, 2012 and *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 11 August 1959

From the early twentieth century, baseball teams and leagues offered a popular form of recreation and community building for Latinos in Riverside. Games were often scheduled around workers’ schedules, with nighttime baseball leagues and tournaments offering a welcomed and popular form of recreation and socializing. In addition, baseball became a source of community building and a political organizing: “Baseball leagues helped create a cohesive and vibrant community and they were a source of pride. The games became a place for meetings across the region and were integral to discussion and eventually to political organization within the communities.”<sup>246</sup> In one example, on the Casa Blanca Aces baseball team, Mexican-American World War II veterans “proudly displayed their military belts as part of their baseball uniform. Displaying military belts on the baseball diamond served as a statement for members of the Casa Blanca Aces to declare their equality against long-standing social discrimination and segregation.”<sup>247</sup>

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

In the postwar period, baseball teams and leagues proliferated. Local Latino teams included the Casa Blanca Comets, the Magnolia Maids (for whom Emma Galvan was the “ace Maid pitcher,” after her time spent playing for the Casa Blanca Busy Bees), and the Eastside Sharks, for teenaged boys. Expanded park facilities throughout the City, including at Villegas Park in Casa Blanca, and a growing Latino middle-class increased opportunities for traveling and participating in baseball leagues and tournaments. Throughout California in the postwar period, amateur baseball “remained important to Latino communities. Games continued to be community events, with food and entertainment before and during games. They remained important vehicles for gathering together and maintaining a strong community or neighborhood identity.”<sup>248</sup>

**Figure 98 Casa Blanca All-Stars, with Casa Blanca Elementary School Principal Madden as manager, 1950**



Source: Santillán, Ocegueda, and Cannon, 2012

**Figure 99 Casa Blanca “Busy Bees,” Fast-Pitch Softball team, 1945-1950**



The Casa Blanca Busy Bees fast-pitch softball team played from 1945 to 1950 against women’s teams from Colton, Ontario, Corona, and San Bernardino. The Busy Bees are shown here at Escuela Vieja in Casa Blanca. Emma Galvan was a high-profile softball pitcher and proved to be nearly unhittable within the region. From left to right are Stella Galvan, Mary Louise Gutierrez, Jessie Gutierrez, Mercy Chavez, Emma Galvan, Vera Rodriguez, Jenny Gomez, and Kinny Galvan.

Source: Riverside Co. Mexican-American Historical Society and Santillán, Ocegueda, and Cannon, 2012

## Boxing

For Latino athletes and spectators in California, boxing was one of the most popular sports in the early twentieth century. In this era,

boxing became associated with Mexican identity in a positive manner. The rise of boxing clubs in the first decades of the century was a testament to the sport's popularity. By the 1920s, boxing clubs and gyms were springing up in Mexican neighborhoods all over California. These informal spaces, such as vacant lots, backyards, abandoned buildings, or small halls, gave amateur players a chance to showcase their skills and develop a following.<sup>249</sup>

As early as the mid-1920s, boxers from Casa Blanca had constructed their own arena and held fights every Wednesday night. In the 1920s, one of the best known Mexican-American boxers in Riverside was Louie Contreras. In the mid- to late-1920s, Contreras often garnered mention in the sports section of the *Riverside Daily Press*, traveling to regional matches throughout Riverside, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles. "And they do say that Contreras boy who hails from down Casa Blanca way is some clever scrapper, ready to step in and trade punches with an opponent at any time."<sup>250</sup> In 1927, Contreras lost a fight to another Casa Blanca boxer, Joe Garcia. Their match was deemed "the best fight on the card."<sup>251</sup> Although Contreras lost, "a draw would have satisfied the fans, so close was the bout."

In the 1930s, Latino boxers had the opportunity to participate in amateur boxing leagues and matches sponsored by the City Recreation Department. In one such match in 1938, amateur boxers from "Riverside and Casa Blanca" headlined an event held at Evans Park near downtown Riverside. With boxing and musical offerings, the event included Casa Blanca boxers Joe Cabrera, Leno Mesa, and Tony Gomez, as well as Rudy Alfaro and Daniel Avila from Riverside, going against boxers from San Bernardino.<sup>252</sup> Other Latino boxers from Riverside in the 1930s included Bobby Espinoza, Red Delgado, and Jesse Alfaro.

Boxing remained popular in the Latino community in the postwar period: "Not only did boxing encourage the formation of new notions of Mexican masculine identity, it also provided young men with a path to success. The popularity of the sport and its reputation as an everyman sport, one that anyone could aspire to and succeed at, made it all the more appealing and a primary means through 'which men's ethnic consciousness was formed.'"<sup>253</sup>

One venue that opened in the postwar period (and remains open to this day) is the Lincoln Boxing Club in Eastside. Originally run by Larry Rios, Lincoln Boxing Club became not only an important training venue for competitive athletes but also a place for neighborhood kids to train and learn. Long-time Riverside boxers Joe and Tony Salazar had a great deal of success as competitive athletes and still train athletes and neighborhood youth in Eastside's Lincoln Boxing Club. One of the professional boxers recently who trained at the venue was Josesito Lopez, known as "The Riverside Rocky."

Boxing also became a means for offering shared activities and positive interactions between adults for youth in Latino neighborhoods. Through Los Vagabundos in Casa Blanca, for example, young people participated in a boxing club, basketball, and other activities to keep them engaged and active in the community. Life-long Casa Blanca resident, Valente Glen Ayala, was an active member of Los Vagabundos in the postwar period. In 1970, he became director of Villegas Park, where he designed and led a wide variety of sporting and community events. Ayala was director of Villegas Park for nearly two decades, until retiring in 1988.

**Figure 100 Vagabundos member Glen Ayala with young boxers (left); Frank Salazar presents trophy to Angel Ramirez while Jay Chavez and Lilo Fuertes look on (right), 1955**



**BOXING**—Vagabond member Glen Ayala gives some last minute instructions to “featherweight” sluggers Eddie Garcia and Ernest Murillo, as part of the Vagabonds recently-started boxing program for boys.



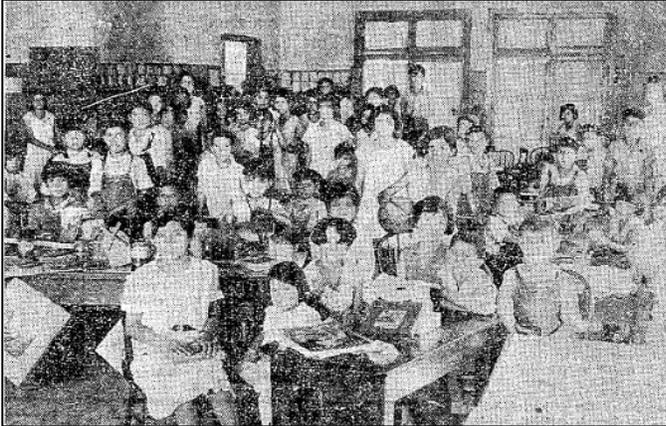
**BASKETBALL**—Frank Salazar (right) presents a high-scoring basketball trophy to young Angel Ramirez, while Vagabonds' President Jay Chavez and Lito Fuentes look on. The Casa Blanca club sponsored two leagues last season.

Source: *Riverside Independent Press*, 31 May 1955

### *Children's Recreation and Summer Programs*

For Latino children in Riverside, recreational opportunities were provided by local school programs, as well as through community organizations and agencies, often working in concert. During the Great Depression, the Community Settlement House planned and hosted summer programs for children in Casa Blanca and Eastside, with athletic and educational activities, handcrafts, and games. A six-week summer program in 1932, for example, kept costs down through collaboration and fundraising: “Because of the kind cooperation we have had on every hand...this work has been carried on for 1,787 people, including 114 adults, at a total cost of \$22.34 for the entire six weeks. This is but 12 ½ cents per capita for the entire period, and each child made two or three toys, besides other articles.”<sup>254</sup>

Similarly, athletic programs offered through the Riverside Unified School District provided physical education classes each day, but also team sports and competition. Over the years, students in all levels participated in all-city leagues, as well as internal matches between classes. Starting in 1924, Casa Blanca Elementary School participated in the all-city school football league. As Principal Madden from Casa Blanca Elementary School said, “Athletics has done more to elevate the boys and girls than any other subject taught in the school... School spirit is aroused through athletics...this causes boys and girls to be more loyal to their school.”<sup>255</sup> During the Great Depression, the school district also installed night lighting at Casa Blanca Elementary School for evening recreational programs for neighborhood youth.

**Figure 101 Craft making at the Community Settlement House children's summer program, 1932**

Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 9 September 1932

Prior to the construction of City-sponsored parks, sports and recreational events were an important part of social life for the Latino community in Riverside. As the City's Latino population grew, so did the need for conveniently located parks and community gathering places. While a number of different parks have served the community through the years, this section highlights two of the oldest parks in Latino and ethnic communities.

#### *Lincoln Park and Pool*

One of the first City-built parks to serve Riverside's communities of color was Lincoln Park. The 1924 construction of Lincoln Park and Pool grew out of a discrimination lawsuit brought by Frank M. Johnson against the City. Johnson, an African-American resident of Eastside, had been outraged when his daughter was barred from using the Fairmount Park plunge and sued the City under California Civil Code, Sections 51 and 52. As a result of negotiations surrounding his lawsuit between the mayor at the time, Horace Porter, a committee of citizens, and the plaintiff, the City agreed to open Fairmount pool to residents of color, but only on certain days.<sup>256</sup> Three years later, the new Lincoln Park and Pool were constructed in Eastside.

With the formal opening in August 1924, Lincoln Park was established along Park Avenue between Twelfth and Thirteenth Streets.<sup>257</sup> By this time, the Eastside was a neighborhood comprised primarily of African-Americans and Mexican-Americans. When it opened, the park was welcomed by neighborhood residents and children. In 1927, a new indoor baseball diamond and tennis courts were installed at Lincoln Park. Through the 1930s, the park's facilities included nighttime baseball, which hosted many games and tournaments.

During the era of segregation, the Lincoln Park pool, which opened in 1924, provided one of the few swimming facilities open to citizens of color in Riverside. Beginning in the 1930s, summertime activities included swimming meets for children, with the sponsorship of the nearby Community Settlement House. Free swimming lessons were offered to neighborhood children, for the price of admission to the pool. In the summer of 1941, the pool facilities expanded when the City inaugurated the Lincoln Park Plunge building, with changing facilities, offices, and concessions for the pool. Designed by City Engineer Henry Jekel, the one-story building was commissioned by the Riverside Parks Department. (In subsequent years, during a major redevelopment project at the park, the pool and plunge building were removed.)

**Figure 102 Announcement of Lincoln Park Plunge Building, June 1941**



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 14 June 1941

Recreational spaces such as Lincoln Park became home to annual sporting events and meets for the Eastside community. All-day sports programs brought together neighborhood children for track meets, baseball games, and boxing events. These were very well attended—albeit still segregated—events. In one such all-day sports program, staged in 1933, “several hundred colored and Mexican residents of Riverside” participated in an all-ages sports meet.<sup>258</sup> The program was cosponsored by the Community Settlement House and the Colored Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Lincoln Park also provided a recreation and meeting site for many groups through the years, as well as a venue for music. Annual events included the Memorial Day sports carnival, sponsored by the Riverside County Recreation Department.

The postwar boom in Riverside extended to a wide variety of park improvements in Latino- and ethnic-majority neighborhoods. One of the most significant events was the 1952 park improvement bond measure, which provided a total of \$1,000,000 for parks improvements throughout the City. Throughout the 1950s, Riverside’s parks received much-needed investment and expansion, including those in Latino- and ethnic-majority communities.

From the 1930s through the postwar period, one individual who contributed to the development of recreational and educational programs for the City’s Latino and ethnic communities was Mrs. Edith L. D’Eliscu. As an executive with the Community Settlement House and as director of the Riverside County Recreation Department, Mrs. D’Eliscu planned and led a variety of programs in Riverside parks, forming alliances with schools and community organizations to stage sporting events, summer camps, dances, and festivals. Between 1934 and 1948, Mrs. D’Eliscu also served the chairperson of the Riverside County Chapter of the American Red Cross.

In the summer of 1932, with D’Eliscu’s participation, the Riverside County Recreation Department collaborated with the Community Settlement House to put on the first annual “water carnival” and sports meet in Lincoln Park. At the time, the Community Settlement House was located on the grounds of Lincoln Park. Attended by hundreds of participants and spectators, the 1932 event was the first of its kind at the Lincoln Park pool: “more than 130 swimmers and divers from the local Settlement, San Bernardino and Redlands took part in the big event. The first annual swimming meet, which was ably supervised by Director Mrs. Edith L. D’Eliscu and her assisting staff, attracted a

throng of spectators which filled the stands and walks bordering the plunge.”<sup>259</sup> The summer event continued for a number of years.

### *Villegas Park (Casa Blanca Park)*

Established in the early 1940s, the Casa Blanca Park was an idea long in the making. Given the level of discrimination and segregation in the City, one of the only pools and recreational spaces provided for people of color was Lincoln Park in Eastside. This was a considerable distance from Casa Blanca. With many children of all ages in Casa Blanca, the need was great for a nearby playground and recreational area.

One of the first official calls for a park in Casa Blanca reported in the local press came in 1937. In the summer of 1937, Riverside Chief of Police Nestor Brule appeared before the City Park Board to “give consideration to the creation of a city park or recreational grounds at Casa Blanca.”<sup>260</sup> Although the *Riverside Daily Press* reported at the time that a tentative plan for a park in Casa Blanca was already in place, the conversation on how to move forward with that plan continued in the late 1930s. An idea was put forward to acquire a 5-acre plot of land in Casa Blanca, adjacent to Casa Blanca Elementary School. The investment would be \$1,500, a small amount that City officials nevertheless hesitated on repeated occasions to allocate. By way of comparison, during this era, funding for Fairmount Park ranged from \$19,000 in 1939/1940 to \$25,000 in 1940/1941, and Eastside’s Lincoln Park had an operating budget of \$3,500 in 1939/1940.<sup>261</sup> In this way, the norm of separate and unequal applied in most areas of daily life for Latinos and people of color in Riverside.

Before US entry into World War II, the park board again requested funding for \$1,500 to acquire five acres for a Casa Blanca park. This funding request also included construction of the new pool building at Lincoln Park. In January 1941, Casa Blanca “was assured of a playground area” when the City agreed to a \$2,000 expenditure to acquire a 5-acre lot near the elementary school for a park and recreation fields.<sup>262</sup> The park was official when, in March 1941, the City Council adopted an ordinance establishing the Casa Blanca Park. By May, a small expenditure was approved for water infrastructure, grading a baseball diamond, and installing bleachers, a backstop, and lighting for nighttime baseball games.

Although the US entry into World War II in late 1941 would dramatically shift priorities, Casa Blanca had an official, allocated space for recreation. During World War II, a portion of Casa Blanca Park was utilized by nearby residents as a victory garden for growing and harvesting food. With the end of the war, discussions resumed for redeveloping and allocating funds for Casa Blanca Park.

In 1949, Riverside Mayor William C. Evans expressed his support for a park development program for Casa Blanca. Mayor Evans said ““These folks out there have been kicked around”” and the time had finally arrived to move forward.<sup>263</sup> With a large-scale bond measure providing funding, plans finally moved forward to begin work on Casa Blanca Park. An expanded, modern baseball diamond was added in the late 1940s, along with other features and recreational facilities. Once it was established, Casa Blanca Park provided a vital recreational and meeting space for the community.

The 1950s brought a number of improvements—and the renaming—of Casa Blanca Park. Ten additional acres were acquired for the park in early 1950. In March 1950, the City began accepting bids for the relocation of a former school district building, at 9<sup>th</sup> and Lemon Streets, to be used as a community center in Casa Blanca Park. During the summer, the building was relocated to the park, repaired, and prepped for use. Still, the facilities and yearly budget lagged well behind what was made available for other parks.

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

In 1952, in advance of a major bond measure, Casa Blanca Elementary School principal Mabra Madden participated in calls for park improvements in Casa Blanca. By this time, Madden had been principal of Casa Blanca Elementary School for nearly 30 years. He understood the need for a decent recreational facility and programs:

‘I’m thinking of the bond issue from the standpoint of Casa Blanca, where not too much improvement of the park has been possible due to lack of funds,’ he said. ‘Our area has, during a peak period in the year, about 1,000 young people and we very much need the swimming pool and playground equipment proposed for Villegas Park.’<sup>264</sup>

The bond measure was successful, and a number of significant improvements to Casa Blanca Park continued. Through the early to mid-1950s, park improvements included the annual planting of trees during Arbor Week, repaving of basketball courts, and addition of three new baseball diamonds, playground equipment, horseshoe facilities, and new lighting equipment.

In March 1952, on the request of the Parks Board, the City Council approved the renaming of Casa Blanca Park to Ysmael Villegas Park, in honor of Riverside County’s first recipient of the US Congressional Medal of Honor, Casa Blanca native Staff Sergeant Ysmael “Smiley” Villegas. The same year, the City budget included \$75,000 worth of expenditures for improvements to then-Ysmael Villegas Park.

Villegas Park quickly became an indispensable, multi-use site for many different community events and seasonal gatherings, including sporting events, dances, Sunday evening movie nights, Easter Day programs and Easter Egg hunts, Arbor Day tree plantings, summer programs, Cinco de Mayo festival, Halloween festivities, and a yearly Christmas party, among many other activities. The park also provided a central location for the initiatives and programs of the Casa Blanca PTA and City speakers and conferences.

By 1953, improvements at Casa Blanca Park became a higher priority for the Parks and Recreation Commission, who argued to City Council that the “Casa Blanca park should get attention first,” given that the “‘greatest problem’ of inadequate recreational facilities exists in Casa Blanca.”<sup>265</sup> As the year ended, nearly 800 neighborhood children came to Villegas Park for a Christmas party, sponsored by the Ysmael Villegas American Legion Post 838. Subsequent programs held in the park included a program called “Teen Time,” offering a special recreational programs twice a week for teenagers, with table games and dancing each Friday evening.

The long-awaited pool at Villegas Park started construction in 1956, opening in July 1956. That same year, the Park and Recreation Commission approved construction of a new clubhouse in the park, a small, 60’ by 30’ building planned at Marguerita Avenue and Dolores Street, just north of the current community center. A new asphalt blacktop area provided space for music performances and dances. A handball court and basketball court were also added, providing much-needed opportunities for community sports and recreation.

Since that time, Villegas Park has grown with the community, reflecting changes along the way. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Casa Blanca muralists Jim Gutierrez and Roy Duarte were commissioned to create a number of murals at Villegas Park (described in more detail below). One of the Gutierrez murals, entitled “Grandesa Azteca,” is being restored as of July 2018.

Figure 103 Villegas Park Pool opening, 1956



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 22 July 1956

Figure 104 Halloween festivities at Villegas Park, 1958



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 31 October 1958

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### Subtheme #3: Cultural Development

In Riverside, “excluded from the early Riverside mainstream, life in the barrio developed a distinctive character of its own. There Spanish served as the primary language, *la comida* (traditional food) could be found in the local *mercados* (markets), and Mexican customs retained their power. Well into mid-century, traditional healers, known as *Curanderos*, continued their use of herbs and massage to treat illness.”<sup>266</sup>

In addition to the distinctive culture in Latino neighborhoods, Mexico’s civic and religious holidays were celebrated each year. Those holidays include 16 de Septiembre (Mexican Independence Day), the Feast of the Virgen de Guadalupe, and Cinco de Mayo (celebrating the 1862 Mexican victory over the French). Parades and festivities surrounding Cinco de Mayo stretch back to the early years of the twentieth century in Riverside (as described in more detail below). As historian Steven Moreno-Terrill said, “In terms of leisure and cultural life, one area that is...imperative when discussing the history [of Riverside’s Latino community] are *fiestas patrias*.”<sup>267</sup> For Mexican-Americans in Riverside, Cinco de Mayo and 16<sup>th</sup> de Septiembre are “important cultural practices that served as a form of community-building and the teaching of Mexican culture through various public performances and celebrations.”<sup>268</sup> Religious holidays also harkened back to the traditions of Mexico, with annual *posadas* and mass on Christmas eve.

In general, for the Catholic majority in Riverside’s Latino community, the church became the centerpiece of cultural as well as social and religious life. Cultural events were shared community projects, in which a number of groups and organizations came together to plan, sponsor, and stage events. As in other areas of life, cultural development and arts benefited from collaboration between many different groups and venues. As observed by José Alamillo in his pioneering study on labor and leisure in the Mexican-American community:

Mexican working men and women drew upon cultural resources at their disposal—pool halls, sporting events, church-related events, and patriotic events, among others—to build ethnic solidarity, critique social inequities, mobilize oppositional resistance, and to some extent improve the conditions of their lives.<sup>269</sup>

Thus far, little research has been conducted on the history of cultural development in Riverside’s Latino community.<sup>270</sup> Based on available literature, though, Alamillo’s description closely reflects the Riverside Latino experience. In times of limited resources, the community made use of the spaces and amenities available to provide and promote cultural events. Early institutional expansion in Latino and ethnic neighborhoods, such as the construction of churches including Saint Anthony’s Church and the Church Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine in the 1920s, among many others, schools, libraries, and parks, including Lincoln Park in the 1920s and Villegas Park in the 1940s, provided a boost for cultural development as well. Such venues provided a convenient gathering place for cultural events and arts, usually with the participation and sponsorship of mutual assistance organizations, neighborhood groups and improvement societies, churches, PTAs, veteran’s group, and other organizations. Many cultural events were also held at the Community Settlement House over the years.

Figure 105 1935 Play at the Community Settlement House, “Las Estrellas Responden” (The Stars Answer)



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Figure 106 Mexican Independence Day Queen, Emma Galvan, 1947. Photo inscription reads, “Muy carinosamente para mi prima Carolina Galvan de parte de su prima, Emma Galvan.” (With affection, for my cousin Carolina Galvan, from your cousin, Emma Galvan.)



Source: Shades of Riverside, Riverside Public Library

In the postwar period, one significant addition to Latino and ethnic neighborhoods that aided in cultural development and the arts was the construction of new libraries. One such addition took place in Casa Blanca in the postwar period, when a new library branch was built on Madison Street. From 1957 to 1992, Grace Bailón served as librarian and ultimately branch manager of the Casa Blanca Branch of the Riverside Public Library. With her motto "*leer es poder*" ("reading is power"), Mrs. Bailón became well known as a "storyteller, interpreter, and reader...Mrs. Bailón dispensed wisdom and inspiration to all those she served."<sup>271</sup> The current Casa Blanca Branch of the Riverside Public Library is named for Staff Sergeant Salvador J. Lara, a World War II veteran awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor by President Barack Obama in March 2014. Similarly, an Eastside branch of the Riverside Public Library, on Chicago Avenue, carries the name of Sergeant Jesus S. Duran, a Vietnam War veteran awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor by President Barack Obama in March 2014.

**Figure 107 Junior high students at Casa Blanca Library, 1960**



(Staff Photo)

**HAPPY READER** — Junior high school students look at the books they won for attendance records in special study classes at the Casa Blanca Library. Sponsoring the program was the House of Neighborly Service. Classes were two nights weekly during the school year with Ramona High School seniors helping in the final weeks. The home's auxiliary provided the books that were given as awards yesterday.

Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 18 June 1960

### *Romanticizing Hispanic Heritage and Cultural Appropriation*

In considering cultural development in the Latino community, it is worth noting the history of appropriation of Hispanic heritage and culture. As observed in *Latinos in Twentieth Century California*, at times cultural life reflecting the Latino experience came from within the community, as “an expression of that experience, both negative and positive.”<sup>272</sup> At other times, Latino culture was appropriated from the outside, “taking the initiative and voice out of the hands of Latinos and placing it in the hands of others.”<sup>273</sup>

These layers are also evident in Riverside. Latino culture reflected the experience and lives of members of the community. At the same time, in the early years in particular, Hispanic culture was often appropriated to brand Southern California and to market its goods throughout the United States. (This branding more often relied on Spanish heritage, however, while the history and culture of Mexican workers were marginalized and regarded in a paternalistic manner.)<sup>274</sup>

In Riverside, as reported in newspapers of the day, Hispanic-themed theatre performances might include the participation of “foreign” Mexican-American children from Riverside’s neighborhoods, in venues that were otherwise off limits to Mexican-American patrons. In another example dating to the Great Depression, during the height of the repatriation program, the Riverside City School District chose a Mexican-themed gala for its yearly teachers’ association banquet. With Casa Blanca Elementary School Principal Mabra Madden serving as master of ceremonies, the gala was “distinctly Mexican in flavor”:

The national colors of Mexico, red, white and green were predominant in the decorations of the club house and tables. ...As a concluding feature, Mexican pinatas, or bags filled with favors and suspended from the ceiling were broken in the Mexican fashion.<sup>275</sup>

Mexican-American musicians and children participated in the gathering: “A brightly-costumed group of Mexican players, the Reyes orchestra of Casa Blanca, played appropriate music during the dinner,” and children from Casa Blanca and Irving Elementary Schools, costumed in “Mexican attire,” performed dances and songs for the gathering.<sup>276</sup> The event took place at the Fairmount Park American Legion Clubhouse. As context, even in the immediate postwar period, this venue continued to deny membership to Mexican-American veterans of World War II.

In the context of the time, the Riverside City School District was not alone. The disjuncture of romanticizing the culture of Spaniards and Mexicans while simultaneously discriminating against their ancestors has been amply explored in the literature and was noted by commentators at the time. José Alamillo pointed to a 1928 commentary in *The Saturday Evening Post* on the topic: “The whole country is steeped in the romance and traditions of the [Mexican] race it is now proposed to bar therefrom. Seven out of every ten of the older cities of the Southwest bear Spanish names given them by Mexicans who long constituted their chief population.”<sup>277</sup>

With the advent of the Civil Rights Movement, the tide started to shift. As described below, for example, celebrations of Cinco de Mayo were gradually characterized not merely as charming *barrio* events but events that were open to and for the entire City. With time, there was a growing realization that Latino culture and identity forms an integral part of Riverside’s identity. (As of July 2018, the Riverside Art Museum is moving forward with plans for the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art, Culture, and Industry, a collection that will bring to Riverside “one of the finest Chicano art collections in the world.”<sup>278</sup>) An awareness of the origins of cultural appropriation offers an important lens through which to examine and understand Latino culture in cities like Riverside and apply the theme of cultural development in historic resource evaluations.

## *Cinco De Mayo Festival and Parade*

“Several spoke during the [Cinco de Mayo] open forum, stressing respect to the American flag and laws, and love and loyalty to Mexico. Anthems of both nations closed the program.”  
—*Riverside Daily Press*, covering Casa Blanca’s Cinco de Mayo celebration, 1938

Since the opening years of twentieth century, the Cinco de Mayo celebration has been one of the most important cultural events throughout Riverside’s Latino communities. Marking the 1862 victory of Mexican generals Zaragoza and Diaz against the French, Cinco de Mayo was celebrated in Riverside much as it was in Mexico: as a communitywide event celebrating Mexican culture and history as well as family and community. Through the years, the City has been home to several Cinco de Mayo celebrations, primarily in Casa Blanca and Eastside. These celebrations often spanned the entire week, with days of preparation, fund raising, and events on the day itself, May 5<sup>th</sup>, and into the weekend. Cinco de Mayo celebrations included the participation of many community organizations, as well as planning committees that operated and worked year-round.

One of the oldest ongoing Cinco de Mayo celebrations in California is in Casa Blanca. The first Casa Blanca parade was said to have taken place in 1907. Celebrations typically included a parade, with the Casa Blanca band, food, and festivities. As Simona Valero recalled in 2011,

‘When my dad came in 1911, they were already celebrating Cinco De Mayo,’ beams [Simona] Valero, 89, a lifelong resident of Casa Blanca whose father came to pick oranges in the local groves. ‘The women swept the dirt streets and watered it down for the parade,’ she says, recalling the early days when a multi-piece band of musicians made of local residents marched down unpaved streets. ‘Something beautiful about that time. At 5 a.m., the band would play while the American flag was raised, first of course. Then we raised the Mexican flag.’<sup>279</sup>

In the 1919 celebrations, Cinco de Mayo in Casa Blanca was attended by over 500 celebrants. With the neighborhood “gaily decorated in honor of the Mother Country’s liberation from Maximilian,” as the local news reported, Casa Blanca was “thronged with local and visiting celebrants”:

This morning at 6 o’clock, 21 shots of dynamite were fired as a salute in honor of General Ignacio Saragosa, the liberator of Mexico from the rule of Maximilian. The whole day is given over to joyous celebration of the greatest event in Mexican history. There was a program of speaking by prominent Mexican citizens this forenoon, and this will be continued until nightfall. ...The Casa Blanca band is furnishing music, both as a concert program and for the dancing.<sup>280</sup>

At the 1922 Cinco de Mayo celebration held in the Eastside neighborhood, hundreds of spectators participated in the day’s festival. A “rousing musical program” was led by one Professor Perez, and speeches were offered by Riverside City Mayor S.C. Evans and E.M. Carrasco, president of the Pro Patria Club. The following day, the local newspaper celebrated the event’s success:

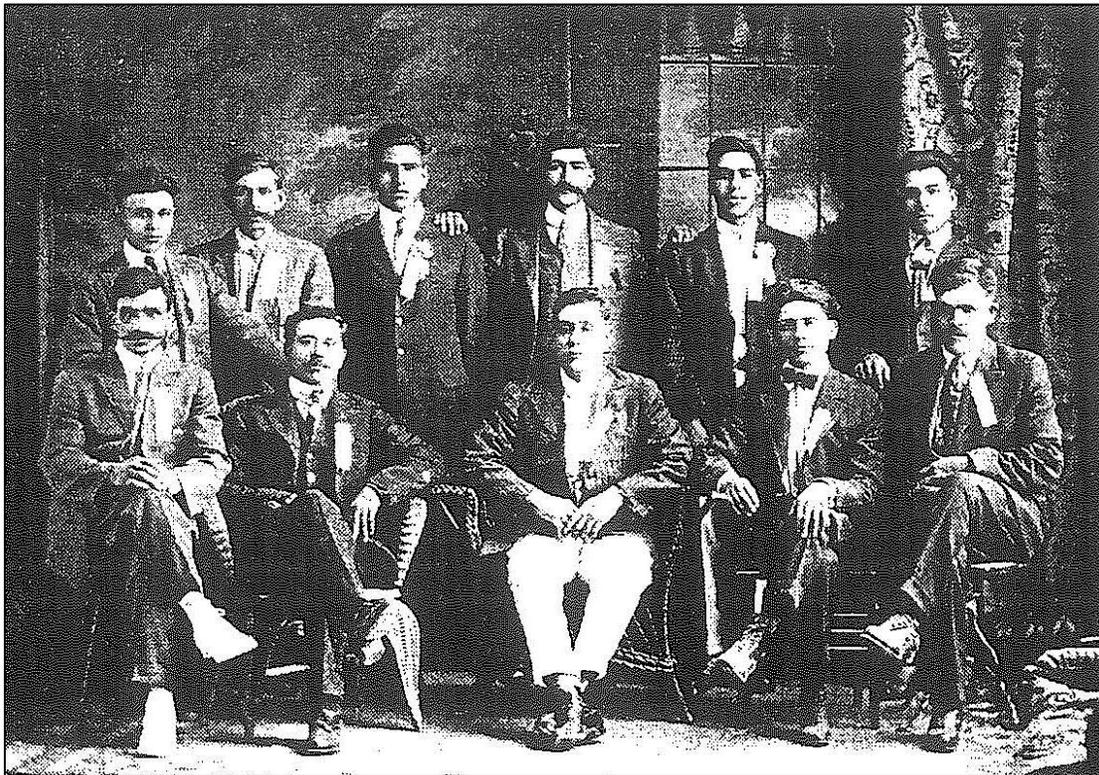
Viva Mexico! Under the auspices of the Pro Patria club of Riverside, the Mexican War of Independence, May 5, 1862, is today being celebrated at Thirteenth and High Streets. During the morning a parade, headed by the Casa Blanca band, wended its way through the city streets there being more than 25 gaily decorated automobiles in line together with about 150 Mexicans on foot. American and Mexican colors unfolded in the breeze while numerous banners added a distinct touch. ...Jose Quiroz as director of the parade covered himself with glory. It was well done and created an unusually fine impression.<sup>281</sup>

Figure 108 Cinco de Mayo band and celebrants, Casa Blanca, 1910



Source: Riverside Public Library, Shades of Riverside

Figure 109 Cinco de Mayo Committee, 1919, with parade director José Quiroz (bottom row, second from left)



Source: Riverside Metropolitan Museum, *Nuestros Antepasados*

As the City's Mexican-American communities grew, Cinco de Mayo celebrations grew with them, and gained renown throughout the region. In 1938, celebrations of Cinco de Mayo in Casa Blanca drew hundreds of spectators throughout the County of Riverside for a "fiesta, parade, patriotic speeches and music during the day. In the evening, a softball game between the CYO and Wildcats will be an event. A dance and 'jamaica' [church bazaar] were held last night."<sup>282</sup> General chairman of the event that year was Raimundo "Raymond" Reyes, a musician from Casa Blanca whose orchestra played often in Riverside. A "baby carnival" was also held at Casa Blanca Elementary School for children, with the participation of school Principal Mabra Madden. In 1940, an estimated 4,000 people participated in the Cinco de Mayo celebration in Casa Blanca, with music provided by Reyes and his band. In Eastside that same year, Cinco de Mayo celebrations were held on Park Street.

The postwar period brought a growing Mexican-American middle-class. With expanding community resources, Riverside's Cinco de Mayo celebrations continued to grow in scale and stature. In the Eastside neighborhood, the event came to include many bands and music, booths with games, a variety of *comida mexicana*, and a program featuring a master of ceremonies and the crowning of the Cinco de Mayo queen and her court. By the postwar period, the competition for Cinco de Mayo queen was an event amply covered in the local press. Indeed, in its 21 April 1956 issue, the local *Riverside Independent Enterprise* announced Eastside's Cinco de Mayo event alongside, and on par with, announcements for the St. Margaret's Guild annual bridge benefit tea. (While discrimination was an ongoing, pressing issue in the 1950s, this tone and level of recognition did represent signs of a gradual shift.)

Part of the importance of the Cinco de Mayo celebration was not just the day itself, but the community preparation, planning, and fundraising leading up to it. For example, church bazaars known as *jamaicas* (festivals with dancing, dining, and celebrations) were an anticipated and enjoyable part of the event itself. Consortiums of Mexican-American organizations joined forces to assist the Cinco de Mayo committee with planning. In just one example, as of 1959, led by Fernando Avila as committee president, the Eastside Cinco de Mayo celebration depended on the participation of multiple organizations, including the Latin-American Club, Dario Vasquez Post 750, American Legion, Altar Society from Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, Trabajadores Unidos Lodge No. 9 from Highgrove, and Our Lady of Guadalupe youth clubs, the "Squires" and "Squirettes."<sup>283</sup>

For a short time in the postwar period, the Casa Blanca Cinco de Mayo celebration was scaled back. It was revived in full force in 1954, with the Casa Blanca Parent-Teachers Association taking the lead in planning the event. By 1954, Ysmael Villegas Park was in place to serve as the central venue for the event, which featured an orchestra, dancing, a variety of Mexican foods, and a parade. Booths offered

the sale of popular ox carts, widely used for all types of patio and table decorations, games, cascarrones (confetti eggs), white elephant sales and a cake walk. Planning for the event, first Cinco de Mayo celebration in Casa Blanca in several years, is in charge of the Casa Blanca PTA with the school faculty, children and all segments of the community cooperating to bring a genuine glimpse of the culture of Old Mexico at carnival time.<sup>284</sup>

In postwar Eastside, Lincoln Park and the Community Settlement House were common venues for Cinco de Mayo. By the 1950s, the heart of the Cinco de Mayo celebration in Eastside had moved to the new location of the Community Settlement House, on Bermuda Avenue.

Figure 110 Cinco de Mayo presentation, Community Settlement House, ca. 1935



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

The availability of venues like Villegas Park, Lincoln Park, and the Community Settlement House facilitated the event's expansion in the postwar period. This era also brought the early signs of broader acceptance and participation by the City at large. In 1945, for example, the festivities were attended by City Attorney Miguel Estudillo, two-time City Attorney and an ancestor of early Hispanic settlers in San Diego. Estudillo represented Mayor Walter C. Davison at the event. By the early 1950s, Cinco de Mayo in Eastside drew more than 1,000 participants from around the city.

In 1951, the *Riverside Daily Press* extolled the offerings of the celebration: "Flowers, dancing, beautiful girls, flags and heroes have ever been the essence of Cinco de Mayo, national holiday of Mexican. And all of these are dedicated to 'La Patria,' that mystic word which symbolizes the love of all people for the homeland."<sup>285</sup> The article described efforts by the Cinco de Mayo committee, which included work by Jess Martinez, chairman of the fiesta committee, Mrs. Porfirio Vasquez, mother of World War II veteran and casualty Dario Vasquez, and Douglas Adame, father of queen candidate Sarah Adame. Again, the next year, the front page of the *Riverside Independent Press* announced "one of the biggest two-day celebrations of Cinco de Mayo in the history of this area."<sup>286</sup> Hosted on the grounds of the Community Settlement House, the celebration included flower girls, music, dancing, and Mexican foods, with festivities planned to last until midnight. In this way, through the postwar period, Cinco de Mayo grew but remained an important community event.

**Figure 111 Cinco de Mayo at the Community Settlement House (left) and in Casa Blanca (right), 1950**



Source: Riverside Independent Enterprise, 7 May 1950

**Figure 112 City Councilperson E.T. Patterson, awarding first prize to Philip Ortega and Johnny Jackson for the most original booth, Cinco de Mayo, 1950**



Source: Riverside Independent Enterprise, 7 May 1950

Figure 113 Cinco de Mayo preparation at Community Settlement House, 1952



Source: *Riverside Independent Press*, 30 April 1952

Figure 114 Cinco de Mayo at Ysmael Villegas Park in 1954 (left) and 2011 (right)



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 3 May 1954 and Fuentes, 2011

*Musicians*

In Riverside’s Latino community, music was at the heart of community life. Whether in church activities and services, school performances, or festivals such as Cinco de Mayo, musicians and vocalists shared their talent and love of music with the community, in informal as well as formal venues.

Local residents who were also musicians included Manuel Reyes, Sr., who performed with his brothers Juan, Ysidro, Raymond, and Humberto. Raymond (also known as “Reimundo”) led the band, which played in events such as Cinco de Mayo in the late 1930s.

As in other areas of life, resourcefulness was key. Community member Simona Valero spoke of how her brother Augustín set aside several dollars from each paycheck from the Arlington Heights Packinghouse to purchase a piano for her. As a girl, she always loved playing the piano, always heading straight to the piano to play following church services at the Casa Blanca Presbyterian Church. After Augustín purchased the piano, Valero took lessons for several months from the spouse of Augustín’s boss. With Simona on piano, her father and brothers on saxophone, trumpet, and French Horn, the Valero family enjoyed making music at home.

With Valero providing accompaniment, Annie and Frances Romo, twins from Casa Blanca, were popular singers in the community. Born in 1920 in their home on Evans Street, Annie and Frances “had a passion for singing.”<sup>287</sup> Countless others brought music to community events and venues over the years.

Subsequent research will shed additional light on the topic of Latino arts and music in Riverside, which, to date, has gone under-researched. This section presents an overview of Latino musicians and groups in Riverside, based on available information.

**Figure 115 Family photos of Annie Hernandez Romo and her sister Frances**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society

### **CASA BLANCA BAND<sup>288</sup>**

The Casa Blanca Band was established in 1915, with patronage from the Riverside Anglo-American community. With a 20-piece orchestra and chorus, the band operated through the 1920s. Although little information exists to shed light on the group's origins or members, the Casa Blanca Band performed at numerous City events, annual festivals, and parades. In 1915, reporting on the July 4<sup>th</sup> parade at the Riverside Fair Grounds, the *Riverside Daily Press* observed that the Casa Blanca Band,

in natty white uniforms, marched throughout the long parade and contributed royally to the music en route; at the fair grounds they were on duty all day, ever willing to fill in with a selection... This organization of young Mexican musicians does highest credit to Casa Blanca, and are a real civic feature. From their patriotic service yesterday they have proven themselves a real asset which can be called upon for future celebrations.<sup>289</sup>

A year later, coverage of the band observed how the "patriotic Mexicans" of the Casa Blanca Band participated in the July 4<sup>th</sup> parade and festival in San Bernardino attended by 20,000.<sup>290</sup> Similarly, in 1916 the *Riverside Independent Enterprise* observed, in an article entitled "Mexican Boys Being Developed," that

Much can be said in behalf of the Mexican boys who make up the personnel of the Casa Blanca band. Some of these young men are reported to be unable to read or write and yet are excellent musicians. They have been well trained and produce excellent band music. A prominent Riverside physician who has come in contact with a number of them and their leader considerably of late reports that they are patriotic Americans.<sup>291</sup>

The band's efforts to raise funds for uniforms and instruments were widely publicized in Riverside newspapers of the day. In 1916, the *Riverside Daily Press* announced that "The appeal in Saturday evening's Press for contributions to the Casa Blanca Mexican band, for the purpose of purchasing uniforms for that very creditable organization, brought a prompt and generous response."<sup>292</sup> As part of this fundraising effort, the Casa Blanca Band serenaded downtown merchants in Riverside. In 1917, the Saint Francis de Sales Church and City business leaders gave a banquet for members of the Casa Blanca Band in Reynolds Hall in downtown Riverside.

**Figure 116 Casa Blanca Band, circa 1915**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

**ABBIE CHAVEZ AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

One popular entertainer and musician from West Riverside was Abigail “Abbie” Chavez. Born in 1920, Chavez moved to Riverside in 1946. Prior to his move, Chavez had started his career in music and entertaining at the Padua Hills Theatre in nearby Claremont, California. After moving to Riverside, Chavez established the Abbie Chavez Orchestra, a band that became well-known for its big band and Latin American music. Operating from 1947 to 1960, the orchestra played in venues throughout Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. Chavez’s career in entertainment included a cameo appearance in the Walt Disney Studios animated musical, *The Three Caballeros*. Released in Mexico City in 1944 and the United States in 1945, *The Three Caballeros* was Disney’s first foray into a mixed live-action and animated musical feature. Chavez also worked for nearly 40 years at DeAnza Chevrolet in Riverside.<sup>293</sup>

**Figure 117 Abbie Chavez (far left) with Walt Disney (lower right) on the set of *Los Tres Caballeros*; movie poster for *The Three Caballeros***



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society and Walt Disney Studios

**Figure 118 Abbie Chavez and His Orchestra, at El Sombrero Café, Colton, circa 1950**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

### **RAUL SANCHEZ**

One musician from Riverside’s Latino community was Raul Sanchez.<sup>294</sup> A native of Cabazon, Mexico, Sanchez moved to Riverside when he was 10 years old. “Although his formal education stopped at ninth grade he taught himself to play a variety of musical instruments, including the piano, organ and trumpet.”<sup>295</sup> By the time he was 20 years old, Sanchez had become a composer and musician, playing popular, jazz, and Latin music. He formed an orchestra in Riverside for friends and family that quickly evolved into a professional band that played throughout the country. According to his obituary, one night while playing in Palm Springs, Sanchez’s band “caught the attention of Frank Sinatra. The following day the singer contacted Sanchez and told him to take the orchestra to the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas.”<sup>296</sup> The engagement was a success, and Sanchez was offered a national tour (though he turned it down).

Over the years, a number of well-known musicians played in Sanchez’s band. “When the big band era began to fade, Sanchez tried to keep it alive by playing in Southern California ballrooms.”<sup>297</sup> In Riverside, Sanchez played at La Casita for seven years, the Ramada Inn for four years; the Holiday Inn, and the Royal Scot. “He was still playing and composing at the time of his death.” Sanchez passed away in 1971 at the age of 46.

### **UC RIVERSIDE, KUCR, RADIO AZTLÁN**

Founded in 1982 and still broadcasting as of 2018, Radio Aztlán features a wide range of Chicano music and artists. The show began in 1982 when the campus’ radio station manager Louis Van Den Berg approached then-director of Chicano Student Programs, Alberto Chavez, with a plan to diversify the station’s programming. While beyond the period of significance, subsequent research will provide more information on the history and potential significant associations for Radio Aztlán.

### Murals and Mural Artists

Emerging from the Chicano Civil Rights Movement, muralism became “one of the most widely known visual art forms” to reflect and represent Chicano life and experiences.<sup>298</sup> Throughout California, muralism

was partially a result of the desire to create ‘a true people’s art’ that was widely ‘public, monumental and accessible to the common people,’ and initially drew its inspiration from La Causa, or the farm workers’ struggle. Murals were a vehicle for reclaiming Latino history and for telling a side of the story of Chicano life and politics that the mainstream media did not cover. They became a way for Chicanos to assert themselves politically; they ‘reflected a growing political consciousness and identity’ and aimed to both convey information and elicit emotion.<sup>299</sup>

This description reflects the murals that are known to survive in Riverside. Explaining the art form to the *Riverside Press Enterprise* in 1981, UC Riverside professor Eliud Martinez said, “Murals tell stories... It’s a way of depicting chicanos and establishing chicano connections with Mexico’s culture.”<sup>300</sup> In Riverside beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s, artists used available spaces in the community to create works that told their stories. In some cases, these murals were commissioned as a deterrent to graffiti, such as the murals at Tony’s Grocery, Park Avenue and 11<sup>th</sup> Street in Eastside (the original Chavarrias Market) and Mendoza Market in Casa Blanca.

To date, limited information has been identified to shed light on the muralist movement in Riverside. Further research and interviews with community members will continue to shed light on this topic. Several of the known Latino muralists who lived or worked in Riverside are described below.

**Figure 119 Mural honoring César Chavez and the UFW, Home of Neighborly Service, artist unknown**



Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., 2018

### ROY DUARTE, MURALIST

Born in 1955, Roy Duarte grew up in Casa Blanca. He attended Riverside public schools through the ninth grade. In late 1972 and early 1973, Duarte created half a dozen murals throughout Casa Blanca, including on the wall of Mendoza's Market at Madison and Evans Streets. As of 1973, Duarte also taught art classes for community residents. As he told *Riverside Daily Press* journalist Douglas Martinez in 1973, his only arts training came in classes at Gage Junior High School through teacher Adrian Reinis. His training in Chicano studies came on his own, primarily in the library at the Home of Neighborly Service:

'Before doing a mural, I spend hours and hours reading history books and studying the works of other artists on the subject.' Duarte does much of his studying at the Chicano Library of the Home of Neighborly Service. 'Some chicanos have been so brainwashed by the educational system that they are ashamed of their own culture and symbols. This was true for me too. I had to learn my own history by myself.'<sup>301</sup>

A natural and gifted artist, Duarte appears to have started creating murals in his teens. By the time he was 18, his work appeared on buildings and spaces throughout Casa Blanca, as well as in Indio and Fresno (though several of his works were painted over). The creation of one of Duarte's larger murals, a 40 by 15 foot study of Emiliano Zapata (which no longer appears extant), was thus captured by the *Riverside Press Enterprise* in March 1973:

Roy Duarte stood motionless in front of a chipped plaster wall, a spray paint can in his hand. The dark, brooding face of Emiliano Zapata, nearly complete now, looked back at him, appropriately menacing with dropping mustache and cigar jutting out between closed lips. Then, with quick, violent strokes, the 18-year-old Chicano artist spray painted the beginning of bandoleers around the Mexican revolutionary's shoulders.<sup>302</sup>

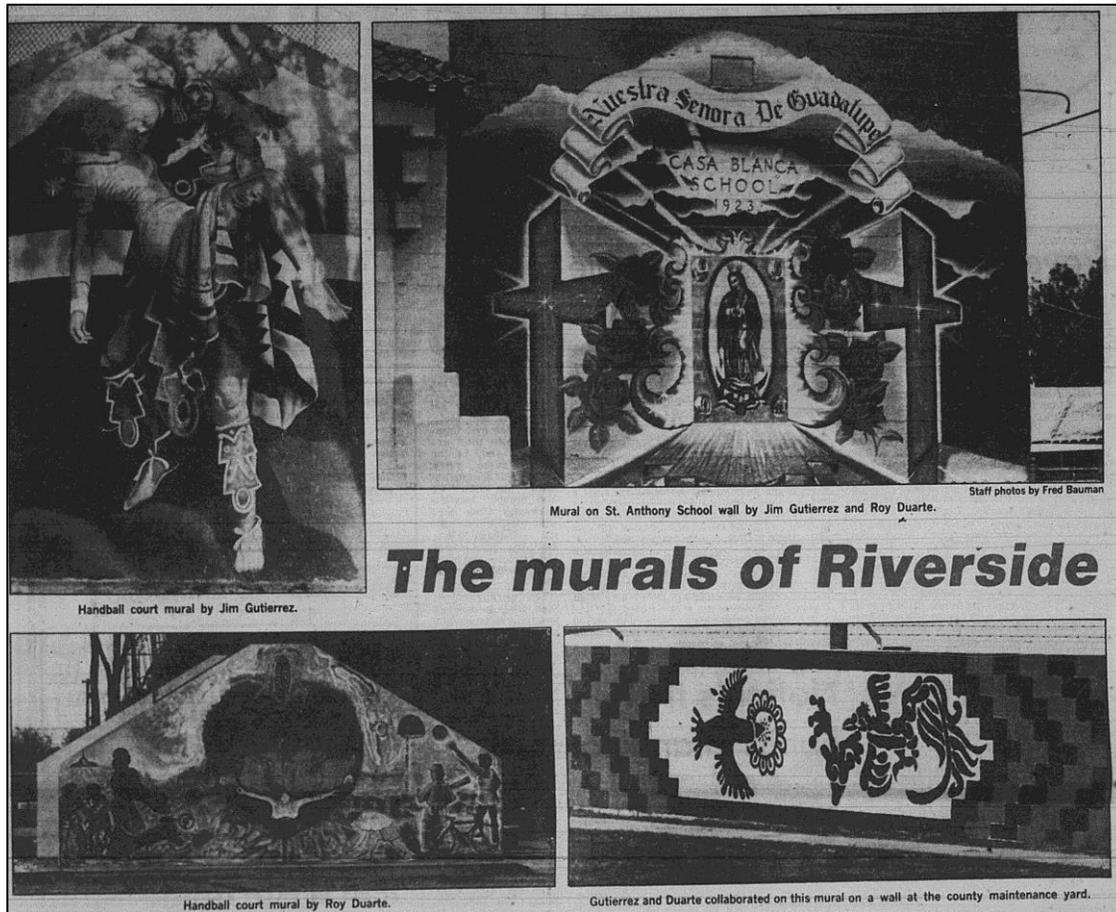
In a multi-piece commission by the Home of Neighborly Service, Duarte created a large-scale piece honoring the legacy and work of César Chavez and the United Farm Workers (it is unknown if the original Duarte mural is extant). With support and supplies from director Al Kovar, the Home of Neighborly Service was also the site for a small, two-by-two foot mural of a Native-American slave as well as a larger murals depicting the Mayan and Aztec history of Mexico.

**Figure 120 Muralist Roy Duarte, 1973 (left); at work on Home of Neighborly Service mural (right)**



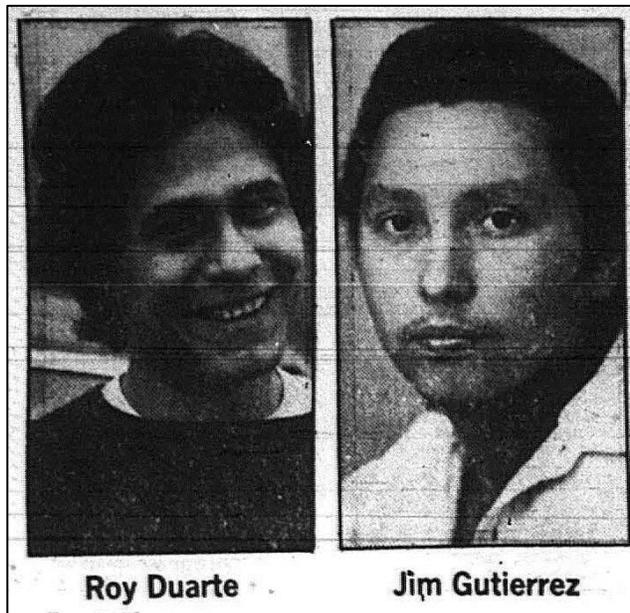
Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 27 March 1973

Figure 121 The murals of Roy Duarte and Jim Gutierrez, 1981



Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 1 March 1981

Figure 122 Riverside muralists Roy Duarte and Jim Gutierrez, 1981



Source: Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 1 March 1981

### **JIM GUTIERREZ, MURALIST**

Muralist Jim Gutierrez completed artworks in Riverside during the Chicano Rights Movement.

Along with fellow Casa Blanca native Duarte, Gutierrez painted several murals commissioned by the County of Riverside in the late 1970s/early 1980s to serve as a deterrent to graffiti. These pieces included murals at the Villegas Park handball court and the County maintenance yard near the park. Gutierrez and Duarte teamed for a mural at the County maintenance yard near Villegas Park, which included scenes drawn from Aztec mythology, with a scene of serpents and frogs.

Gutierrez also collaborated on several occasions with Roy Duarte. In their first collaboration, Gutierrez and Duarte depicted the Virgen de Guadalupe, surrounded by fields of red roses, at the Casa Blanca Elementary School (at least a portion of this mural appears to have been since painted over). Gutierrez also painted a realistic image of World War II hero and Casa Blanca native Ysmael “Smiley” Villegas at the Villegas Neighborhood Center.

Whereas Duarte’s work favored some degree of abstraction, Gutierrez’s murals struck a tone of realism: “That’s where Roy and I went our separate ways after painting the virgin,” Gutierrez said in 1981, referring to their collaboration at Casa Blanca School.<sup>303</sup> “His painting is more abstract, and I was drawing more realistically.” Gutierrez’s work included a mural of Ysmael “Smiley” Villegas at Villegas Neighborhood Center and a 18-foot-high mural called Grandesa Azteca on the handball court in Villegas Park, painted in circa 1980. As of 2018, this mural is undergoing restoration. (Nearby in Villegas Park, Roy Duarte painted a layered mural, depicting two outstretched arms, supporting a heart.)

**Figure 123 Gutierrez and Duarte mural, Casa Blanca Elementary School (the mural around the Virgen de Guadalupe has since been removed)**



Source: Fuentes, 2011

**Figure 124 2018 view of Casa Blanca School, with inset mural of Virgen de Guadalupe intact**



Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., 2018

**Figure 125 Mural of Ysmael Villegas, Villegas Park, as of 1981**



Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 1 March 1981

Figure 126 Jim Gutierrez's "Grandesa Azteca," Villegas Park Handball Court (under restoration)



Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., 2018

### DANIEL “CHANO” GONZALES, MURALIST

While Daniel “Chano” Gonzales was not a Riverside native, his large-scale mural at the University of Riverside, Chicano Student Programs office is one of the few intact, exemplary murals of the Chicano Civil Rights era in Riverside. Gonzalez painted the mural with a grant from the National Council for the Arts. The mural was originally located in the Chicano Student Programs office, on the second floor of UC Riverside’s Library South, a suite of offices created out of the original library adjacent to the Chicano Studies Department. When the Chicano Studies Department and Chicano Student Programs office moved, the mural was preserved and relocated to the CSP’s current location, in 145 Costo Hall.

Gonzales is a native of Chino who became a prolific muralist in the 1970s in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. In a 1975 profile of Gonzales and his work, *The Sun-Telegram* described his work as “bold, colorful and filled with readily understood symbolism directed at inspiring Chicano cultural pride”:

Someday Daniel ‘Chano’ Gonzales may have time to paint landscapes or portraits, but for now he is too busy trying to get his messages across. His messages take the form of large sized murals, which have become an integral part of life in Southern California barrios. ‘What I’m doing is nothing new,’ said the artist, dressed in paint splattered denim overalls. ‘I’m continuing a tradition we now call ‘chican arte.’ The whole purpose is to promote a message to the common people in the barrio.’<sup>304</sup>

In the article, Gonzales described how the approach of Chicano muralists had evolved since the Chicano Civil Rights Movement started to emerge: “Four or five years ago, a picture of Zapata or Villa with their guns would have been up there... But this is getting more subtle. You see more of the family and portrayals of today’s problems. We’re growing, I think.” Gonzales called this work “not only necessary, I feel it’s an obligation.”

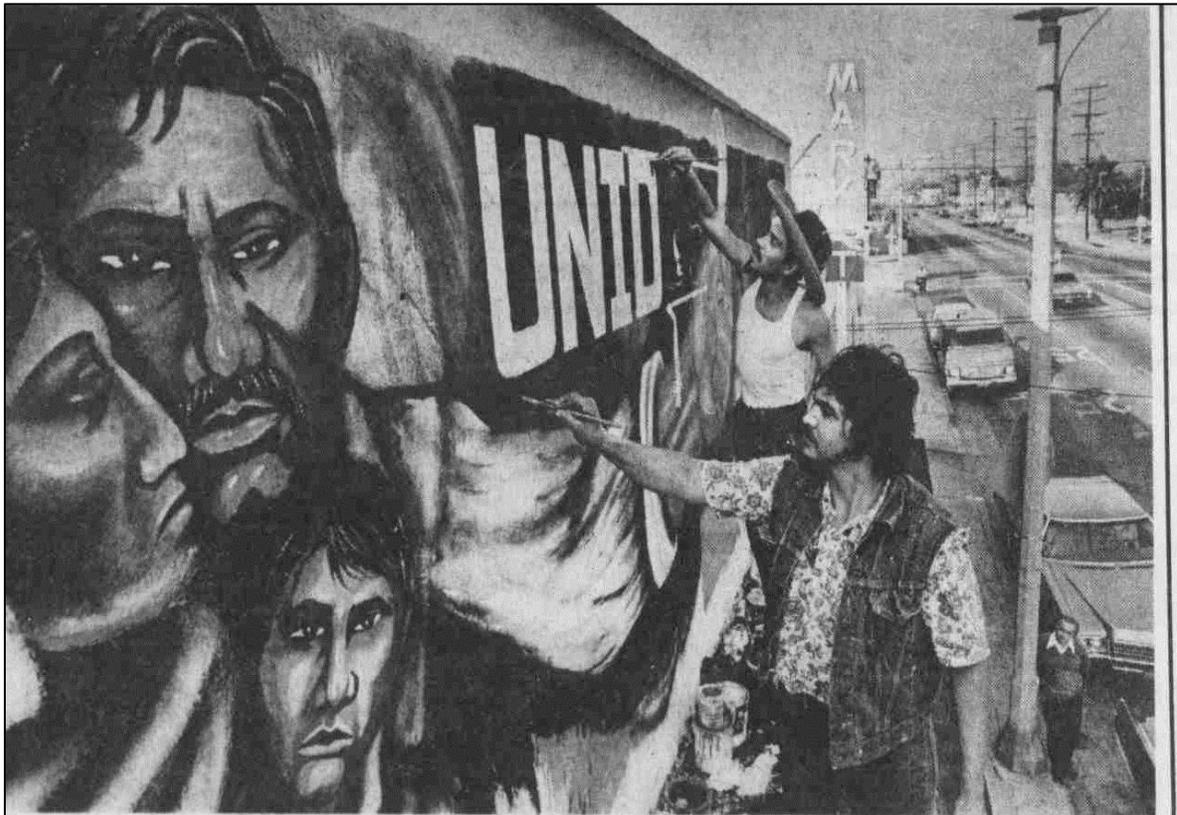
In later years, Dr. Phillip Gonzales, the nephew of Chano and professor in the Department of Chicano and Latin American Studies at Fresno State University, explored and presented the work of his uncle in lectures throughout Californian universities.

**Figure 127 Daniel “Chano” Gonzales, UC Riverside Chicano Student Programs mural, 1975**



Source: University of California, Riverside, Chicano Student Programs

Figure 128 Muralist Daniel "Chano" Gonzalez and collaborator, 1975



Mural takes shape above Campesinos Unidos, Inc.

Staff photo by Greg Schneider

## 'Chican arte' is a message to the people of the barrio

By STEVE COOPER

Sun-Telegram Staff Writer

SAN BERNARDINO — Someday Daniel "Chano" Gonzales may have time to paint landscapes or portraits, but for now he is too busy trying to get his messages across.

His messages take the form of sized murals which have become an integral part of life in Southern California barrios. Recently, Gonzales has been experimenting with 100-foot canvasses as well.

"What I'm doing is nothing new," said the artist dressed in paint-splattered denim overalls. "I'm continuing a tradition we now call 'chican arte.' The whole purpose is to promote a message to the common people in the barrio."

The paintings are bold, colorful and filled with readily understood symbolism directed at inspiring Chicano cultural pride.

"I think this work is not only necessary, I feel it's an obligation,"

part of his mural. The past and present meet in the mural and the Chicano's stern determination for a better future is depicted in the face of the man.

"Four or five years ago, a picture of Zapata or Villa with their

The experiment was not entirely successful. He did graduate from high school and learn to paint in prison and, after his release, he married and became a carpenter.

"I even bought a house and a new car and a color television. I got into that whole trip," he said, speaking softly as he rubbed his

cause of something wrong in himself. But suddenly he realized it was also a problem of environment and training.

"I always felt I was dumb or stupid. But when I realized I wasn't the only one to blame I could live with myself. After that the pieces of the puzzle just started falling together.

"The first thing I had to do was accept myself. You have to feel good about yourself before you can do anything," he said.

When he was released from jail, he used his newly acquired confidence counseling drug addicts and ex-convicts in halfway houses. While working for the County of Los Angeles, he began attending Chaffey College.

Two years ago he graduated from Johnston College in Redlands

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*"Four or five years ago, a picture of Zapata or Villa with their guns would have been up there . . . But this is getting more subtle. You see more of the family and portrayals of today's problems. We're growing, I think."*

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Source: *The Sun-Telegram*, 27 November 1975

### **FLORINDA LEIGHTON, “BRIDGE OF UNDERSTANDING” MURAL, UC RIVERSIDE**

Riverside native Florinda Leighton is a well-known Southern California muralist who specializes in works fashioned from enamel copper. In 1966, Leighton designed one of her best-known works at UC Riverside. Called “Bridge of Understanding,” the 10’ by 30’ foot mural consists of enameled copper tiles, forming a mosaic, to honor the life and work of Thomas E. Gore, founder of UC Riverside’s International Students Lounge. The mural was commissioned the year of Gore’s death. Currently in storage at UC Riverside, the mural features multiple ethnicities in traditional garments and artifacts.

#### *Chicano Art Association*

In the 1960s, the Chicano Civil Rights Movement brought a flowering of artistic expression, including murals, paintings, literature, and music. While little research has been conducted on the topic in Riverside, one group that gained renown in the early 1970s in Riverside was the Chicano Art Association. In 1973, the Chicano Art Association sponsored an exhibit on Chicano art in collaboration with the Riverside Art Center. Including 75 paintings, photographs, sculpture, and jewelry, the exhibit was shown in three locations in Riverside in 1973: at the Casa Blanca Community Center at Villegas Park, the International Lounge in UC Riverside, and on the Riverside Plaza. David Guerrero served as chair of the group in 1973. Describing the exhibit, Guerrero said: “As chicanos, we’ve got a lot of experiences behind us and the only one that can really show this is the chicano artist. We have to come up with a whole new pattern, a style that is chicano.”<sup>305</sup>

### **ESAU QUIROZ, CHICANO ARTIST, UC RIVERSIDE**

One of the local artists participating in the Chicano Art Association was Esau Quiroz. A native of Mexico, Quiroz had been painting since he was a boy. In circa 1970, he moved to Riverside to study art at UC Riverside. Quiroz captured the essence of his work, and Chicano art in general, this way:

“I paint because I want to express the feelings of our people – anger, happiness and pride,” says Quiroz. As one of few chicano artists in Riverside, Quiroz says, “It’s up to me to help our people to express what we are going through. As I became aware of the chicano movement and got involved in it, I realized I had to tell the story of my people. ...

“There’s something about our culture, our people, that we’ve always had good artists... We have to get the message across of how the chicano artist, having all this background, plays on of the most important roles in the chicano movement. There are many individual chicano artists, but you hardly hear of them because of lack of communication. Once we know who they are, and where they’re at, we can show that our art potential is as good as anyone else’s.”<sup>306</sup>

In addition to painting, his ambition was to teach art to fellow Chicanos: “If you have one Chicano teaching another, he’s teaching same blood, same color and same background. He feels an obligation, like if I’m teaching another chicano, I make sure he knows everything I know, and give him all the help he needs.” As of 1973, Quiroz had shown his work in art shows at Santa Ana College and Golden State College in Westminster, among other venues. At the age of 19, he painted a mural for the United Farm Workers headquarters in Blythe; the mural, created as a removable artwork, was later displayed at various California colleges before being obtained by a private collector in Los Angeles. In addition to his studies at UC Riverside, Quiroz served as the staff artist for the *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán* (Chicano Student Movement of Aztlán, or MECHA).

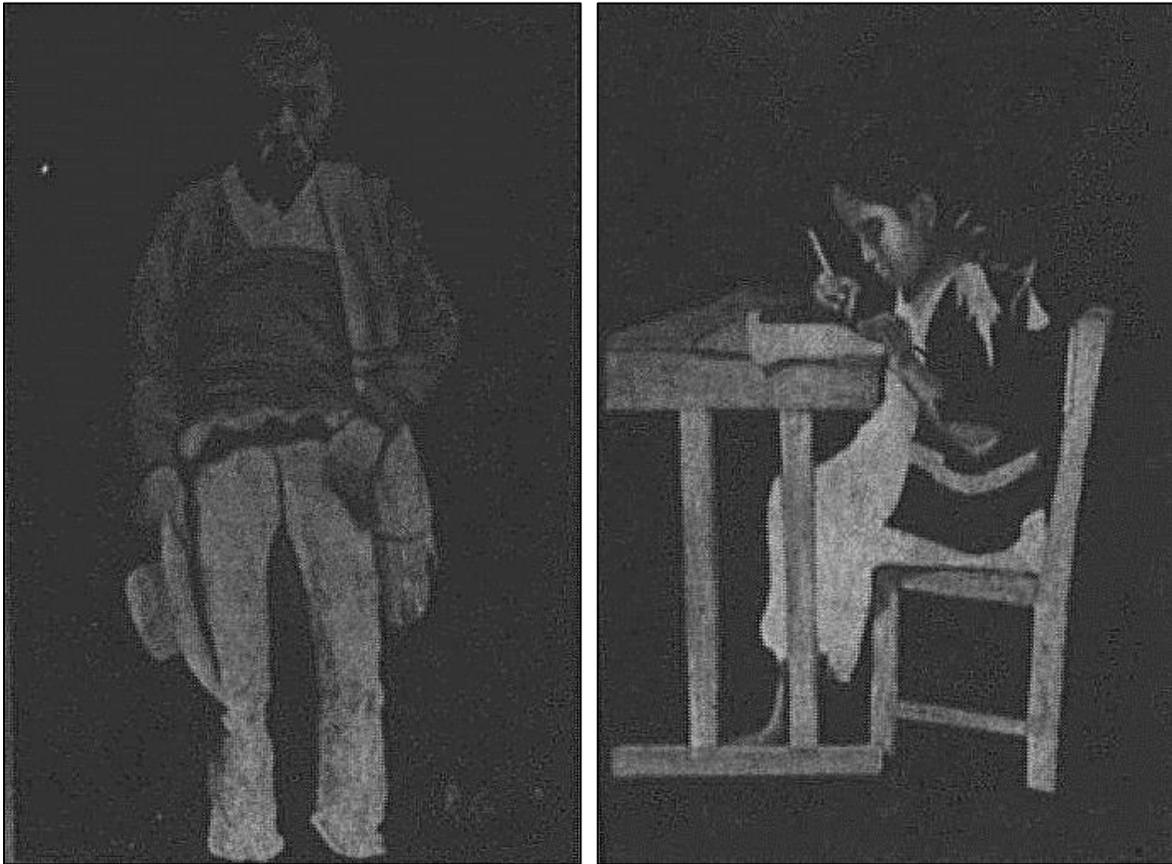
**Latino Historic Context Statement**

In the 1972 *Riverside Press Enterprise* article, Quiroz emphasized the need to express the Mexican-American experience in his work:

‘The Chicano artist has to put the feeling of the people first... He has to have empathy into how it is, being poor, working in the sun, making tortillas.’

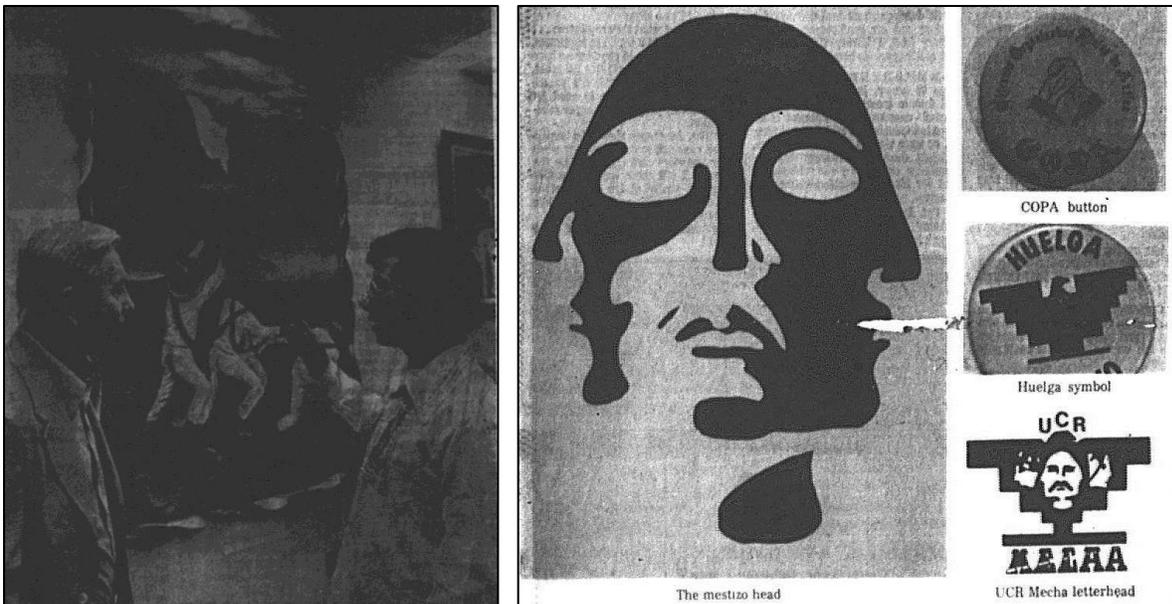
In his own work, Quiroz says, he tries to capture this sense of Chicanismo, the Mexican experience. ‘I get ideas for paintings from myself, or photographs, and develop them to have something to relate to our people. Something that our people could say, Hey, that’s us.’

Figure 129 “Don Juan” (left) and “Angela” (right), by Esau Quiroz



Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 3 April 1972

Figure 130 Esau Quiroz and Alfredo Castaneda, UCR Chicano Studies Department Chair (left); Quiroz artwork and logos (right)



Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 3 April 1972

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## 4.4 Theme #4: Making a Democracy: Latino Struggles for Inclusion

“We looked through the wire fence at white kids swimming at Fairmount Park, and we couldn’t get in. In the theater, the Mexicans were segregated in the balcony, and we wondered, ‘Why the hell can’t I sit down there?’”  
 —Augustine Flores, Co-founder, American GI Forum<sup>307</sup>

### Subtheme #1: Community Responses to Segregation and Discrimination

Through the first half of the twentieth century, separate and unequal were the basic themes for the Latino community in Riverside (and beyond). Although the Hispanic presence pre-dated Anglo-American settlement, and although Riverside’s economy and growth had always depended on their labor, the Mexican-American population was openly regarded as a “problem” in need of solving. This discourse was evident well before the Great Depression triggered an economic and employment crisis. Even in polite society, openly racist discussions of the “Mexican problem” were considered appropriate. At its core, these discussions reflected a nativist fear that “the United States has reached the stage where it is necessary to choose just who shall make up the people of America.”<sup>308</sup>

From the founding years, the challenges faced by Riverside’s Latino community were shared by Latinos throughout California:

While Latinos made significant contributions to the growth and development of California, and while they could lay claim to deep historical roots in the state, they nonetheless endured widespread discrimination and segregation in the twentieth century. This inequity drove a long, unyielding fight for full equality and inclusion in American society.<sup>309</sup>

Figure 131 “We Serve Whites Only,” restaurant in the American Southwest (left); Riverside Woman’s Club talk on the City’s “Mexican Problem,” 1928 (right)



Source: Russell Lee Photography Collection, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin and *Riverside Daily Press*, 6 December 1928

## Latino Historic Context Statement

The struggle for social and political inclusion intensified after 1900. As the Spanish and Mexican eras ended, and California joined the United States, Anglo-American society asserted its “power in social, political, and economic life, [and] Mexicans experienced downward mobility and marginalization in all of these realms.”<sup>310</sup> As well established in recent scholarship, this change in status was linked to race. Mexicans and Mexican-Americans were defined as inferior “as a means of justifying their social and economic subjugation. ...This process, in turn, justified the creation of a dual labor market in which Mexican workers were paid less and relegated to inferior jobs because of their perceived ethnic inferiority.”<sup>311</sup>

### *Separate and Unequal: Riverside’s Latino Community in the 1920s and 1930s*

In the pre-1945 era, even as Riverside’s Mexican-American and ethnic communities continued to contribute and grow, they faced discrimination and segregation—as either stated or unofficial policy. This segregation and exclusion included employment opportunities, housing options, as well as public places such as parks and pools, theaters and schools, restaurants and restrooms. Basic rights, including voting and attending public school, were often not accessible for migrant families.<sup>312</sup>

In addition, racially restrictive deed covenants, as well as unspoken agreements among neighbors and real estate agents, fueled housing segregation. Unable to purchase homes in the neighborhood of their choice, many residents purchased homes or rented in the only neighborhoods that would let them in. Taken together, discrimination on many different fronts impacted the lives of Latinos in Riverside and kept them from enjoying the same access to opportunities and upward mobility experienced by their Anglo-American counterparts.

As Riverside grew into a thriving metropolis, with new, modern amenities and institutions offered to its citizens, this discrimination only came into sharper relief. For example, if a Mexican-American or African-American family wanted to take their children swimming in the summer, they could only visit certain pools on days reserved for them, usually the day before the pool was emptied and cleaned. These demeaning policies were in place at the Fairmount Park pool and Arlington Park pool. Life-long Eastside resident John Sotelo recalled trying to visit the Fairmount Pool when he was a boy. Sotelo would sit by the gate, waiting. “Every time [the attendant] opened the gate for the white boys to go in swimming, I would stick my dime out and the attendant would say, ‘Sorry, but I can’t.’ So then I’d sit down back on the ground next to the gate [and await another opportunity.]”<sup>313</sup> At the same time, Japanese and Italian children did not experience such restrictions. One Japanese-American resident of Arlington, Etsuo Ogawa, recalled “learning to swim at Arlington Park and ‘roaming the streets, stealing watermelons’ with his Caucasian friends.”<sup>314</sup>

Official policies of segregation also were in place in Riverside movie theatres. For example, if a Latino family wanted to visit the Fox Theatre or Golden State Theatre, they would be directed to sit in the balcony. In the 1930s, Phillip Diaz Castro enjoyed going to the movies at the Golden State Theatre. One day, after purchasing his ticket, Philip

snuck into the main floor and took a seat. An usher came and tapped him on his shoulder and told him he had to go up to the balcony. Philip stood his ground and stated, ‘I pay the same price for my ticket as everyone else, and I want to sit here.’ Philip was taken to the lobby, given his money back and escorted out the door.”<sup>315</sup>

Such stories from Riverside’s Latino families abound. In restaurants, for example, signs might be posted outside, excluding residents of color, or the wait staff might simply ignore patrons until they gave up and left. Phyllis Salinas, the daughter of John Sotelo, recalled one visit to a restaurant with

her family; after waiting for a long period of time, Sotelo patiently asked the waitress why she hadn't come over to serve them. Sotelo reasoned with the waitress that "I'm the same as everyone else, my blood is also red, I'm just a little more tan." The waitress refused to serve them, and the family departed.<sup>316</sup>

One of the earliest legal challenges to discrimination in Riverside was brought by Frank M. Johnson, an African-American resident of Eastside. In the early 1920s, outraged over the City's refusal to allow his daughter to swim in the Fairmount Park plunge, Johnson sued the City for discrimination under California Civil Code, Sections 51 and 52. The suit was resolved by the construction of a new park and pool, known as Lincoln Park, on the Eastside. As noted above, with the formal opening taking place in August 1924, Lincoln Park was established along Park Avenue between Twelfth and Thirteenth Streets.<sup>317</sup> By this time, the Eastside was a neighborhood comprised primarily of African-Americans and Mexican-Americans. When it opened, the park was welcomed by neighborhood residents and children.

However, Lincoln Park reflected the ongoing discrimination and separate-and-unequal approach applied to communities of color. In a reflection of the lesser importance placed on parks in minority communities, in the fiscal years 1939/1940 and 1940/1941, the City's annual budget for Fairmount Park was approximately five-times greater than that of Lincoln Park. At the same time, calls had begun in the late 1930s for a small, \$1,500 expenditure to purchase land in Casa Blanca for a park. Residents of that community would have to wait several years before \$1,500 was allocated to construct a park. The priority placed on parks in Anglo-American neighborhoods was just one example of the discriminatory treatment and demeaning policies faced by the City's Mexican-American and communities of color.

There were other small victories along the way, in particular in the postwar years. In 2006, Sotelo recalled returning home from World War II and seeing a sign in a Riverside bar that read "White Trade Only." Sotelo and several other Latino veterans of World War II complained to the owner; the owner, who had recently purchased the bar and inherited the sign, "promptly tore the sign down and threw it away."<sup>318</sup> Through multi-ethnic collaboration, and a long-term effort involving many community members and organizations, Riverside's communities of color slowly rolled back discrimination and segregation.

While the postwar period brought the greatest surge in political activism for Riverside's Latino community, some earlier efforts and advances also took place. In 1944, Casa Blanca residents successfully lobbied the City's Planning Commission to halt a rezoning plan that would have brought new factories and warehouses within the Casa Blanca residential neighborhood:

Refusing to let the matter rest, over forty barrio residents, led by Sophia Arciniega, protested before the city council. They argued that they had homes in the area and did not want their children to grow up in an industrial area. Faced with this unexpected protest, the council, in a historical turnabout, rejected the planning commission's rezoning proposal.<sup>319</sup>

### *El Espectador*

As the community came together to respond to and address discrimination, some publications emerged in these early years. One early regional Latino publication that had wide reaching influence in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties was *El Espectador* (The Spectator). Published by Ignacio Lopez, a UC Berkeley graduate with Master of Arts degrees in History and Spanish, the newspaper was said to be California's largest reaching Spanish-language weekly publication.<sup>320</sup> The newspaper was active in 1939—in 1939, in nearby Ontario, Lopez rallied the community, "both Mexican

American and Anglo-American, to protest racial discrimination against Pedro Tucker, who had been prohibited from sitting in the middle aisle of a movie theatre. After a boycott of the theatre and many angry meetings, the owner signed a no-discrimination pledge. Throughout the war years, Lopez, with his newspaper and the Unity Clubs—precursors of the Unity Leagues—also organized boycotts and protests against discrimination in public facilities and restaurants.”<sup>321</sup>

### *Postwar Era of Empowerment and Engagement*

In American history, the year 1945 is often presented as a significant turning point between the old ways and a new contemporary era. This was certainly true for the Latino community. In the 1940s and 1950s, “the Latino struggle for equality expanded rapidly and took multiple forms—from grassroots organizing to litigation.”<sup>322</sup> For Latinos throughout the United States, the war years had brought a wealth of opportunities to participate in and support war efforts, whether through military service or defense-related employment. Latinos also had enjoyed new opportunities to branch out beyond the agricultural work to which previous generations of Latinos had been confined.

Advances made during World War II brought a new sense of empowerment. Efforts to organize and advocate for civil rights, equal access and opportunities gained momentum. This shift ended up affecting all areas of life for Latinos in the postwar era. In California, Latino activism

gathered the strongest momentum after World War II, reflecting a maturing of the broader Latino civil rights movement. As Latinos gained political rights, they built a formidable base of political power through institution building, voter mobilization, and the electoral successes of Latino candidates.<sup>323</sup>

There was a realization and active assertion that, as Corona-based activist and community leader Frances Martinez wrote,

‘these so-called ‘Mexicans’ are one hundred and one percent Americans—second and third generation Corona born Americans—many of whose ancestors were on the American continent before any Anglo had set foot on United States soil.’ [Martinez] appealed to both Anglo and Mexican American groups to take a crash course on US and Mexican history to better understand the problems facing Chicanos, because ‘these young people are strictly a United States product.’<sup>324</sup>

Martinez’s description of Corona certainly applied to Riverside, as well, with one of California’s oldest Latino communities. Understanding this, Latinos in Riverside began to organize and to assert their rights more forcefully. They had ready-made means for doing so. In his 2006 book *Making Lemonade Out of Lemons*, José Alamillo shows how, in nearby Corona, “Mexican American men and women transformed two relatively autonomous leisure spaces—baseball clubs and Cinco de Mayo festivals—into venues for incipient political activism aimed at improving conditions” in the Latino community.<sup>325</sup> With these same social and recreational networks in place, Latinos in Riverside also organized through their church communities and jamaicas, patriotic festivals and Cinco de Mayo events, and baseball leagues and teams. Community-based groups, as well as local branches of statewide civil rights organizations, proliferated in the postwar period.

These stirrings of the civil rights movement brought a growing sense of empowerment to assert the right for equal treatment. While a generational divide existed, with young people more open to and comfortable with vocal activism and, when necessary, proactive engagement and confrontation, a broader sense of empowerment took hold. As Simona Valero said in 1972, working at the time with

the Office of Economic Development as an anti-poverty worker, “Only lately have we felt that we have the right to say what we feel and do what we want.”<sup>326</sup>

All members of the community got involved. At a 1952 board meeting of the Community Settlement Association, for example, teenager Manuel Villalpando, a student at Polytechnic High School in Riverside, shared with Board members that “a sense of exclusion” and “discrimination against minorities in employment and in other fields gives rise to social difficulties which otherwise probably would not develop.”<sup>327</sup>

In addition, World War II veterans took the lead in responding to and addressing discrimination. After serving their country in war, as veteran Raul Morin observed,

‘How could we have played such a prominent role as Americans over there and now have to go back living as outsiders again? How long had we been missing out on benefits derived as an American citizen? We never had any voice. Here now as veterans who had risked their lives for the US was the opportunity to do something about it.’<sup>328</sup>

For Riverside veteran and community leader John Sotelo, World War II served as a catalyzing experience. After serving in the US Navy, Sotelo’s political activism began in earnest after he returned from the war. In those years, a group of Mexican-American veterans from Riverside wanted to join their fellow veterans in the American Legion Veterans Post in Fairmount Park. Their request to join was denied:

Despite having fought for the same democratic principles and shared the same misery and toil associated with military service, white members of an American Legion outpost in Riverside, California, felt compelled to maintain an exclusionary policy toward Chicano veterans. ‘When we...were ready to join the American Legion here in Riverside, we probably had 150 to 200 veterans that wanted to be a part of it, and, at that time they told us...that we had different cultures so why don’t we form an American Legion [outpost] of [our] own.’<sup>329</sup>

Sotelo, Juan Acevedo, Augustine Flores, and other fellow veterans did just that, establishing a Riverside chapter of the American GI Forum in 1951 (a topic described in more detail below).

Along with the rise in activism and the emerging civil rights movement, in the 1940s and 1950s, landmark legislation and US Supreme Court rulings shifted the legal terrain and provided a stronger foundation for fighting discrimination and segregation. Court cases included *Mendez v. Westminster*, a California-based lawsuit through which racial segregation of schools was found unconstitutional (1947), and *Shelley v. Kraemer*, through which the US Supreme Court found exclusionary deed restrictions unenforceable. (It would take another two decades for the practice to be determined illegal.)

In 1954, the landmark US Supreme Court ruling, *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*, finally overturned nearly a century of policies based on the premise that “separate but equal” as a legal doctrine was constitutional. Reversing this practice, the US Supreme Court found such policies in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution. This unanimous Supreme Court decision provided the foundation for the gradual dismantling of public school segregation (though it did not provide an accompanying blueprint for carrying this out). This ruling also helped catalyze the Civil Rights Movement and Chicano Rights Movement by the 1960s.

Although advances were significant, they were also incremental. Setbacks were also experienced along the way. In the 1950s, for example, the US program of “Operation Wetback” fanned anti-

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Latino sentiment and resulted in widespread abuse and deportation. But, in general, the terrain was ready for a major shift.

These shifts slowly started to be reflected in how Mexican-Americans were portrayed by the English-language media in Riverside. Almost 30 years after the *Riverside Daily Press* pondered the “Mexican problem” and who should be allowed to live in the United States in 1928, the same newspaper ran a six-part series exploring the entrenched discrimination faced by Latinos and African-Americans in the City. Written by *Riverside Daily Press* journalist Harry Lawton, the series addressed discrimination faced by Riverside’s ethnic communities, as well as commonly held prejudices against them, in articles entitled “Minority Housing Needs Pose Social Challenge to Riverside,” “Bad Houses Don’t Reflect Characters of Inhabitants,” “Minorities Face Barriers,” and white flight in “‘Transition’ Neighborhoods Show How Problem Spreads.” In addition, the series celebrated the work of John Sotelo (“The Story of Johnny Sotelo”). In this way, the civil rights work and organizing on the part of Latinos, and a growing recognition of racial discrimination on the part of Anglo-Americans, began to change the tide in the postwar period.

**Figure 132** Lozano family, from left, Chona, Chavela, Josephine, Lily, Lucy, and Manuela. In front, Mr. and Mrs. Marcos Lozano, with son John. ca. 1940



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Figure 133 Josephine Lozano, pioneering activist and community leader (b. 1912, d. 1983)

# Josephine Lozano, Hispanic rights activist in Riverside, dies at age 70

By EMANUEL E. PARKER  
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

Mrs. Josephine Lozano, a pioneer in the struggle for equal rights for Hispanics in Riverside, died yesterday. She was 70 years old.

Mrs. Lozano, who came to Riverside in 1913 at age 1, was a former county Democratic Central Committee member, a charter member of the statewide Mexican-American Political Association and instrumental in forming the local Mary O'Keefe Democratic Club. She was also a member of the Citizens Committee for Justice, the Community Service Organization and other charitable organizations.

Visitation will be from 2 until 9 p.m. tomorrow at the Garden of Prayer Mortuary, 7944 Magnolia Ave., Riverside. Mass will be said at 10 a.m. Monday at St. Catherine's Catholic Church, 7050 Brockton Ave.

Mrs. Lozano attended Longfellow Elementary, University Junior High and Poly High schools. During the Depression she worked to desegregate public restrooms in Riverside, and after World War II encouraged Hispanic women to register and vote.

During the early 1950s, Mrs. Lozano worked for the Riverside Community Settlement House under the direction of Juan Acevedo.

She became active in Democratic politics in the mid-1930s and was a delegate to the 1960 Democratic convention in Los Angeles that nominated John F. Kennedy for president. She also campaigned for former Riverside Councilman Johnny Sotelo, former Govs. Edmund G. "Pat" Brown and Edmund G. "Jerry" Brown Jr., former U.S. Sen. John V. Tunney, Rep. George E. Brown, former Assemblyman Walter Ingalls, State Sen. Robert B. Presley and others.

During the administration of President Lyndon Johnson, Mrs. Lozano used her own money to travel to Washington, D.C., to lobby for poverty funds for the Riverside area.

Mrs. Lozano is survived by her husband, John R. Lozano; five daughters, Delores Sevilla, Sylvia Martinez, Lidia Padilla, Anna Chavez and Rosalee Acevedo, all of Riverside; two sons, Alfred and Ralph Rodriguez, both of Riverside; two sisters, Virginia Webster and Eleanor Deaton, both of Riverside; and one brother, Arthur Dennis of Riverside. She also leaves 16 grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren.



**Josephine Lozano**

Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 8 April 1983

*Spotlight On: Josephine Lozano*

“I led the first race riot in Riverside by refusing to use a toilet labeled ‘colored.’  
I’ve been fighting for my rights and for the Mexican-American ever since.”  
–Josephine Lozano, Civil Rights Activist and Charter Member of MAPA<sup>330</sup>

One early pioneer in Latino civil rights in Riverside was Josephine Lozano. Born in 1912, Lozano lived in Riverside’s Eastside neighborhood since the age of 1. She attended Longfellow Elementary School, University Junior High, and Polytechnic High School, graduating from high school in the early years of the Great Depression. She recalled Riverside of the 1910s as “small and segregated,” with the Mexican community living in separate neighborhoods.

After graduating from high school, Lozano began working as a seamstress in 1933 for a Works Progress Administration project in downtown Riverside. She recalled the moment at work when signs segregating the bathrooms were put up, with one door marked “Colored” and the other marked “White.” Lozano refused to use the segregated bathrooms. With this, her supervisor threatened to fire her unless she used the “Colored” bathroom. After Lozano held her ground, a regional supervisor from the San Bernardino Works Progress Administration office was called in. Lozano recalled a tense stand-off among workers, as the supervisor arrived. Upon hearing what had happened, the Works Progress Administration regional supervisor told the women gathered that, because this was a federally funded project, the bathrooms “were to be shared together regardless of race, creed or color and any white woman who objected was fired.”<sup>331</sup> For her part, Lozano, instead of being fired herself, was promoted as one of the supervisors.

These experiences, including the creation of a “Mexican” church in Eastside, launched Lozano into political action and activism. She became involved in democratic politics in the mid-1930s and served as a delegate to the 1960 Democratic convention (which ultimately launched John F. Kennedy to the presidency). Lozano also actively campaigned for John Sotelo, Riverside’s first Latino City councilperson, as well as governors Pat Brown and Jerry Brown, Jr. Among her many activities, Lozano served as a County Democratic Central Committee member, a charter member of the Mexican-American Political Association (MAPA), and as a founder of the local Mary O’Keefe Democratic Club. During the early 1950s, Lozano worked for the Riverside Community Settlement House under the direction of Juan Acevedo.

“The salvation of the Mexican-American is to be involved politically,” she said in 1970. “We must support a candidate or have a Mexican-American candidate ourselves.”<sup>332</sup> In the postwar period, Lozano organized a group of Mexican-American mothers, to form the *Programa de Madres Mexicanas* (Program of Mexican Mothers), a “Chicano equivalent of the PTA.”<sup>333</sup>

In 1962, she was honored by the East Los Angeles-Belvedere Democratic Club at a presentation for women who had made outstanding contributions to community and political work. In 1963, based on Lozano’s recommendation, California Governor Edmund G. Brown reappointed Riverside Mexican-American Juan Acevedo to serve on the California Youth Authority Board, as the only Mexican-American appointee on the board.

A life-long resident of Riverside, Lozano passed away in 1983 at the age of 70.

## Subtheme #2: Housing

“I really do want to rent the house to you. But I’ve thought it over and I don’t want a long fight with my neighbors.”  
—Riverside property owner to Major Sergeant “R” and his wife, 1956<sup>334</sup>

From the earliest years, housing represented one of the front lines in the battle for equal access for the Latino community in Riverside and California. As in other areas of life, separate and unequal was the rule, through discriminatory real estate and housing practices and racially restrictive covenants. (The one exception, as a holdover from the Spanish and Mexican eras, was the group of Latinos with real or presumed Spanish heritage, as well as wealth, social status, and sufficiently light complexions.)

This discrimination affected Latinos throughout California during the first half of the twentieth century. During this time,

a powerful set of legally sanctioned tools created this segregation, including race restrictive covenants, homeowner associations, real estate practices, and ultimately federal policy that rewarded segregated neighborhoods. ...these tools of exclusion essentially protected white neighborhoods from minority incursion, and helped create separate Mexican neighborhoods.<sup>335</sup>

The way forward to gaining access was often through the courts, in particular with challenges to racially restrictive covenants. But this entailed expensive and lengthy legal processes that most people opted to avoid. Faced with this discrimination, many people focused their attention on their own neighborhoods. As Riverside business owner Pauline de la Hoya said, “you just knew you weren’t accepted and you didn’t push yourself.”<sup>336</sup> Echoing the sentiment of Ms. de la Hoya, scholars have illustrated “the twin forces that created the barrio—both Anglo exclusionary practices and the Mexican desire for cultural autonomy” as a way of explaining the factors that created Latino neighborhoods.<sup>337</sup>

In Riverside, in terms of housing condition and infrastructure improvements, ethnic neighborhoods lagged well behind their Anglo-American counterparts. During the roaring 1920s, for example, as Riverside became a modern city, majority Latino neighborhoods like Casa Blanca lacked underground sewer systems or paved streets. Most residents of Casa Blanca would have to wait another three decades before seeing major infrastructure improvements, such as sewage services and paved streets. (A greatly increased political profile and presence in the postwar period helped the Latino community successfully lobby for municipal investment.)

In the opening decades of the early twentieth century, housing demand among Latinos greatly expanded. Between 1920 and 1930 alone, Riverside’s Mexican and Mexican-American community increased nearly fourfold. By the end of the 1930s, the Latino community comprised approximately 13.3 percent of the City’s total population.<sup>338</sup> Even as the population grew in Casa Blanca, the City did little to provide services or improve infrastructure. Similarly, other neighborhoods in Riverside that were home to the City’s ethnic populations were underserved. If Latino or ethnic residents wished to leave these neighborhoods, though, their options for purchasing or renting housing were severely limited by restrictive housing covenants.

In 1919, conditions in predominantly Latino neighborhoods had deteriorated enough that the state legislature ordered a survey of living conditions in the City of Riverside. “Under the direction of 10 men and two women a census is being taken of the city of Riverside,” the *Riverside Daily Press*

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reported in 1919; the survey's focus was the Mile Square area, as well as Eastside, Casa Blanca, and Arlington neighborhoods.<sup>339</sup> While the survey results showed neighborhoods and residents suffering from a profound lack of investment, infrastructure, and opportunities, the City continued to encourage de facto segregation, thereby confining Mexican and Mexican-American residents to neighborhoods deemed substandard.

Indeed, a year later, in 1920, Riverside Mayor Sam Evans praised the use of racial restrictions, in a statement that demonstrated the degree of the problem and the challenge faced by Riverside's residents of color:

Here in Riverside we are inserting these racial restrictions in our Deeds, which they say is all wrong. Now I can go as far as the next man in giving the Negro his vote, his education, and his rights, but I can't agree on his 'social equality' status & his right and his desirability to settle all through the City in white neighborhoods – it is not good for him, it engages strife and is out of place... Several committees of citizens have called to protest the purchase by Negro people of property in white sections and now, a large section of the City is petitioning to have all the property deed to the Title Co. & then re-deed with a racial restriction.<sup>340</sup>

Given this open embrace of racist views and policies at the highest levels of city government, it comes as little surprise that the Ku Klux Klan developed a branch in Riverside. In 1924, the Klan "gathered a crowd of between 5,000 and 10,000" in Riverside; even more telling, the gathering was held in the stadium of Polytechnic High School, with the permission of the school district.<sup>341</sup> Historian Catherine Gudis notes that much Klan activity throughout the United States subsided with passage of the 1924 Immigration Restriction Act. In contrast, voters in Riverside "instead voted into office in January 1928 Edward Dighton, thought to be a Klan member, supported by the '100% American League.' In this climate, it is no wonder that racial minorities in Riverside tended to create their communities where they were welcomed."<sup>342</sup>

The onset of the Great Depression worsened not only discrimination but also the physical condition of ethnic neighborhoods. During this time, the City had fewer funds available to make municipal improvements, and Latino neighborhoods and citizens suffered. The lack of sewers and infrastructure had triggered health crises, as neighborhoods expanded but infrastructure did not. In Casa Blanca, for example, "One of the most tragic consequences of the city's denial of sewer facilities was the periodic outbreak of typhoid and tuberculosis epidemics that frequently ravaged the barrios. One such epidemic occurred in 1915, another in 1933."<sup>343</sup> In 1933, the City's health officer, Dr. W.B. Wells, "admonished the city council" that "'Casa Blanca is a pesthole... As far as typhoid fever is concerned, it is a menace owing to inadequate storm drainage facilities,'" Wells stated.<sup>344</sup> Historian Paul Viafora recounted the City Council's disinterested response as additional cases of typhoid fever emerged in Casa Blanca and Eastside:

Again, Dr. Wells and Dr. Zwahlenberg went before the city council to emphasize the urgency of the situation, 'since in sections of the city where these typhoid cases are appearing, there are no sewers.' In response, the council politely assures the two doctors that the matter would be considered in making up the budget for the following year.<sup>345</sup>

Even so, between 1936 and 1939, the City earmarked a mere \$180 for aid to Casa Blanca, from the "Unemployment Relief Fund for the continuation of a children's rest class at Casa Blanca Elementary School."<sup>346</sup>

On the Eastside, one interesting glimpse of resident demographics is provided in the 1943 survey of the Eastside neighborhood conducted by the Community Settlement House.<sup>347</sup> As noted previously, between June and September 1943, the Community Settlement House sent out a total of 50 women

to survey over 300 homes in Eastside. The 1943 survey is one example of the World War II housing boom in Riverside. Surveyors found that, as of 1943, approximately one-third of Eastside families had moved to Riverside since 1940.<sup>348</sup> Along with this increased demand, however, some landlords started raising rents from 20 to 25 percent, “even though no improvements had been made” to the homes.<sup>349</sup>

Indeed, another one-third of respondents also said that, if they could, they would relocate from Eastside; the main reason given was overcrowding in their homes. (Of course, the neighborhoods they could choose at the time were severely limited, due to official and unofficial housing discrimination.) Approximately one-third of the homes did not have adequate plumbing, and 10 percent did not have running water in their homes.

### *Exclusionary Housing Practices and Early Legal Challenges and Victories*

During the Great Depression, a New Deal program helped increase new residential construction as well as levels of home ownership, but further restricted the housing options of homeowners of color. Established through the National Housing Act in 1934, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) offered home mortgages that were long-term, low interest, and within the reach of the average American family. In addition to offering funding for homes, the FHA also developed designs for the ideal home and for the neighborhood itself. The so-called Minimum House served as the prototype used by the FHA in its efforts to codify and manufacture “a standard, low-cost, minimum house that the majority of American wage earners could afford.”<sup>350</sup> The resulting residential construction boom in Southern California was significant enough that it had helped the construction industry recover by the late 1930s. With GIs returning from World War II, FHA funding programs accelerated in the postwar years.

Even as the FHA made home ownership a reality for many Americans, it encouraged practices that actively excluded non-Caucasians. Several factors came together in this respect. Prior to the establishment of the FHA, in the early twentieth century, restrictive covenants had been used in property deeds that dictated terms for present and future ownership. In the case of restrictive housing practices, deeds would specify which “races” could own a property, and which could not. Covenants could last for decades and cover individual properties or entire neighborhoods. In 1919, at a time when the Mexican and Mexican-American community in Riverside was growing rapidly, the California and US Supreme Courts upheld the use of racially restrictive covenants, which “unleashed their widespread use.”<sup>351</sup>

This greatly limited not only housing options for Riverside’s residents of color but also their options for recourse. In addition, during this period, few attempts were made to disguise such housing discrimination; it was the open preference of many real estate professionals.

In the 1930s, exclusionary housing practices were encouraged and furthered by another New Deal program, the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) program. The HOLC offered refinancing and low-interest loans for homeowners during the Great Depression.<sup>352</sup> In order to offset the risk, the HOLC established an appraisal system for ranking neighborhoods and assigning a “security risk” level for each neighborhood. A number of factors went into assigning risk, including housing age, condition, and value, as well as demographics of the residents, proximity to services and amenities (or hazards).

What made the program infamous, however, was its focus on the race of neighborhood residents to assign risk and the subsequent refusal to offer loans to non-Caucasian homeowners. Security levels were color-coded from green (least risk), blue, yellow, and red (highest level of risk). Owners living

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in neighborhoods with higher levels of risk generally could not qualify for loans or federal funding. Prepared for cities throughout the United States, the HOLC Security Maps offer an illuminating if troubling look into housing discrimination and the federally sanctioned practice of “red-lining.” The FHA supported the use of restrictive covenants until 1948, a practice that impacted neighborhoods throughout Riverside, Southern California, and the United States.

Such exclusionary housing practices were dismantled in small steps through the courts beginning in the 1940s. A half-century of use of such practices, however, had resulted in entrenched segregation in communities throughout Southern California and Riverside. The gradual reversal of these practices contributed to early success in challenging housing discrimination.

One early, successful challenge was filed by the Bernal family of Fullerton, Orange County. In 1943, Alex Bernal, a native Californian and son of Mexican immigrants, his wife Esther, and their family moved into a neighborhood called Sunnyside Addition. The neighborhood’s racially restrictive covenants barred “any Mexicans or persons other than of the Caucasian race” from living in the neighborhood.<sup>353</sup> When neighbors hoping to drive the Bernals out of the neighborhood filed suit in the Orange County Superior Court, the Bernals’ attorney argued that racially restrictive covenants were a violation of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments of the US Constitution. The judge agreed, “marking the first successful use of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments in a housing restriction case.”<sup>354</sup>

Similarly, in a 1943 case, *A.T. Collison and R.L. Wood v. Nellie Garcia*, a Los Angeles superior court judge ruled in favor of a Mexican-American woman, Nellie Garcia, who had purchased property near El Monte in Southern California. The judge ruled that the racially restrictive covenant itself was invalid, since “there was no such thing as a ‘Mexican race.’”<sup>355</sup> The 1948 US Supreme Court decision in *Shelley v. Kraemer* found racially restrictive covenants unenforceable on a national level. As a result of the landmark 1948 ruling, the Federal Housing Administration, which had tacitly encouraged the use of racially restrictive covenants through its lending and redlining practices, cut off federal mortgage funding for sales involving restrictive deeds.

Although it would take another 20 years for such covenants to be ruled illegal, these court decisions “enabled a small Mexican-American middle class to begin moving into formerly all-white suburbs by the 1950s.”<sup>356</sup>

*Postwar Progress toward Equal Housing*

In the postwar period, even as many new housing tracts were constructed throughout Riverside, housing options continued to be tightly restricted for Latino families and families of color. In Riverside and beyond, official and unofficial discrimination remained the norm and “gaining open access to housing became a key civil rights goal.”<sup>357</sup> At the same time, the Latino community in Riverside “entered a new, activist era” after World War II,<sup>358</sup> and the activism of this era would prove transformative for the community in all areas of life, including housing access. Riverside real estate agents of color, such as Eddie Streeter and Leo and Mela Lueras, helped home owners and renters to find housing.

Even as Latinos were limited in their housing choices, many new neighborhoods appeared throughout Riverside, as agricultural lands were gradually replaced with housing tracts and development. By the mid-20th century, “the increasing diversification of Riverside’s economic livelihood saw the destruction of much of Riverside’s once vast citrus acreage”:

As the dependence on agriculture lessened and population pressures increased, the groves and fields that dotted Riverside gave way to urban expansion, as elsewhere in southern

California. By the late 1950s, the post-WWII boom and the accompanying suburbanization movement in American history had redefined the residential landscape throughout Riverside.<sup>359</sup>

Although Latinos benefited from legal victories in the pre- and post-war period, the practice of “steering” people of color away from certain neighborhoods remained intact in California and in Riverside. The *Riverside Daily Press* noted the practice in 1956, claiming that most of Riverside’s neighborhoods at the time were “closely fenced in by ‘Gentlemen’s Agreements’ that aimed to keep people of color out of primarily Anglo neighborhoods.”<sup>360</sup>

A 1956 series in the *Riverside Daily Press* explored the topic of housing discrimination. In the articles, countless similar stories were recounted. Overall, for minority renters and owners in Riverside, options were severely limited. With the rental market largely off limits, due to “steering” practices by real estate agents, Latinos or African-Americans could build their own home or find housing in a neighborhood with an existing minority presence.

In this way, the much-celebrated postwar housing boom was all but closed to families of color. Between 1950 and 1956, more than 210 new housing subdivisions had been constructed in Riverside. Among these, only three “catered exclusively to minority group needs.”<sup>361</sup> Those three neighborhoods were the Streeter Tract off Pennsylvania Avenue in Eastside, Los Ranchitos tract by Critchlow-Austin in Casa Blanca, and the Wood Subdivision east of Kansas Avenue in the Eastside “fringe” area.

Although legal remedies to housing discrimination were available, filing suit entailed an arduous and expensive path, and one that most people chose to avoid. For example, in the 13 August 1956 article “Discrimination Mars an All-American Community,” the article opens with a young World War II veteran and his wife, house hunting in Riverside. Recently stationed at March Air Force Base, the sergeant and his wife visited many open rentals throughout the City, only to be told repeatedly that the home had just been rented. Through the course of the day, one sympathetic real estate agent said more candidly, “I really do want to rent the house to you. But I don’t want a long fight with my neighbors,” the reporter recounted. Finally, the young couple, who were African-American, were directed to a dilapidated cottage that was well below their price range and in dire need of repairs and remodeling. They opted to buy a home in Eastside instead, since “it would be almost impossible for him to buy a home in a new subdivision without a long court battle.”<sup>362</sup>

Even as their housing choices were limited, the Latino community was growing rapidly in Riverside. As of 1956, an estimated 5,000 to 6,000 Mexican-Americans called Riverside home.<sup>363</sup> This community consisted primarily of second- and third-generation Mexican-American families. As of 1958, this total was estimated to have grown by more than 70 percent, with first-generation groups constituting a minority among Riverside’s Mexican-American population.<sup>364</sup>

### **LOS RANCHITOS, CASA BLANCA**

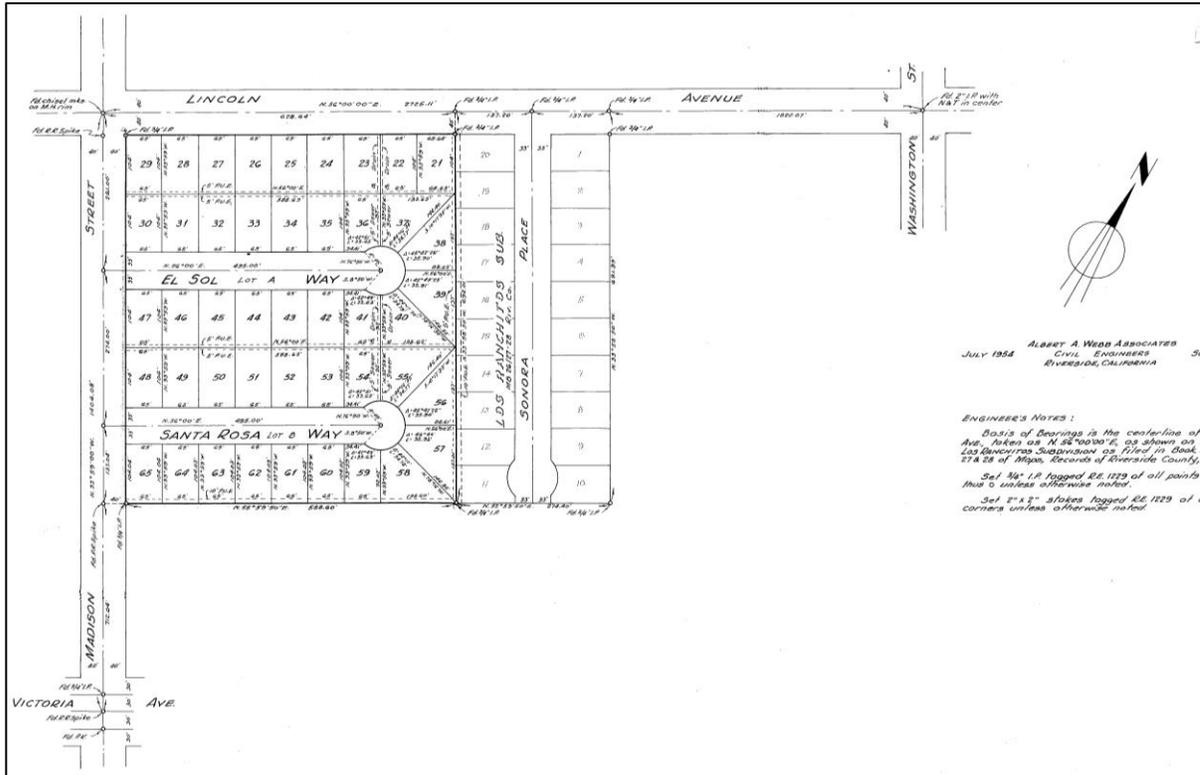
Subdivided in 1954 by the Critchlow-Austin Company, Los Ranchitos is located in the southwestern corner of Casa Blanca. A classic postwar suburb of single-family homes, Los Ranchitos features the Ranch Style homes that were popular during the era, with generous setbacks and lawns, arranged on landscaped streets with cul de sacs. The neighborhood was one of the neighborhoods featured in *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1956, as an example of improvements throughout Casa Blanca. As of 2018, the neighborhood appears largely as it did in the 1950s.

Figure 134 Los Ranchitos, Casa Blanca's postwar suburb, 1956



Source: *The Saturday Evening Post*, 21 April 1956

Figure 135 Los Ranchitos, original tract map, 1954



Source: Riverside County Maps and Land Records, RICT

## THE STREETER TRACT AND EDDIE STREETER

One of the earliest integrated postwar housing tracts in Riverside was the Streeter Tract. With the original subdivision map filed in 1950, the development hit the market just two years after racially restrictive covenants were legally unenforceable.

From 1950 to 1972, John Sotelo and his family lived in the Ranch House-lined Streeter Tract.<sup>365</sup> The story of Sotelo's acquisition of the property was a common one for families of color in the postwar period. In the late 1940s, back from the war and working at Rubidoux Cadillac, Johnny Sotelo started looking for a new home in a new tract on Pennsylvania Avenue. He visited the main sales office but was told that no vacancies were available. Back at work, Sotelo relayed this news to a coworker (who happened to be Anglo-American). The coworker, upon visiting the same housing tract, was told there were plenty of vacancies and was presented with a map showing the available homes. No stranger to discrimination, Sotelo did return to the sales offices and asked why they insisted they had no vacancies for him, but plenty for his white coworker. (Over a decade later, when Sotelo was serving on the City Council, the salesman who had refused to sell him a home came before City Council with a land development project. Although Sotelo opposed the project, favoring conservation of the land, he recused himself in the vote, wishing to avoid the appearance of bias.)

Sotelo gave up on that tract, though, and enlisted the help of local African-American realtor and land developer, Eddie Streeter, who was well known among families of color experiencing entrenched housing discrimination. Streeter had an office on the Eastside, located at 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Park Avenue (Streeter's wife Peggie, a successful caterer in Riverside, shared a space with her husband, with "Peg's Party Shop"). Streeter told Sotelo about a tract he was planning on Sedgwick and Pennsylvania Avenues, called Streeter Tract. With the tract owned by Penn Homes, Streeter worked with the American Legion and NAACP in establishing the subdivision.

In 1950, Sotelo purchased one of the first homes constructed in the tract, at 2427 Pennsylvania Avenue. The family lived there from 1950 to 1972. Given Johnny's profession and skills, he requested a double-garage door, which is still there today (one of the few in the neighborhood). Sotelo's daughter Phyllis recalls that, while the neighborhood was initially multicultural, with almost all the families either veterans or active service in the military, white flight began to take hold as an increasing number of families of color moved in.



improvement loans to barrio residents. Assured of the necessary funding for the renovation campaign, neighbors began to unite to help each other remodel and repaint their homes.<sup>367</sup>

Figure 137 "Tangible Example of Civic Pride at Work" in Casa Blanca, *Riverside Daily Press* series

## Casa Blanca - Tangible Example of Civic Pride at Work

**(This is the seventh in a series of articles on minority group housing problems in the city of Riverside.)**

By HARRY LAWTON:

Over a year ago, Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Aguilar lived in a cramped, four-room cottage at 7347 Peters St., Casa Blanca. Although their home could not properly be considered a slum-type dwelling, it was badly deteriorated and an eyesore.

Recently a friend—who had not visited the Aguilars in a long time—dropped by the same address and stared in wonder at their spacious, trimly attractive home.

"When did you build a new home?" he asked.

Gloria Aguilar laughed.

"We didn't!" she said. "We remodeled. Isn't our new house nice?"

In remodeling, the Aguilar family expanded the house into a six room residence, enlarging the building to such an extent the house was completely unrecognizable.

Remodeling of the Aguilar home is typical of the face-lifting the minority group community of Casa Blanca has undergone in recent years.

Casa Blanca is a rapidly changing community. One can't drive through it today without sensing the spirit of accomplishment which permeates its citizenry.

Almost every street reveals the growing sense of civic pride in Casa Blanca residents. New homes are going up, shacks are being razed, old homes are being remodeled and yards are being landscaped.

This is not to imply all of the dilapidated houses have vanished. They are, however, fast disappearing and the few slum type houses still existing will probably be gone in a few years.

**40 Years Old**

Casa Blanca is a community of about 400 homes, established almost 40 years ago as a Mexican-American colonia. It is still primarily a Mexican-American community, but scattered throughout the district are Negro, Korean, Japanese, Indian and a few Anglo families.

Although almost 90 per cent of residents own their

homes, there was little incentive for improvement prior to the end of World War II.

Apathy of Casa Blancans was largely due to the fact that Casa Blanca was a forgotten community. It had never received a fair share of community services. It had no street lights, no sewers, no curbs and gutters, and loans for improvement were practically impossible to get because of lack of civic improvements.

Also operating against improvement was the fact that most residents were employed in agricultural work, where incomes were marginal and unstable. They spent a large portion of each year following crop harvests across the state.

**Better Jobs**

During the war, many Casa Blancans found better job opportunities. And veterans returning home had a new sense of pride in their Mexican-American heritage. They were aware it was not just prejudice, but also defeatist attitudes and feelings of restriction and helplessness which kept Mexican-American communities in a backward state.

The rest of Riverside also took notice of Casa Blanca when a Congressional Medal of Honor was posthumously awarded to the community's Sgt. Ysmael Villegas, who was killed in 1945 leading his unit in a direct frontal attack on six Japanese fox holes. In 1952, Villegas Park was dedicated by the city in his honor.

The changes which occurred in Casa Blanca can not be attributed to any one person's leadership or any one group. They represent combined efforts of a community, which has acquired a firm sense of civic responsibility.

**Drive Failures**

Improvement drives have failed in Riverside's crowded Eastside section because half of the homes are rental units and landlords have been backward in razing sub-standard housing and making repairs.

The single residential zoning of Casa Blanca favored the neighborhood improvement program method. The community lacked the mass of back-lot shacks blighting the Eastside, which is zoned for two family residences.

(Turn to HOUSING, Page B-3)



(Staff Photos by Fred Bauman)

This tiny shack is typical of slum-type dwellings which are rapidly disappearing in Casa Blanca as residents voluntarily participate in neighborhood improvement programs.



The Sylvester Aguilar home, 7347 Peters St., is one of many Casa Blanca residences, which have been attractively remodeled in recent years.

Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 18 August 1956

Historian Paul Viafora noted the catalyzing effect of these improvements and efforts neighborhood-wide:

The success of the renovation campaign and the enthusiasm which it sparked within the Chicano community led to the development of a series of barrio organizations, which focused their sights on improving the community. ...The Casa Blanca Welfare Association was formed to investigate the neglect of barrio citizens by various welfare agencies. ... The Casa Blanca Health Council was founded to 'educate community residents on health and sanitation needs.'<sup>368</sup>

The directorship of the Casa Blanca Welfare Association included representatives from Saint Anthony's Church, the Ysmael Villegas American Legion Post No. 838, American Legion Auxiliary, Home of Neighborly Service, Arlington Heights Citrus Company, and the Victoria Avenue Citrus Association. In addition, by-laws for the association were drafted by long-time Casa Blanca elementary School Principal Mabra Madden, along with Augustine Flores and Joseph Park. By the 1970s, all community services in Casa Blanca, including water, electricity, sewage and solid waste disposal, fire protection services and police services, were provided by the City.

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Discrimination continued to take many forms. In addressing an enduring perception that the working poor were somehow to blame for their own lack of material resources, one article featured a photo of an immaculate home interior, with a Mexican-American mother reading to her three children. The photo caption read, “A deteriorating dwelling is not an accurate index of the character of its habitants. The interior of the building shown was neatly kept despite its shabby exterior.”<sup>369</sup>

Such enduring prejudice contributed to the waves of “white flight” or “panic buying” that took place as residents of color made in-roads into predominantly Anglo-American neighborhoods. One such area was in Eastside, along Angelo Street and Michael Street. Termed a “panic” neighborhood, after minority families arrived, these blocks displayed a total 14 for sale signs in one week in 1956.<sup>370</sup>

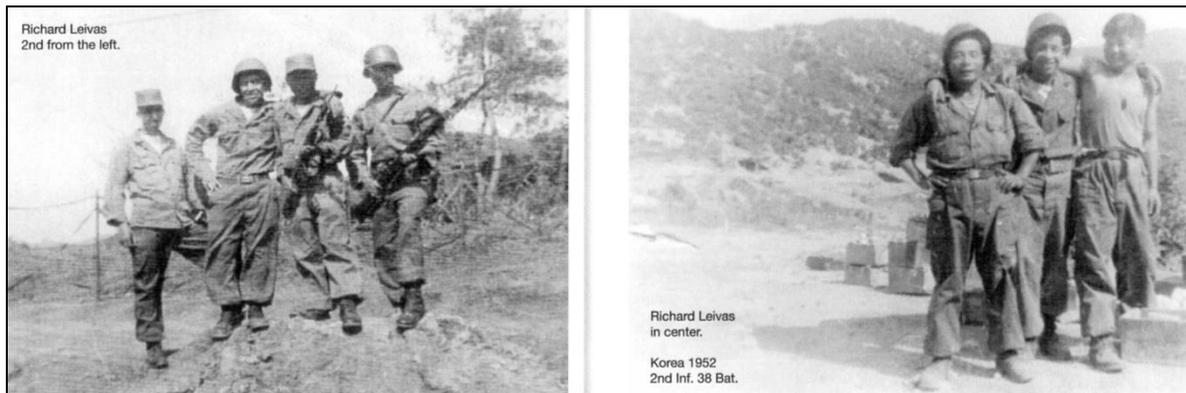
Toward the end of the same article, Lawton interviews several Anglo homeowners in another “transition” zone, on Prospect Street, south of Eastside. In these neighborhoods,

For Sale signs are beginning to disappear on many of these streets. Non-minority families have become adjusted over a period of several years to their new neighbors. ‘The fact that there were Negro and Mexican-American neighbors didn’t factor into our choice,’ stated one homeowner. ‘We wanted a home with a nice backyard and this was it.’

In 1966 and 1968, the Civil Rights Act and Federal Fair Housing Act prohibited discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability. With the 1968 Federal Fair Housing Act, passed just four days after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., the practice of redlining and racially restrictive covenants that had defined racial lines in Riverside’s neighborhoods was declared illegal.

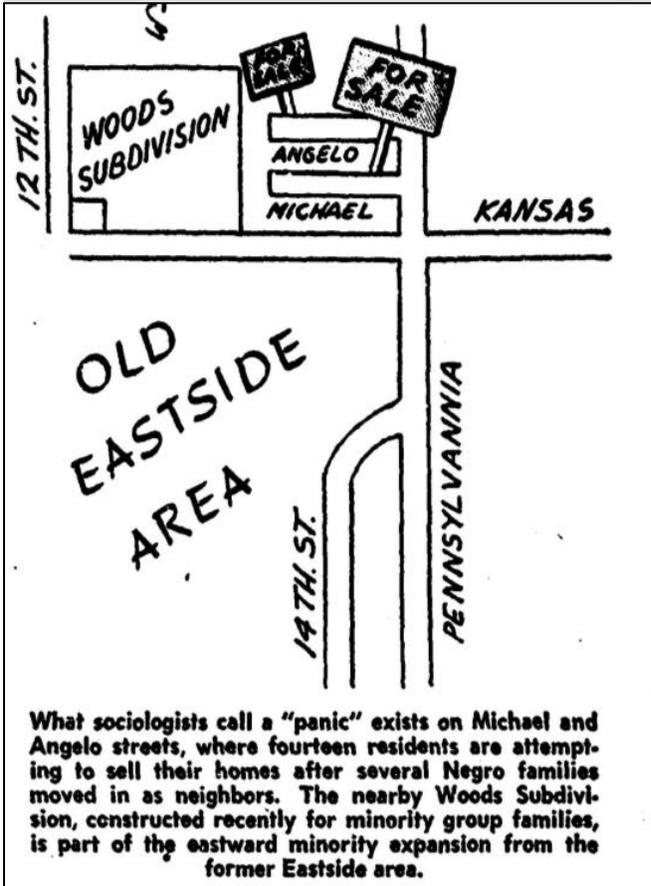
In the 1960s, minority home owners and residents started to experience greater openness and flexibility in where they could live. Such an experience was recounted by Richard Leivas, who, in 1967, moved with his family to a neighborhood he had always loved, Magnolia Center. At the time, Leivas recalls that his family members were the first Mexican-American residents in Magnolia Center. Leivas recalled having had reservations about how the family would be received by the mostly Anglo-American neighbors. His fears were eased, though, as the family was well received in the neighborhood. After 50 years, Leivas still owns his long-time family home on Luther Street in Magnolia Center.<sup>371</sup>

**Figure 138 Richard Leivas, during his service in the Korean War, 1952**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Figure 139 The inviting interior of an Eastside home (top); "White flight" in Eastside, 1956 (bottom)



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 14 August and 12 August 1956

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### Subtheme #3: Education

“Leer es poder.” (Reading is power.)

—Motto of Mrs. Grace Bailón, Casa Blanca Branch, Riverside Public Library

In Riverside and beyond, access to education represented one of the front lines in the civil rights struggle. The focus of these efforts was on equal access to facilities and educational opportunities, and on the curriculum itself. The struggle for educational access grew out of “severe segregation of California’s school and early Americanization campaigns...that required acculturation and left little room for acknowledging Latino contributions to California society and history.”<sup>372</sup>

From the Latino community’s earliest years in California, educational segregation was the norm: “As towns gained ethnic Mexican inhabitants, Anglos typically called for separate public schools ‘on the theory that the Mexican is a menace to the health and morals of the rest of the community.’”<sup>373</sup> The practice was so widespread throughout California that, by 1928, a total of “64 schools in eight California counties had enrollments between 90 to 100 percent Mexican American,” making Mexican-Americans “by far the most segregated group in California public education by the end of the 1920s.”<sup>374</sup> Apart from segregation and unequal facilities and access, the curricula in schools focused on “Americanization” and demeaned and downplayed Latino contributions and culture.

For Latino parents, securing access to quality schools for their children was of critical importance. The movement to eliminate segregated schools gained momentum in the postwar period, as a multi-ethnic coalition came together to apply pressure to the school district.

#### *The Founding Years and “Americanization” Movement*

In the early twentieth century, one factor that shaped the curriculum offered to Latino pupils was the Americanization movement, an outgrowth of the Progressive Era. The official goal of Americanization was assisting immigrants in acculturation, including a wide range of classes in English and job skills. Often run out of churches and schools, such programs were designed to teach immigrant women “English, thrift, time discipline, hygiene, and low-level work skills” intended to prepare them for “the bottom segment of the American work force as low paid, yet loyal workers.”<sup>375</sup>

Some of the earliest Americanization efforts in Riverside focused on the Native-American population. In 1902, a boarding school for Native-American children—the Sherman Institute—opened on Magnolia Avenue.<sup>376</sup>

Among Mexican natives and Mexican-Americans, Americanization classes were often met with distrust. With a focus often on assimilation rather than acculturation, there was a perception that Americanization showed “contempt for the Mexican peasant.”<sup>377</sup>

In 1915, Americanization initiatives were taken a step further with passage of the California Home Teacher Act. The law encouraged assimilation and Americanization through placing a “teacher” in the homes of foreign-born residents: “The home teacher was to work in the homes of the pupils, instructing children and adults in matters relating to school attendance and preparation, sanitation, and in the English language, in household duties such as purchase, preparation and use of food and of clothing and in the fundamental principles of the American system of government and the rights and duties of citizenship” among other things.<sup>378</sup> By the 1920s, in Riverside as elsewhere, this movement helped justify creation of separate “Mexican schools,” as evidenced in the 1924 construction of Independiente School in Arlington Heights.<sup>379</sup>

Figure 140 Sherman Institute “Indian School,” Magnolia Avenue, Riverside, 1902



Source: Sherman Institute Museum

Figure 141 Sherman Institute students at Sunkist Oranges packing plant, ca. 1945 (left); Robert F. Kennedy and staff visiting Sherman Institute, ca. 1965 (right)



Source: Riverside Public Library and Los Angeles Public Library

In the late 1910s, efforts at “Americanization” for foreign-born adults included free English lessons, offered three times a week. Reporting on the program in 1919, the *Riverside Independent Enterprise* noted that “practical work on a good-sized scale is being done at Casa Blanca in Americanizing Mexican residents of that section of the city. ...The attendance is not only large, but is constantly increasing.”<sup>380</sup> At the time, Ira Landis served as principal of the program, with Eliza Penney, Vera Marti, and Ethel Johnson serving as teachers. In addition, as Independiente School opened in 1924, the campus offered a venue for night-classes in English and other aspects of American “citizenship.”

Figure 142 Americanization work at Independiente Night School, 1928

SECTION TWO  
EDITORIAL

# RIVERSIDE DAILY PRESS

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## Americanization Work Conducted at Independiente Night School

### JAPANESE AND MEXICAN WORK

School Proves God-Send To Foreigners—Examples of Work

By MILDRED AYERBELL

Independiente is a Mexican and Japanese settlement in Riverside, located on Indiana avenue and extending from Jackson street beyond Van Nuys.

Last year a desire was expressed by members of this community for the opportunity of education as afforded in night school. The matter was considered by those in authority, but it was not until this year that steps were taken to hold regular sessions of night school in the Independiente school house on Indiana street.

Credit is due to Mrs. Len P. Jennings, principal of the Independiente grade school, to A. N. Whelan, superintendent of schools, and to Ira C. Landis, for their kindly and interested cooperation in starting and supporting the work.

The conducting of the night school was placed in charge of Miss Zeala Wetterli, one of Riverside's city teachers, employed in the third and fourth grades at the Independiente school. Mrs. Wetterli is adequately and efficiently prepared for Americanization work, having pursued courses at the University of California at Los Angeles.

On the night of January 10, 1928, the doors of the Independiente school house were opened to the members of the Mexican and Japanese village. A cordial invitation and welcome were extended to those who wished to enter the halls of learning.

Mrs. Jennings and Miss Wetterli were present, enthusiastic and eager to assist in a truly American spirit all who were seeking to take advantage of the opportunity freely and generously offered to acquire knowledge.

Thirty-one presented themselves the first night, the majority of whom were Mexican laborers; there were a few Japanese working men. They all wanted to learn to use English, to speak in their tongue, and to be able to write it. The desire was earnest and genuine. The good news spread that the

### County Schools Scattered Over Extensive Area

Supt. E. E. Smith Travels Thousands of Miles Each Year

By ARLOFF COSWAY

"Riverside county is as large in area as Rhode Island and Connecticut combined, and one in a hundred of its population lives in this city for 20 years. For supervising the schools of this county, E. E. Smith, county superintendent of schools, is a Polytechnic Journalism student recently. "On school," he continues, "is the mountain, one mile above sea level, and in one district the pupils number one million to 50 miles distant."

It is necessary for this official to travel from six to seven thousand miles yearly to keep in touch with all parts of the county. He believes the office is getting to be one much as business men have fallen in impulse to lead a hand in teaching, and to assist in following their fortunes than otherwise to travel to his birthright of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." But it is "recept upon receipt; bus and the pursuit of happiness." But it is "recept upon receipt; bus and the pursuit of happiness."

By the time the school about all had learned to speak English, and all had learned to write it; some more, some less, to be sure; but all had attained a certain ground possession, and, too, were well on the road to Americanization.

As they shook hands in farewell, the expressions of gratitude and respect were heard for their untiring services. Many voiced the hope that there would be a repetition of the night school next year.

It is that the laborers are leaving for employment elsewhere, following the crops of the country, and that the night school and worthy of recognition and commendation are offered in conclusion of this article.

NIGHT SCHOOL

When I heard the Independiente grammar school had begun night school, it was the afternoon of January 10, Monday. I tried

### Vocational Training Outstanding Feature in Riverside City Schools

By KENNETH HOTELING

Riverside's Poly High Vocational department, under the supervision of W. C. Wigley, is doing wonderful work in training students for the future. The department is well equipped with up-to-date equipment and each week puts out the "poly spotlight," also printing the annual, "The Orange and Green," besides taking care of numerous other minor publications, programs and announcements.

Auto shop. The Print Shop, under the direction of S. O. Moore is provided with up-to-date equipment and each week puts out the "poly spotlight," also printing the annual, "The Orange and Green," besides taking care of numerous other minor publications, programs and announcements.

Students of the Auto Shop are accomplishing much with the help of their instructor, Milford Furkett. The boys have the privilege of using the shop to work on their own cars and thereby receive experience and valuable instruction. The cost of every description of repairs and rebuild here.

A. W. Weston, Machine Shop instructor, has made a record for the machinery there are so many of them are needed for both the boys are greatly handicapped.

J. W. Hinton, Machine Shop instructor, has made a record for the machinery there are so many of them are needed for both the boys are greatly handicapped.

Roy of the Mill Cabinet Shop has made a record for the machinery there are so many of them are needed for both the boys are greatly handicapped.

Source: Riverside Daily Press, 27 April 1928

### Segregation and "Mexican" Schools, 1920s

As the Latino community grew and established its presence as a permanent part of the community, segregation and discrimination in many areas of public life became the norm. This extended to the realm of public education. While the official formation of "Mexican schools" in Riverside arrived in the 1920s, de facto segregation had been the norm from the earliest years.

As early as 1874, the Riverside City School District established a separate district—the Trujillo School District—for residents of La Placita, an action that excluded the early Spanish-speaking and Mexican community from Riverside schools.<sup>381</sup> In 1906, this decision was reaffirmed by the Riverside City School Board, as the board determined that school attendance must be tied to residential location, thereby guaranteeing the de facto segregation that would remain in place until the postwar period: "Born in the political, economic, and social conflicts between Mexicanos and Anglos in the post-Mexican-American War period, the policy and tradition of racial segregation of Riverside schools continued until 1965."<sup>382</sup>

In addition, prior to physical segregation and the construction of "Mexican" schools, Latino children throughout the Inland Empire were separated into special "Spanish" and vocational classes. Housed in the same facilities as Anglo-American students, these courses included a "very different curriculum than the other classes in the schools. According to author Philippa Strum, the boys in the classes often studied 'gardening, bootmaking, blacksmithing, and carpentry,' which were considered appropriate trades for the boys. The girls would be educated in sewing and homemaking."<sup>383</sup>

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**Latino Historic Context Statement**

As the Mexican-American population grew in the 1920s, school segregation and unequal treatment grew more pronounced. By 1927, for example, “about ten percent of California’s public-school population was of Mexican descent. In Southern California counties the percentage of students of Mexican descent ranged from 17 to 36 percent.”<sup>384</sup> In Riverside, in addition to the nativism and discrimination faced by Latino students, some ranchers were reticent to allow their workers’ children to obtain an education: “Education, they believed, would lead the students to become dissatisfied with the idea of working in the fields and result in a less subservient attitude.”<sup>385</sup>

In addition to gerrymandering and other policies, the Riverside City School District adopted the “poll tax” for students. As a tactic ordinarily employed in politics, the poll tax assessed an attendance fee for the children of migrant workers. An \$8.00 fee per semester, per child, was assessed for attending Riverside High School, and \$4.00 fee per semester assessed for elementary school. The fee proved prohibitive for many low-wage agricultural workers.

Another approach that encouraged segregation during the tenure of Arthur Wheelock as Riverside City School District superintendent was granting school transfers to Anglo-American parents, while restricting (or disallowing) transfers for parents of color. One example involved the boundary lines between Lowell Elementary School, which served a predominantly Anglo-American population, and Irving Elementary School, which served minority populations. Anglo students who wished to transfer out of Irving Elementary School were typically allowed to do so, whereas requests for transfers by Mexican-American and African-American students were generally denied. In contrast, by the 1930s, Italian-Americans from Riverside’s ethnic neighborhoods such as Eastside and Casa Blanca had an easier time transferring into Anglo-American schools if they so wished. At the same time, Japanese and Italian children and families had more success in moving out of segregated schools.

In this period, as historian Steven Moreno-Terrill has shown, the practice of separate and unequal became the policy for Riverside’s public schools:

For each designated Mexican school in Riverside, there was a corresponding white school. Irving’s was the Lowell school, Casa Blanca’s was Palm, and Liberty for Independiente. Lowell was built less than two miles away in 1911 at the behest of white parents when Irving’s population of African American and Mexican American pupils grew too numerous for their tastes. Near Casa Blanca, the Palm School was maintained white primarily through rigid district boundary lines.

In Arlington, the Liberty School P.T.A. mothers requested segregation to supposedly relieve overcrowding, resulting in the construction of the Independiente School, the only intentionally created Mexican school of the three. Irving and Casa Blanca had slightly mixed enrollment, though Mexican Americans were the majority.

In all cases, with the complicity of superintendent Arthur Wheelock, district boundary lines were drawn and consistently adjusted to maintain segregation. This functioned to preserve superior educational spaces for whites while containing the Mexican American population.<sup>386</sup>

As segregation became the norm, there were some noteworthy initiatives in the 1930s to bridge the cultural gap. Beginning in 1932, the Spanish department of Riverside Junior College presented an annual program of songs, stories, and entertainment to children at Casa Blanca and Independiente Elementary Schools.<sup>387</sup> Separate programs were prepared for younger and older children, with selections including a mix of traditional Mexican and Anglo-American songs and stories.

## CASA BLANCA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 1913 - 1967

According to the State Office of Historic Preservation, Casa Blanca Elementary School is one of three known extant “Mexican Schools” remaining in California. The school’s origins go back to 1911, when two mothers of Mexican ancestry journeyed to a meeting of the Riverside School District Board of Education. The mothers brought a petition and a request to the board.<sup>388</sup> As historian Frances J. Vasquez noted, “the women’s names were not noted in the minutes, nor in the newspaper report the next day. Yet, these two nameless women are heroes. They—and the 80 signatories on the petition—served as Casa Blanca’s culture bearers in pursuit of their children’s education.”<sup>389</sup>

The issue raised by the two women was described in the Board of Education meeting minutes: “A petition was presented signed by eighty residents of Casa Blanca asking for the erection of a public school in that locality. It appears that more than seventy children of school age reside in Casa Blanca...[and] forty children in primary grades now go to Victoria School,”<sup>390</sup> a school located nearly four miles away from Casa Blanca.

As a result of this effort, a facility for kindergarten and first-grade instruction was established in 1913 in “makeshift classrooms in an abandoned warehouse on Prenda Street,” near the Prenda Packinghouse.<sup>391</sup> While far from state-of-the-art, the facility was more accessible for families and children. In 1918, with the population of Casa Blanca growing rapidly, a repurposed wood-frame facility was relocated to Madison Street. Finally, in the early 1920s, after a fire damaged the original school, a permanent, poured-concrete facility was commissioned by the district at 3020 Madison Street, where it still stands. Classes commenced at Casa Blanca Elementary School in 1923.

The building was designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style by Riverside architect G. Stanley Wilson. For over 40 years, Casa Blanca Elementary School served the neighborhood’s primarily Mexican-American and ethnic communities. The school epitomized the “de facto segregated, separate, and unequal education of Chicano and other ethnic minority children in California.”<sup>392</sup> At the same time, the school provided an important neighborhood center, for cultural and recreational events, community meetings and political organizing. In this way, while reflective of the era of segregation, Casa Blanca Elementary School also represented “the coordinated, successful struggle of ethnic minority communities to fight against racism and unequal education.”<sup>393</sup>

From 1923 until 1965, the principal of Casa Blanca School was Mr. Mabra Madden. Under Madden’s leadership, Casa Blanca School “became famous as more than an educational facility. It became a community social center.”<sup>394</sup> Madden established the Casa Blanca Welfare Fund, which provided economic and material assistance to students and families in need. Under Madden’s leadership, a number of teachers of color were hired, including Hazel Russell, Leo Baca, and Gloria Elizarraraz, all of whom became well respected, important figures in the community. One student at Casa Blanca in the late 1920s and 1930s was Simona Valero. Reflecting on Principal Madden, Ms. Valero recalled that “We couldn’t have asked for a better principal. He was like a grandfather in the community.”<sup>395</sup>

In September 1967, following district-wide desegregation, Casa Blanca students were transferred to other schools within the district. After its closure in 1967, Casa Blanca School was purchased by the Catholic Diocese of San Diego in the 1970s.

Given how central the school had become to the community, some residents felt that Casa Blanca lost part of its identity when the school closed: “That’s a thing I feel is a negative. We were forced to integrate,” said neighborhood activist Morris Mendoza in 2016. “It wasn’t a choice of having two way busing. We no longer had our history. We no longer had our identity. We no longer had a centralized place where parents and community could gather.”<sup>396</sup>

City of Riverside  
**Latino Historic Context Statement**

As of 2018, it has been over a century since the two Casa Blanca mothers visited the Riverside Board of Education to lobby for a school. Research conducted to date has still not identified their names. As Roberto “Tex” Murrillo, a community historian and founder of the organization *Tesoros de Casa Blanca* (Treasures of Casa Blanca), said ““Can you imagine the courage those ladies had? ...You’re talking about 1911, this when you would find signs in Riverside saying, ‘No Mexicans Allowed.’ ...It was a very tough period. Those are heroes to me.”<sup>397</sup>

**Figure 143 Casa Blanca Elementary School, 1923**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Metropolitan Museum

**Figure 144 Casa Blanca Elementary School, 1925**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Metropolitan Museum

**Figure 145** Casa Blanca School principal Mabra Madden, known as “Maestro,” 1935 (left); Casa Blanca School photo, ca. 1935 (right)



Source: *Maestro*, M. Stowe Colvin, 1935 and *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 11 May 2017, Roberto Murrillo

**Figure 146** Casa Blanca Elementary School, circa 1953



Source: Riverside Public Library, *Shades of Casa Blanca*

**Figure 147 Teacher Leo Baca and his fifth-grade class, Casa Blanca Elementary School, 1957**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society

## INDEPENDIENTE SCHOOL, ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, 1924 - 1948

Constructed in 1924, Independiente School was located at 9170 Indiana Avenue in Arlington Heights; the parcel is now occupied by Hawthorne Elementary School. Referred to as a “Mexican school” (though a good number of Japanese and Japanese-American pupils attended as well), Independiente School was established by the Riverside City School Board following pressure from Anglo-American parents of nearby Liberty School, in the Arlington neighborhood. Up until 1924, Liberty School had been largely integrated, though Mexican and Mexican-American children were often separated into special “Spanish” classes.

As in Casa Blanca in 1911, it was a group of Liberty School mothers who presented their case to the Riverside Board of Education:

On May 16, 1922, a delegation of mothers from the Liberty School’s Parent Teacher Association requested of the Riverside School Board that ‘there might be segregation of the Mexican Element now attending Liberty.’<sup>398</sup>

The request was ostensibly based on increasing enrollment numbers at Liberty Elementary School. The pressing issue, however, was a presumption on the part of Anglo-American parents that their children could not receive a quality education in an integrated school. Based on this request, the Riverside School Board constructed Independiente School, just east of the Santa Fe Railroad tracks in Arlington Heights. The school was specifically intended for Mexican native and Mexican-American pupils, though Japanese and Japanese-American students also attended. In arguing for the new school, “white parents made a distinction between the ‘special’ needs of their own children versus those of Mexican pupils.”<sup>399</sup>

In newspaper coverage of the school through the 1920s and 1930s, the “special needs” of Mexican-American pupils was emphasized. In 1933, for example, the *Riverside Daily Press* published an article explaining what the Independiente School was, since “many people have confused Casa Blanca and Independiente schools.”<sup>400</sup> As noted in the article, Independiente School was constructed so that “the needs of the Mexican children could be given special attention” (though it is worth noting that, by 1933, a good number of children with Mexican heritage were American born in Riverside).<sup>401</sup>

As reported in the 10 March 1933 *Riverside Daily Press*, the school had been constructed on a small lot, occupied by a “small four-room cottage and a ‘tin barn,’ so named because it was surfaced with tin. Two portable buildings were placed on the front of the lot beside the little green cottage, and thus Independiente school had its beginning.”<sup>402</sup> With the new facility in place by December 1924, “the Mexican children in the first four grades at Liberty school were transferred to Independiente school,” with Mrs. Lou P. Jennings serving as principal in the early years. In 1927, a classroom building was relocated from Palm Elementary School for use at Independiente.

For over two decades, the segregated school served the children “of orange pickers residing in three camps or clusters of small homes – Campos de Pasqual, Campos de Leonardo, and Campos Modesto.”<sup>403</sup> During the Great Depression, the City’s Kiwanis Club donated milk to school children of Independiente School. By 1938, enrollment stood at just over 70 students.

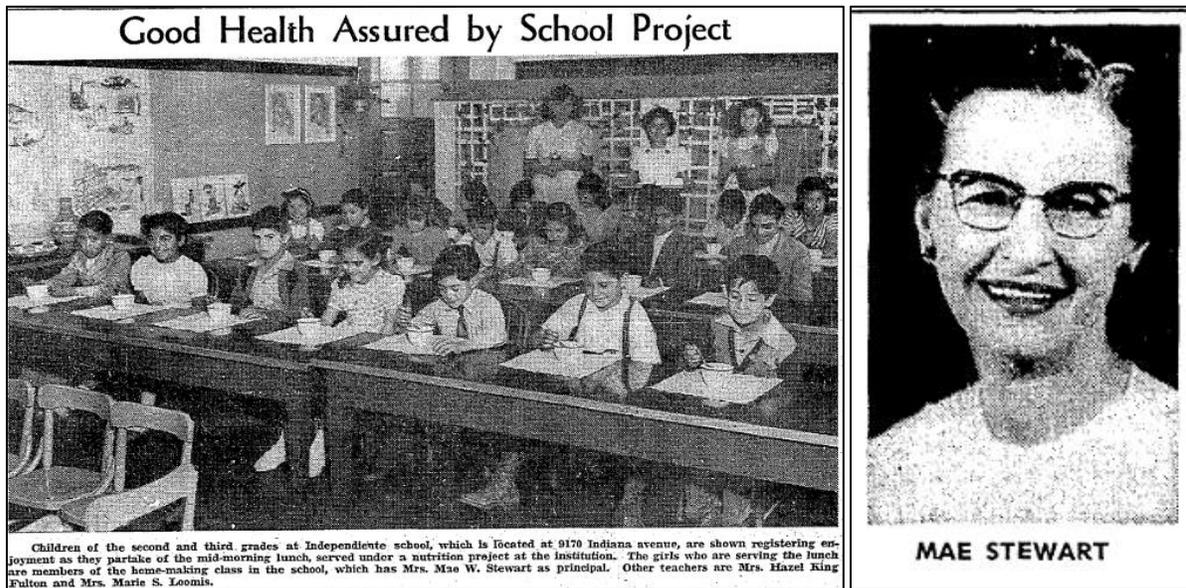
From 1928 to 1948, Mrs. Mae W. Stewart served as principal of Independiente School. A graduate of University of California, Santa Barbara, Stewart served as “the business manager, bookkeeper and contact person for my families for many years... I translated for them, called lawyers, doctors and welfare people. As the years passed, however, this group became more and more a part of the community.”<sup>404</sup> When Independiente School closed, Mrs. Stewart became principal of Jefferson School before joining the district until her 1959 retirement.

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

During World War II, Principal Stewart launched a nutrition program, wherein students in homemaking would prepare nutritious meals for the students and serve them each day at 10am. Offerings ranged from “hot chocolate to soup, beans, hot cereal and fruit.”<sup>405</sup> The school also offered night classes for adults in the community. Beginning in 1941 and through the war years, Independiente School began Victory Gardens, tended to by students and teachers.

Other programs put in place by Principal Stewart included an annual Christmas and Cinco de Mayo spring festivals, attended by parents. As enrollment dropped after World War II, the “Mexican school” closed and re-opened as Hawthorne, a standard elementary school in the district.

**Figure 148 Independiente School nutrition program, 1943 (left) and principal Mrs. Mae Stewart, 1959 (right)**



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 14 April 1943 and *Riverside Independent Enterprise*, 26 June 1959

**IRVING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

Constructed in 1940, Irving Elementary School primarily served Latino and African-American families and students. Irving Elementary School featured a late Moderne-style Administrative and Classroom building, with an auditorium, and a small kindergarten classroom housing in a wood-frame Craftsman bungalow. Prior to desegregation, most African-American and Mexican-American students in the Eastside area attended Irving Elementary School (which had been Thirteenth Street Public School prior to 1940) and University Heights Junior High School before attending Riverside High School.

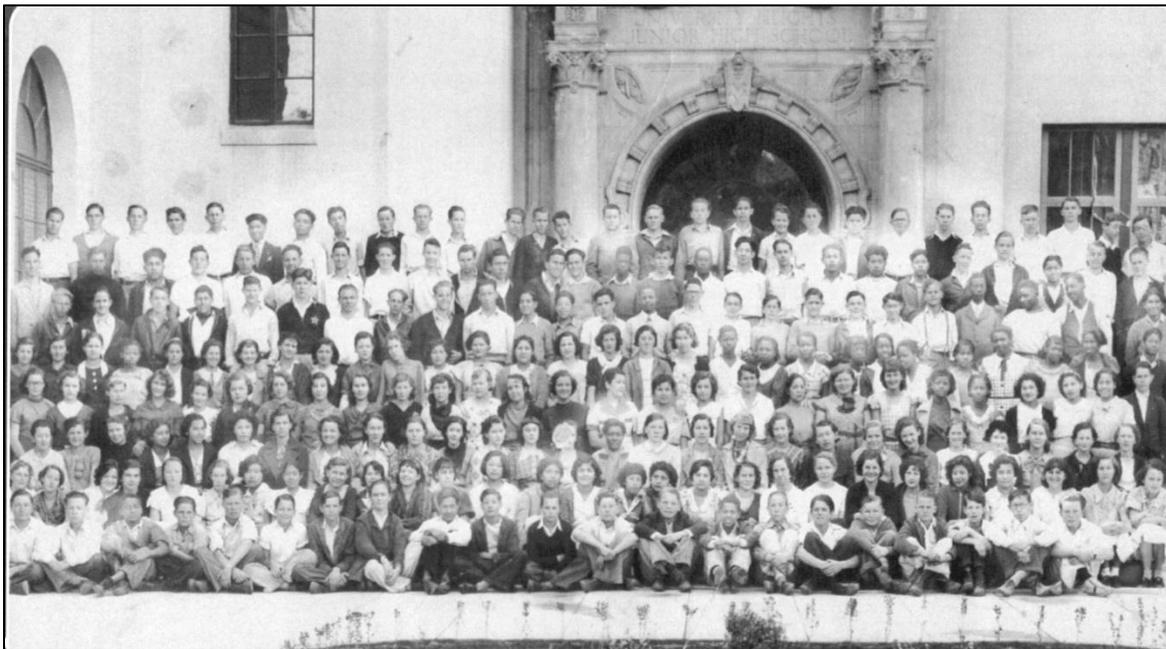
University Heights Junior High School was constructed in 1928 at 2060 University Avenue. Now serving as the Cesar Chavez Community Center, the building is a designated local and national landmark.

**Figure 149 Irving Elementary School, 1951 kindergarten class**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

**Figure 150 University Heights Junior High School, 1935**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Figure 151 Mendez v. Westminster, 1946 (left); Casa Blanca Elementary School, ca. 1955



Source: *Los Angeles Times*, 19 February 1946 and Riverside Public Library, Shades of Casa Blanca

### *Postwar Desegregation and Integration of Riverside City Schools*

With increasing levels of political activism, Latinos and African-Americans, often working together, made important progress in ending segregation in postwar Riverside. The struggle for equal educational access received a boost with the 1946 court case, *Mendez v. Westminster School District of Orange County*. Brought by five Latino parents against schools in Orange County, the court found segregation unconstitutional under the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. This affected at least 5,000 students at the time. Throughout the United States, *Mendez v. Westminster School District* was nationally “significant as a critical test case that successfully used the Fourteenth Amendment equal protection clause in a school desegregation case, setting an important precedent for *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which ended de jure segregation in American schools.”<sup>406</sup>

By 1960, most of Riverside’s ethnic minorities, which comprised approximately 14 percent of the City’s population, lived in highly segregated neighborhoods (resulting in highly segregated schools). Where de facto segregation did not produce racially homogenous schools, gerrymandered attendance boundaries achieved this result instead. In 1961, for example, the Riverside City School District constructed a new campus, Alcott School, and simultaneously redrew attendance boundaries in such a way that Lowell Elementary School would remain highly segregated.<sup>407</sup> An alternative option for parents in the postwar period was the parochial school founded at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church.

In Riverside, coalitions of parents and community groups came together, across neighborhoods and ethnic lines, to protest the new Lowell Elementary School attendance boundaries and to advocate for improved educational facilities and curricula. Among the many groups formed at the time was a study committee for Lowell Elementary School, which included John Sotelo, Jesse Ybarra, Alice Key, president of VOICE (Victory Over Inequities, Civic and Economic), Robert Bland, NAACP Education Committee, Etienne Caroline, staff at the Riverside Police Department; and Jesse Wall, an African-American teacher at Ramona High School.<sup>408</sup> Similarly, in 1952, “multiracial bloc” came together to advocate for improved conditions at Irving Elementary School; the group included Mrs. Lucille Taylor, president of the Irving PTA, Jesse M. Carlos, owner of Carlos Market and president of the Latin American Club; Jess Martinez, Eastside Neighborhood Council, and L.B. Moss, president of the

NAACP. By 1956, the original facility of Irving Elementary School had been demolished and new facilities constructed.<sup>409</sup>

One outstanding and well-respected Latino educator during this era was Dr. Robert Flores. A native of Riverside, Flores attended the City's public schools, including Polytechnic High School, from which he graduated. Dr. Flores received his doctorate in education from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Early in his career, he served as principal of Arlington High School, becoming one of the first Latino administrators in the City's school system. Flores later worked for the district as an administrator and served as coordinator of the Riverside Urban Coalition Task Force, a group that brought together civil rights leaders and activists in Latino and African-American communities to address a range of issues, including education. In later years, Flores and his family moved north to Alisal, near San Jose, California, where he served as Superintendent of the Alisal Union School District until retiring in 1994. Dr. Flores passed away in 2013.<sup>410</sup>

In 1965 a multi-ethnic coalition called the Advisory Committee for Integrated Schools began working toward citywide school integration. One committee member was Richard Roa, a long-time community leader in Casa Blanca who worked at the City and was an active member of the Community Action Group. Other members included Augustine Flores, Mrs. Belen Reyes, Jesus "Jess" Carlos, Percy Baugh, MD, Robert Bland, Mrs. Richard Boylan, Jr., William H. Davis, Truman Johnson, Patricia Kennington, Joseph Palaia, and Donald Renfro.

Overall, Latino parents were divided on the issue of desegregation. Although all would welcome improvements in facilities and classes, the idea of closing convenient neighborhood schools, or allowing their children to be bussed to Anglo-American schools, was viewed with consternation. Nevertheless, in September 1965, a group of parents presented a petition with over 300 signatures to the Riverside City School district, with a "simple and direct" request:

We, the undersigned parents of the Riverside school district, do hereby petition the Riverside School Board to take affirmative steps to improve the educational opportunities for minorities and to eliminate segregation in city schools by closing Lowell and Irving Schools and by reassigning these students to other schools in the area which have previously had less than 10% minority group students.<sup>411</sup>

In addition, "Freedom Schools" opened in September 1965 for students and parents boycotting segregated schools. On the first day of school, approximately 250 students participated in a boycott of Riverside Unified Schools, enrolling instead at the "Freedom School" headquarters at the Masonic Hall, 2943 Twelfth Street. Another 200 students did not attend school.<sup>412</sup>

In October 1965, after many years of lobbying and pressure, Riverside Unified School District announced its intention and plan to desegregate its schools. With this, Riverside

became the first city of its size in the nation to voluntarily and totally desegregate its elementary schools. The desegregation campaign of Riverside schools was developed by Eastside Blacks and Chicanos.

While city government leaders viewed integration with slight support, some opposition, and considerable caution, circumstances prompted them to develop and implement plans for integration with Black and Chicano community groups. ...The evening the petition was presented to the school board, less than three weeks after the Watts riots in Los Angeles, the Lowell School in Riverside went up in flames. Integration leaders pressed the issue, instituted a boycott of segregated schools, and began to organize freedom schools.

The school board acted with unprecedented haste. Working closely with Chicanos and Blacks, the board developed a plan for closing the city's three racially segregated schools and for total desegregation through busing of Riverside's elementary schools by 1967.<sup>413</sup>

Although Freedom Schools were short lived, approximately 250 students participated when classes began in September 1965. Offered in churches and community halls, Freedom Schools were staffed by certified teachers, volunteers, local artist Lee Larkin, who offered instruction in arts and crafts, and "professors of math and psychology from near-by colleges."<sup>414</sup> The Freedom Schools relied on close coordination with University of California, Riverside, which offered a tutorial service and other instruction. Initially the program was provided to students from closed schools at Lowell and Irving, though those outside attendance boundaries were allowed to register. Registration was conducted door-to-door.

**Figure 152 Press-Enterprise coverage of Lowell Elementary School arson and Freedom Schools**



Source: Riverside Press-Enterprise, 8 September 1965 and 14 September 1965

**Figure 153 Application for Freedom Schools, for 1965 boycott of segregated schools in Eastside**

FREEDOM SCHOOL APPLICATION, SEPTEMBER, 1965

Freedom School will be in operation Monday in many churches and halls which have offered their facilities. The many certified teachers who have volunteered their services will be on hand to insure that the students get first-class instruction. Included in the staff are professors of education, math and psychology from near-by colleges. Tutorial service will be available from many of the UCR students who participated in last year's tutorial project at Irving and Lowell. Well-known local artist Lee Larkin will be on hand to provide instruction in arts and crafts. Volunteer parents will assist teachers and supervise recreation.

Registration for the freedom schools will be conducted on a door-to-door basis Sunday afternoon.

People outside of the Lowell-Irving attendance district and those not contacted by volunteers from boycott headquarters should register by calling 682-5466.

Source: Hendrick, 1968, p. 254.

On 18 October 1965, Superintendent Bruce Miller described the district's new approach, and a plan was drafted to end segregation by the Board of Education and Advisory Committee:

In the present instance, we are experiencing a gigantic civil rights movement which is engulfing the entire nation. Overnight communities all across the country are having to re-think through their responsibilities to people. Riverside is not alone in this great social revolution, nor can it hope to turn its head and pretend that change will not take place here.

As every thinking individual knows, schools have changed enormously within the last few years. With great suddenness an educational revolution has and is taking place. We are constantly seeking better answers in raising the level of educational opportunities for all boys and girls in response to the new and ever increasing demands on the educational process.<sup>415</sup>

In order to follow through on this promise, the district had their work cut out for them. As of 1964/1965, no school in Riverside exhibited balance in the ethnicity of its students. Most of the District's Mexican-American students—a total of approximately 1,400—attended just three schools, all of which had minority enrollment levels between 95 to 100 percent (Casa Blanca, 99.8, Irving, 100, and Lowell, 97.2). On the other hand, in half of Riverside's 28 schools in Riverside, minority enrollment was less than 10 percent.<sup>416</sup> With this, these three schools, serving minority populations in their own neighborhoods, were slated for immediate closure.

This integration plan awakened controversy and debate within the affected communities. Many additional petitions were submitted to the school district expressing agreement or asking for variations on these plans or exemptions from closures (including a petition signed by 138 Casa Blanca residents asking that, “under no circumstances” should Casa Blanca School be closed).<sup>417</sup> Although the idea of improved facilities and an enhanced curriculum was positive, Latino students who had attended neighborhood schools were suddenly faced with the prospect of bussing and attending school far from home, in an unfamiliar (and not always welcoming) environment:

A Hispanic mother from Casa Blanca also spoke of the worry that the children “are going so far away” and “what happens when they get sick?” But a concern of Casa Blanca parents and their children was more than the problem of transportation... It concerned facing a different culture; minor activities became major, such as what to pack in lunches for their children who were “used to going home for lunch.”

For Casa Blanca children, being bused meant that parents now had to buy lunch boxes and “they wouldn't dare send tacos to school.” This also meant an added expense for people [who] did not have it and whose children had always come home for a hot lunch.<sup>418</sup>

Despite these protests, Lowell and Irving closed in 1966, and Casa Blanca closed in 1967, with their 650 students sent to other schools throughout the City.

In Casa Blanca, one parent involved in improving the quality and access for education was Mary Ayala. Wife of Glen Ayala, Mary was the Casa Blanca PTA president and school district employee for many years. Although “she had only completed a seventh grade education and considered herself very shy,” Ayala went on to become a vocal proponent of equal educational rights. In addition to her work with the Community Service Organization in Riverside, Ayala spent many years working for the Riverside School District as a district aide. Following desegregation in the mid-1960s, Ayala participated in Title I and Title IV projects to forward educational equality. She assisted in compiling the study, “Teaching Mexican Culture” used by Riverside Unified School District teachers.<sup>419</sup>

*Riverside Unified School District's "Mexican-American History and Culture"*

Ending school segregation was just the beginning. As celebrated *Los Angeles Times* reporter Rubén Salazar noted in 1970, Latino students had always been made to feel ashamed of their culture and language. "Schools have not given us any reason to be proud" of being Mexican, Salazar wrote: "'It has been inculcated' in the minds of grammar school children that the Mexican 'is no good' by means of, for instance, overly and distortedly emphasizing the Battle of the Alamo and ignoring all contributions made by Mexicans in the Southwest."<sup>420</sup>

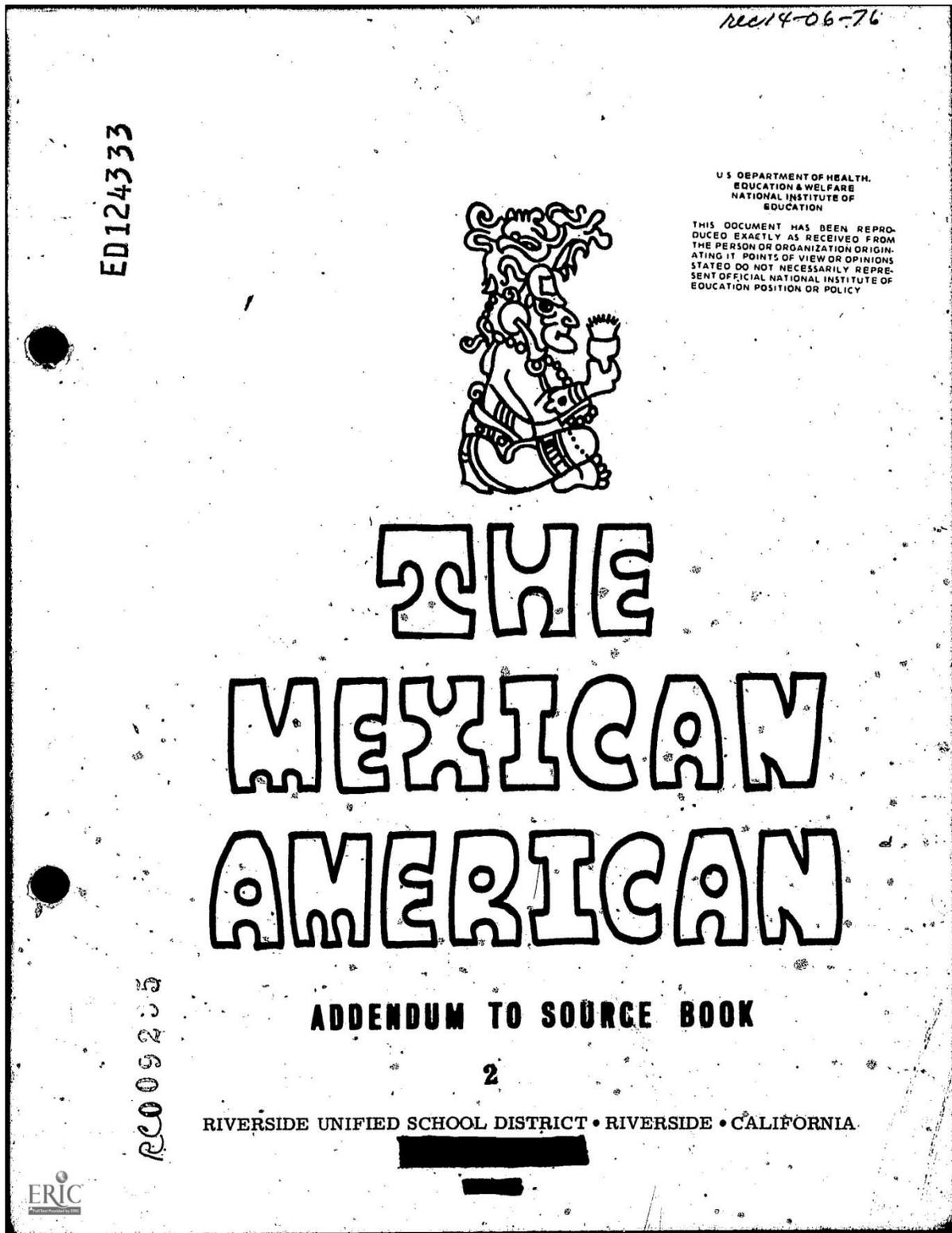
With federal funding through Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Riverside Unified School District launched an initiative to raise awareness and educate both educators and students in Mexican-American history and culture as well as the Mexican-American experience in the United States. (Nationally, Title I funding assisted in the development of "compensatory" teaching materials for underprivileged students.) In 1970 and 1971, with the co-sponsorship of the US Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education, the District commissioned preparation of *A Study Guideline of Mexican American History and Culture*.<sup>421</sup> Written and compiled by Nicholas C. Rodillas, Morris W. Eaton, and Mary Ayala, the book provided a primer for Riverside school teachers in Mexican-American heritage, in order to provide students with "the opportunity to develop an appreciation for and understanding of the Mexican American's role in the development of the United States." In 1971, Rodillas, Eaton, and Ayala followed up with the publication, *The Mexican American: Addendum to Source Book*, which offered supplemental materials for the course.<sup>422</sup>

The publications included a detailed timeline of milestones in the history of Mexico and the United States, which a focus on events that affected Mexican natives and Mexican-American residents. The primer also included an outline of topics for instruction. These topics included "The Sociology of Mexican Americans" and issues such as "The Myth of Mexican American Complacency and Docility," "The Family—An Extended, Pronounced Institution," and "The Mexican American Experience in World War II." Issues explored ranged from Mexican Independence to modern-day Chicano civil rights and the "strides toward social, political, and economic justice." A primer on how to celebrate Mexican holidays, such as Cinco de Mayo, was presented. In addition, readings were presented at elementary, middle, and high school levels, introducing children to figures such as Sor Juana Ines, Benito Juárez, Padre Hidalgo, and Pancho Villa.

This era signaled a change in the level of awareness and activism for Mexican-American students. In 1968, thousands of Mexican-American students in Los Angeles staged walkouts, also known as the "Blowouts," to protest unequal access to a quality education and the lack of instruction in Mexican and Mexican-American history.

For its part, the Riverside Unified School District stated that the "need is obvious" for supplemental instructional materials in Mexican-American history: "In the state of California...there are more Mexican Americans than in any other state. ...In Riverside, during the school year of 1970-1971, there were 3,403 Mexican American students or 13% of the total school population."<sup>423</sup> For this reason, RUSD stated, the "District is committed by both its Superintendent and the Board of Education to include in our courses of study the history and culture of the Mexican American."

Figure 154 RUSD sourcebook for teaching Mexican-American heritage and culture, 1971



Source: Hendrick, 1968

Figure 155 RUSD sourcebook for teaching Mexican-American heritage and culture, 1971

THE MEXICAN AMERICAN -- ADDITIONAL TEACHING MATERIAL

In the summer of 1970, the writing team of Rodillas and Eaton completed a sourcebook entitled A Study Guideline of Mexican American History and Culture. This summer, 1971, this team has attempted to do some additional things that will assist the classroom teacher in better understanding and teaching about the largest minority in the Southwest. We feel that additional background is necessary before the right amount of emphasis can be placed on teaching about Mexican history and culture. The teacher not having this background might ask, "What is the difference between September 16 and Cinco de Mayo?" "Why does Mexico celebrate two independence holidays instead of one like some countries?" There might even be those who would say that Mexican Americans should forget about these two holidays and concentrate only on the Fourth of July. For those who want to know more about Mexican American History and for those who lack sufficient informal background and/or empathy, it is hoped these additional materials will be helpful.

Once this first question is answered, the next question the teacher might ask is, "How does one go about observing and creating an understanding and an appreciation for these Mexican American holidays?" The writing team has tried to fill this vacuum, where it exists, by some suggestions and samples of materials beginning with a P.A. announcement to start the day and continuing with some suggestions as to what various classes might do to carry out these observations.

An additional category that we think will be helpful are suggestions for field trips in our community and near-by areas. For the teacher who wants to take his class to La Placita and/or Agua Mansa Cemetery, he will find a map to assist in his planning. Or, another class might want to see the San Bernardino Asistencia in near-by Redlands. How do you get there? This question is answered in these materials as well as suggestions made for visiting other locations in the surrounding area.

For the history teacher who has majored while in school in the more traditional Anglo American History or European History, it is sometimes difficult to "catch-up" with the new demands in Black History, Mexican American History, and Oriental American History, etc. This obviously takes a tremendous amount of independent study. We hope the "Timeline on the United States and Mexican American History" will serve as a temporary supplement to teaching an integrated course in American History.

Other additional materials to help the teacher include an annotated list of some ten new films on Mexican Americans. These films are available to all teachers in the district. There are additional new books to supplement the bibliography of the Study Guideline of 1970. The readings of Ruben Salazar should serve to help create some dynamic learning sessions in the secondary schools. The suggestions for plays and satires you will find both humorous and useful in dispelling stereotypes about the Mexican American. It is hoped the teacher will study these materials and select those which he can relate to and feel comfortable with.

*Spotlight on: Ernest Z. Robles, Teacher and Administrator*

As the era of civil rights and desegregation began, one important teacher, advocate, and administrator in Riverside was Ernest Z. Robles. A native of Riverside and former student at Independiente School, Robles was an “educator, war hero and principal founder of the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund,” which left “an indelible mark on both his community and his profession.”<sup>424</sup>

At the age of 19, Robles joined the US Marine Corp and was dispatched to Korea as a rifleman. He received the Purple Heart for bravery in action. Upon his return to the United States, Robles eventually enrolled in and completed his studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, graduating in 1960. By 1965, Robles served as principal of Casa Blanca Elementary School, after long-time Principal Mabra Madden retired and before the school closed in 1967. After this time, Robles continued working for the District as an equal education specialist. As Robles recalled in 1972,

‘When you measure attainment of a segregated school and an integrated school, you’ll find a difference in education between a barrio school and the rest of the city... And this ties in with the lower socio-economic and class status which can be perpetuated if no desegregation keeps the school segregated. ...

I went to segregated Independiente School, on the site of Hawthorne School today... When you have gone through a segregated school experience, the effects really come after you leave.’<sup>425</sup>

Robles administered school desegregation programs with the US Office of Education. Reflecting on the experience, Robles said integration in Riverside had helped the Mexican-American children “by opening up an opportunity for a better education to some kids who have not have had this opportunity in barrio schools.”<sup>426</sup>

Robles dedicated his career to addressing and correcting such unequal access to education. After leaving Riverside, Robles worked as Assistant Regional Administrator for Equal Educational Opportunities with the Department of Education in San Francisco.

In 2001, Robles was honored with UCLA’s Community Service Award. In bestowing the honor on Robles, the UCLA Alumni Association stated that:

His extraordinary achievement is the formation and development of this remarkable scholarship fund. Starting the effort out of his own home in 1975, he headed the organization for more than 20 years, awarding \$30,000 the first year to a cumulative total of \$31 million awarded to more than 30,000 outstanding college students. ...For his incredible contribution to the Hispanic community and to the general community of California, Robles has been honored at the White House by President Ronald Reagan, George Bush and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton.<sup>427</sup>

Figure 156 Ernest Z. Robles, with Sargent Shriver and Jaime Garcia, 1966



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 27 August 1966

*University of California, Riverside and Early Initiatives in Diversity***CHICANO STUDIES DEPARTMENT AND DR. CARLOS CORTÉS**

A scholar of Brazilian history, Dr. Carlos E. Cortés joined UC Riverside in January of 1968.<sup>428</sup> Born in 1934 to a Mexican-American father and Anglo-American mother, Cortés grew up in Kansas. His grandfather came to the United States in the 1910s to escape the tumult of the Mexican Revolution. During his college career, Cortés completed degrees at the University of California, Berkeley (Bachelor of Arts in Communications and Public Policy, 1956); Columbia University (Master of Science in Journalism, 1957); The American Institute for Foreign Trade (Bachelor's Degree, 1962); and the University of New Mexico (Master of Arts Degree in Portuguese and Spanish, and Doctoral degree in History in the late 1960s). In January 1968, when he accepted the faculty position at UC Riverside, Cortés became one of two Mexican-American faculty members at the university, along with Eugenio Cota-Robles, a microbiologist hired in 1958.

In this era, calls had been increasing for the establishment of an ethnic studies curriculum and department. UC Riverside had become a center for early Chicano student activism, in a movement that gained momentum in the mid-1960s. The UC Riverside chancellor at the time, Ivan Hinderaker, took note of this mounting pressure nationwide and at UC Riverside, as well, as calls for an ethnic studies department had also been made by the local chapter of the United Mexican American Students (UMAS) group. By 1969, the time had arrived to move forward.

Chancellor Hinderaker invited Cortés and Cota-Robles to join a committee tasked with designing a new ethnic studies department. As Dr. Cortés recalls, their first recommendation was dividing the department into separate branches for Mexican-American Studies and African-American Studies. (A name change in the mid-1970s christened the Chicano Studies Department.)

On 1 July 1969, the new Mexican-American Studies program at UC Riverside was officially launched, with classes beginning in the fall semester. With this, UC Riverside became one of the first universities in the United States to establish a Mexican-American Studies program. For the better part of the next three decades, Dr. Cortés served as department chair (beginning in 1972) and faculty member.<sup>429</sup>

When the department began, Cortés recalled, the broader field was still in its infancy. There was no Chicano studies field per se, no classic texts or literature, on which to establish the new curriculum. This tabula rasa presented an opportunity to fashion an original approach. As designed by Cortés and his colleagues, the objective became providing a collaborative, cross-departmental program, with units, courses, and perspectives by a wide range of scholars and specialties, including historians, sociologists, writers, and psychologists. Cortés and other faculty and administrators also looked to other pioneering Chicano studies departments in California (in San Diego, California State University, Los Angeles, and California State University, Northridge). In the early 1970s, Cortés designed UC Riverside's first Ethnic and Area Studies requirement for the College of Arts.

With a student body drawn primarily from the Inland Empire and surrounding desert communities and with Riverside's rich, century-old Mexican-American heritage to draw on, the timing and place for UC Riverside's Chicano Studies Program were ideal. The department at UC Riverside became a hub for Chicano scholarship and activism. Student work and faculty research recuperated the myriad stories of the Latino experience in the region. For his Chicano history course, Cortés assigned a project for students to explore and document their own family histories, including oral histories with family members, photographs, and background research.

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

Under the leadership of Cortés and other faculty, the output of undergraduate and graduate students in the UC Riverside Chicano Studies Department was as voluminous as it was influential. Where there had been little or no scholarship on topics specific to the Latino experience throughout (and beyond) the Inland Empire, students and faculty of the Chicano Studies, ethnic studies, and other departments explored a range of topics on the Mexican-American experience in the region, not only contributing to but helping define the broader field of Chicano studies.

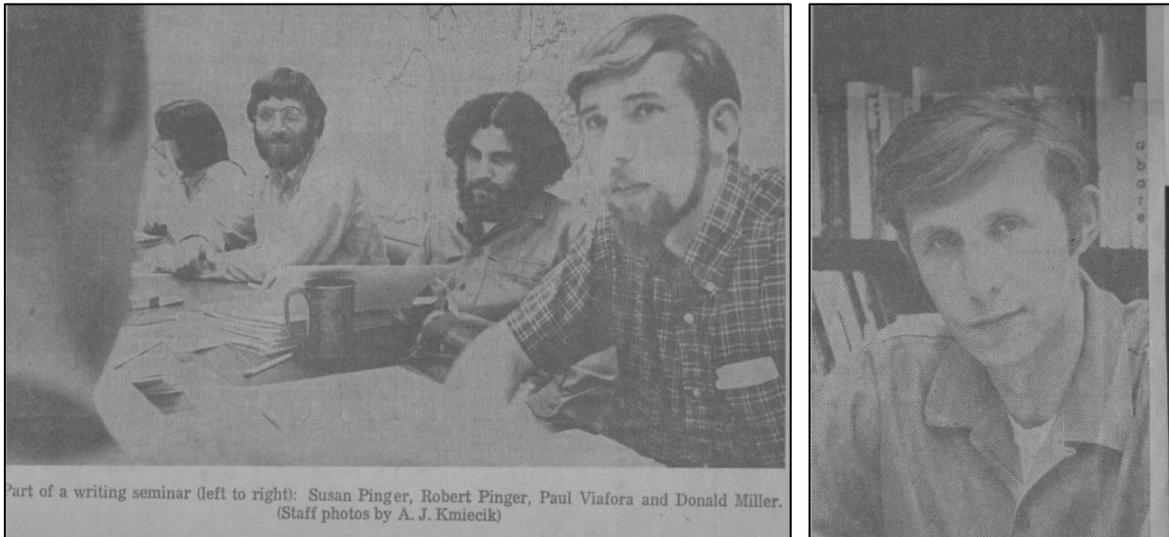
One example is the research of Eastside native, Dr. Raymond Buriel, in the area of “language brokers.” While Buriel was a student at UC Riverside, he worked extensively with Dr. Cortés. Cortés recalled the originality and value of Buriel’s contribution to the field:

What I found most interesting and revealing was [Buriel’s] pioneering research on Language Brokers. Those are young children who, because of their knowledge of both English and their home language, become de facto intermediaries between their non or limited-English-speaking parents and U.S. society. Ray did insightful research on the important roles that these children play, as well as the complexities and stresses of this involuntary role.<sup>430</sup>

The first chair of the department was Dr. Alfred Castaneda. In 1972, Dr. Cortés was named chairperson of the Chicano Studies Department. His goal for the department was to “provide service to students, community at large, not only local; and to the university. We want to prepare students to learn and develop skills to work in the community.”<sup>431</sup> Cortés clarified that “the department is not an ideological builder but that student activism can tie in with their area of study.”<sup>432</sup>

That same year, Dr. Jesse McDade became the new chair of the African-American Studies Department. Dr. McDade’s goals were similar to those of Dr. Cortés, to establish a cross-disciplinary program that would serve the department’s own students as well as the broader university community. Serving African-American students in a similar capacity as the Chicano Student Programs was the Black Student Union. In 1984, the two departments were combined to form UC Riverside’s Ethnic Studies Department.

**Figure 157 Carlos Cortés and UC Riverside graduate students (Paul Viafora, author of a pioneering history of the Mexican-American experience in Riverside, appears second from right), 1971**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Public Library

## UC RIVERSIDE CHICANO STUDENT PROGRAMS

UC Riverside's Chicano Student Programs department was founded in 1972, at the request of new Chicano Studies Department chair, Dr. Cortés. When Cortés was appointed as department chair, he recalled, his one condition was that a dedicated staff and department be established for an accompanying Chicano student services division.<sup>433</sup> At the time, UC Riverside had 345 Latino students; by 2012, that number had grown to over 6,100 Latino students, or approximately one-third of the total student population.<sup>434</sup>

Chancellor Hinderaker agreed, and UC Riverside Assistant Dean of Students, Alberto Richard Chavez, was selected to establish and run the Chicano Student Programs department. Chavez went on to lead the program, which provided a "home away from home" for Chicano students, for 15 years, until 1986.<sup>435</sup> For nearly 50 years, Chicano Student Programs has sponsored a wide variety of outreach and community building events and houses over 20 student-run organizations.

In addition to his work at UC Riverside, Alberto Chavez advocated for Chicano students and encouraged policies that would facilitate and encourage their transition to college. In 1968, Chavez participated on the Citizens' Advisory Committee for Riverside City College. As part of this committee, Chavez forwarded the following recommendations in 1968-1969: (1) Special classes should be established to prepare Mexican-American youths for GED exams; (2) Counseling should be provided to Mexican-American youth who are "undecided and confused about academic aims and opportunities"; (3) Scholarships to Chicano students should be increased; (4) Tutorial services should be provided to Chicano students, with tutoring provided by Chicano college students on a paid basis by Riverside Community College; (5) A Chicano youth organization should be organized.<sup>436</sup> Chavez also worked closely with community activists Josephine Lozano and Steve Moreno, among others, to advocate for Mexican-American students within the Riverside Unified School District. Before his work as director of Chicano Student Programs, Chavez was the assistant Dean of Students at UC Riverside.

In the early years, the Chicano Studies Department and Chicano Student Programs occupied adjacent office spaces in the second floor Library South Wing of the Tomás Rivera Library. One remnant of the early offices of the Chicano Studies Department and Chicano Student Programs is a 1975 wall-length mural by local artist Chano Gonzalez. Funded through a National Council of Arts grant, the mural is a rare surviving work reflecting the early years of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement in Riverside.

**Figure 158 Alberto Chavez, UC Riverside Chicano Student Programs director, circa 1975 (left); Chicano Student Programs mural (right)**



Source: "Chicano Leaders Seek Probe into City Hiring," n.d. and UC Riverside Chicano Student Programs

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

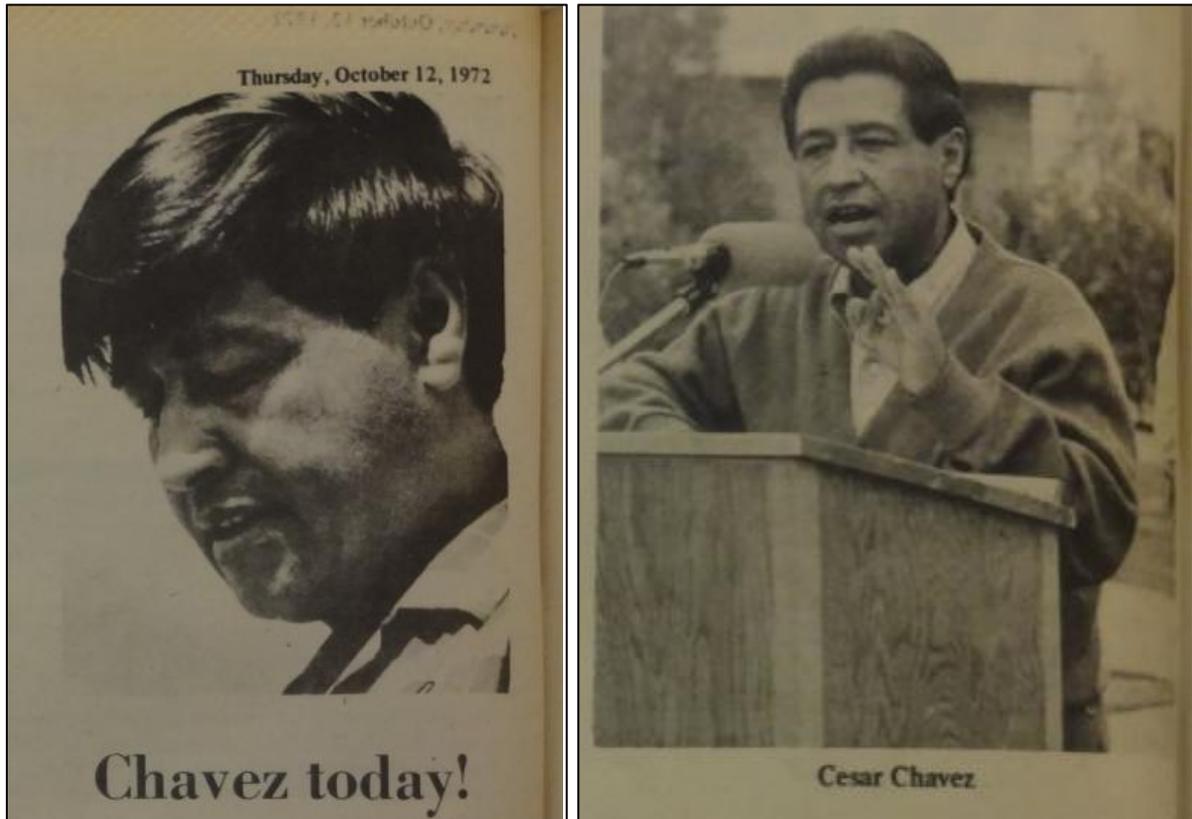
After the Chicano Student Programs office relocated, the mural was preserved, removed, and reinstalled at the current program offices in UC Riverside’s Costo Hall. (Costo Hall is named for pioneering Native American scholar and historian Rupert Costo, a national figure in the Native American Civil Rights movement and founder, along with his wife Jeannette, of the American Indian Historical Society. A donation from the Costos established UC Riverside’s Costo Library of the American Indian.)

Together, the Chicano Studies Department and Chicano Student Programs have provided an important academic and social network that has supported and nurtured generations of UC Riverside Latino scholars. Other Latino faculty members who participated in these early years were Dr. Cota-Robles and Dr. Marigold Linton. Drs. Cota-Robles and Linton were cofounders of the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science.

Since its founding in 1972, the Chicano Student Programs and affiliated MECHA has produced a student newspaper, *Nuestra Cosa* (Our Thing); newspaper archives are housed in the UCR Tomás Rivera Library. In the late 1980s, Chicano Student Programs founded Radio Aztlán (88.3 FM in Riverside), which broadcasts Chicano music through the greater Inland Empire.

In the 1960s, UC Riverside became a center not just for Chicano scholarship but also Chicano civil rights. In November 1968, Cesar Chavez spoke at UC Riverside. Chavez again visited UC Riverside for a talk on 12 October 1972 on the Tower Mall, in opposition to a proposition on the state ballot at the time to establish restrictions for agricultural workers strikes and boycotting activities.

**Figure 159 Cesar Chavez at UC Riverside’s Tower Mall, October 1972, in MECHA-sponsored event**



Source: *The Highlander*, October 12 and October 19, 1972, cited from Ramirez, 2018, pp. 228-229

**TOMÁS RIVERA, CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE, 1979 TO 1984**

UC Riverside was home to another major milestone for the University of California system. In 1979, the University of California system appointed its first non-Anglo-American chancellor, Tomás Rivera, who led UC Riverside until his death (at the age of 49) in 1984. A native of Texas born in 1935, Rivera was the son of Mexican migrant farm workers. He received his education at Southwest Texas State University, where he received his Bachelor of Science and Master’s of Science in Education, and at University of Oklahoma, where he received a doctorate in Romance Literatures. The Rivera Library served as the first home to the Chicano Studies Department and Chicano Student Programs office.

**Figure 160 Tomás and Concepción Rivera, ca. 1980 (left); Rivera (second from right), speaking to President Ronald Reagan, Committee on Higher Education, 1983 (right)**



Source: University of California, Riverside, Special Collections and Calisphere

Figure 161 Symposium in honor of Tomás Rivera, UC's first Latino chancellor, 1988

# TOMÁS RIVERA: A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL HUMANIST



*The Searchers*  
*We are searchers and  
we will continue to search  
because our eyes still have the passion of prophecy:*  
Dr. Tomás Rivera,  
1935-1984

**A CONFERENCE ON UCR'S LATE CHICANO CHANCELLOR**  
April 22, 1988  
University of California, Riverside  
University Club

The Tomás Rivera Conference is FREE for those who wish to attend. The only charge will be for the Tomás Rivera Banquet to be held at the University Club at UCR. The tickets are \$10 dollars per person. FOR MORE INFORMATION: (714) 787-3233, Dr. Kerry Oyerzun, Chairperson or Armando Martinez, Archivist.  
The Tomás Rivera Conference, University of California, P.O. Box 5900, Riverside, CA 92517. Make checks payable to: UC REGENTS

**Keynote Speakers**  
UC Regent Vilma Martínez  
Senator Art Torres

**Distinguished Guests**  
Carlos Monsiváis  
Dr. Luis Leal

**8:00-8:25 am PROGRAM**  
**Registration**  
Coffee & Donuts, Boyd Lounge

**8:25 am Welcoming Remarks**  
Dr. Van L. Perkins, Acting Executive Vice Chancellor

**8:35-9:00 am Opening Address**  
Carlos Monsiváis, Mexico City Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes

**9:05-10:00 am PANEL I**  
Dr. Gabriel Hernández, Moderator, Mills College, Oakland  
Dr. Tomás Arciniega, President Cal State Bakersfield  
Dr. Michael Ollvas, J.D. University of Houston  
Dr. Flora Ortiz, UC Riverside

**10:30-11:55 pm PANEL II**  
**Administration**  
Mr. Robert Nava, Moderator, UCR  
Dr. Andres Jimenez, UC Berkeley  
Dr. Eugene Cota-Robles, Office of the President, UC System  
Mr. Joe Baca, President San Bernardino Board of Trustees

**12:00 pm Inauguration**  
University Library Lower Patio  
Dr. Rosemary S.J. Schraer, Chancellor  
Ms. Vilma Martínez, UC Regent  
Mr. James Thompson, University Librarian  
Ms. Concepción Rivera, UC Riverside

**1:00-2:00 pm Lunch Break**

**2:05-3:30 pm PANEL III**  
**Literature**  
Dr. Tomás Ybarra-Fausto, Moderator, Stanford University  
Dr. Luis Leal, UC Santa Barbara  
Dr. Roseara Sanchez, UC San Diego  
Dr. Juan Bruce-Novoa, Trinity University, TX

**3:30-5:00 pm PANEL IV**  
**Civic Leadership**  
Mr. Aurelio Aguirre, President Moderator, Riverside Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
Dr. Armando Navarro, President Instituto de Justicia Social  
Dr. Arturo Madrid, President Tomas Rivera Center  
Dr. Bert Corona, Cal State Los Angeles

**5:30-6:30 pm Break**

**6:30-9:30 pm No Host Cocktails Banquet**

**Special Music, University Club Dining Rm.**  
Welcome: Dr. Rosemary S.J. Schraer

**8:30 pm Key Note Address**  
Mr. Art Torres, Senator

**9:15 pm Rivera Documentary Video Clip**

Source: University of California, Riverside, Special Collections

## Subtheme #4: Building the Civil Rights Movement

“Not only are we registering voters and awakening their sense of civil responsibility, but we are [also] awakening others to the fact that these people are loyal Americans.”  
—Cesár Chavez, on the 1960 Casa Blanca voter registration

“The salvation of the Mexican-American is to be involved politically. We must support a candidate or have a Mexican-American candidate ourselves.”  
—Josephine Lozano, ca. 1970<sup>437</sup>

In the face of discrimination, Latinos mobilized throughout California to fight for equal access and inclusion in civic and political life. Previous sections detailed the many community-based groups that provided mutual support, assistance, and advocacy to Latinos in Riverside. Nationwide, as well, early groups founded in the 1920s, such as the League of United Latin American Citizens, or LULAC, saw new chapters open throughout the United States. LULAC is one of the important early groups that still maintains a presence in Riverside, with the 2010 establishment of Chapter 3190. Led by long-time community leader Gilberto Esquivel, LULAC Chapter 3190 advocates for the community through civic and political engagement, community building events, student scholarships, and health fairs and clinics. LULAC recently played a key role in successful efforts to establish the 41<sup>st</sup> Congressional District in California, a redistricting effort with great importance to the Latino community.

In the postwar period, generally speaking, direct political engagement became the focus, either in running for office or getting out the vote. Voter registration helped increase representation among Mexican-Americans throughout the US. On a related front, Latinos led a successful effort to allow Spanish-speakers to take the US citizenship test in Spanish. In Riverside, this change allowed for more than 400 Mexican-Americans to “successfully pass their citizenship test, making them eligible to vote and receive pensions.”<sup>438</sup> In this way, during the early years of the Civil Rights Movement, “electoral politics and voter mobilization assumed greater importance, signifying the accumulating power of Latinos.”<sup>439</sup>

### *American GI Forum*

As scholar Richard Griswold del Castillo observed in his 2008 study, *World War II and Mexican American Civil Rights*, “No other postwar organization typified the new energies being brought to civil rights action more than the American GI Forum, an organization that was formed by returned veterans specifically to gain equal treatment.”<sup>440</sup> The American GI Forum became a key civil rights group advocating for a range of issues in the postwar period, including education, equal opportunities, an end to discrimination and segregation in schools, employment, and civic life.

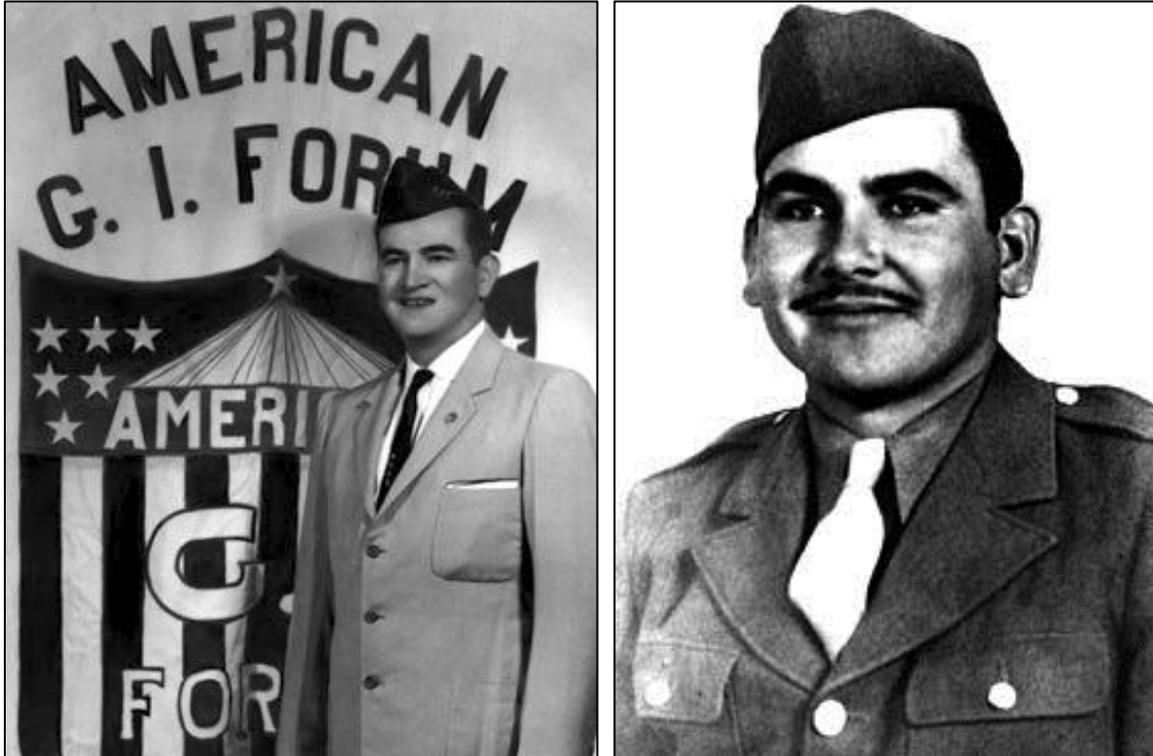
The American GI Forum was founded in March 1948 in Texas by Dr. Hector Perez Garcia, a Mexican-American physician World War II veteran, and civil rights advocate. Like Sotelo and so many Riverside veterans, Dr. Garcia “returned from World War II proud of his accomplishments and eager to participate in the American Dream. To his dismay, he witnessed and experienced what Hispanic servicemen across the country were encountering in the pursuit of the American Dream—deeply rooted prejudice.”<sup>441</sup>

One catalyzing event for the American GI Forum occurred in 1949, in Texas, when a funeral chapel refused to allow a wake for a decorated Mexican-American veteran of World War II, Felix Longoria.<sup>442</sup> Longoria had been killed in action in the Philippines, and his widow decided to bring his

body home to Three Rivers, Texas. The outrage caused by this act of discrimination against a Gold Star family reverberated throughout the Latino community in the United States.

Garcia contacted Texas Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, who was able to arrange for a burial for Longoria with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. With this, Garcia and the American GI Forum became a powerful advocate for equal rights throughout the United States and a catalyzing force for the Civil Rights Movement.

**Figure 162 American GI Forum founder, Dr. Hector Garcia (left); Felix Z. Longoria, Jr. (right)**



Source: Humanities Texas, [www.humanitiestexas.org](http://www.humanitiestexas.org).

For his work with the American GI Forum, Dr. Garcia was presented with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1984 from President Ronald Reagan. (As of 2018, the American GI Forum remains the largest federally-chartered Hispanic veterans' organization in the United States, with chapters in 40 states.)

A similar act of discrimination catalyzed Riverside veterans of World War II into founding their own branch of the American GI Forum. As noted previously, when Riverside veterans John Martin Sotelo, Juan Acevedo, and Augustine Flores, among others, tried to join the American Legion Veterans Post in Fairmount Park, they were denied entry when "white members of an American Legion outpost in Riverside...felt compelled to maintain an exclusionary policy toward Chicano veterans":

'When we...were ready to join the American Legion here in Riverside, we probably had 150 to 200 veterans that wanted to be a part of it, and, at that time they told us...that we had different cultures so why don't we form an American Legion [outpost] of [our] own.'<sup>443</sup>

With the national American GI Forum already a few years old, Sotelo, Acevedo, Flores, and fellow veterans established the Riverside chapter of the American GI Forum in 1951. In Riverside, the

American GI Forum provided opportunities for local Latino veterans to unite beyond neighborhood lines. Up until that point, neighborhood-based American Legion Posts kept the groups somewhat separate. The Riverside American GI Forum helped veterans to unite and combine forces.

For many years, the group offered broad-based advocacy and support to the community on a variety of fronts. As historian Paul Viafora wrote, though the group was primarily a “civic and social organization,”

The GI Forum also emphasized the need for more and better education, better jobs, and political power for Chicanos. It succeeded in placing a Chicano on the local draft board, backed another, Joseph Aguilar, in his successful bid for election to the Riverside Junior College board, and became involved in Ernest Lopez’s victorious campaign for a seat on the Riverside School Board.

In addition, Augustine Flores, a prominent Chicano businessman who dominated GI Forum for years, was appointed to a seat on the city Planning Commission.<sup>444</sup>

In Riverside, the American GI Forum became a political and civil rights group of considerable influence. The group was active in recruiting and electing Latinos to political office, in supporting a range of community initiatives. In 1965, the American GI Forum led efforts in Riverside to collect and distribute food, clothing, and toys for children of striking grape workers in Delano, California, led by César Chavez. The toy drive delivered much needed resources to striking families during Christmas of 1965.

**Figure 163 Riverside chapter of the American GI Forum, at Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, 1963**



Source: Courtesy of Phyllis Sotelo Salinas

Figure 164 Riverside chapter of the American GI Forum and group logo, circa 1965



Source: Courtesy of Luana Ybarra Hernandez

*Spotlight on: Augustine A. Flores, American GI Forum (b. 1926, d. 1987)*

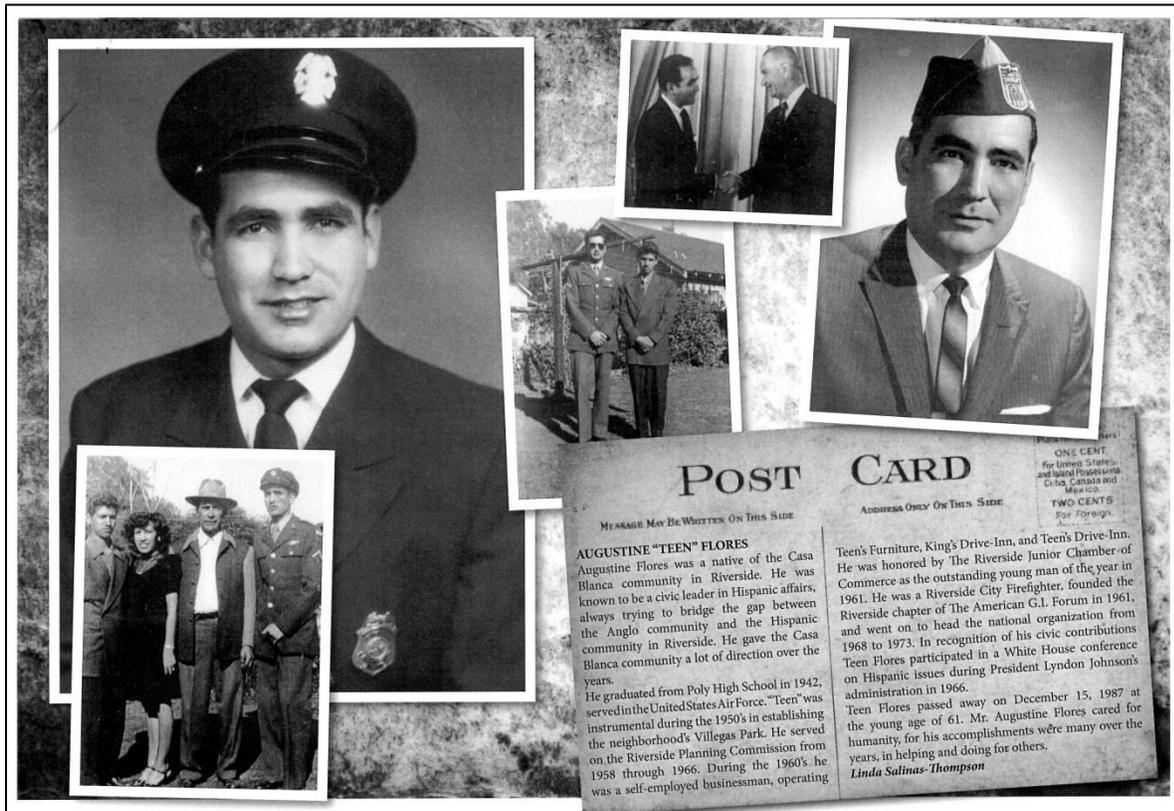
Born in the 1920s in Casa Blanca, Augustine A. Flores was a prominent Mexican-American business leader, World War II veteran, founding member of the American GI Forum, and a civil rights leader.

After graduating from Riverside’s Polytechnic High School in 1942, Flores joined the US Air Force and served in World War II. Known as “Teen,” Flores became known for a leadership style that sought to “bridge the gap between the Anglo community and the Hispanic community in Riverside.”<sup>445</sup> Among his many contributions to the Latino community was worked to establish Villegas Park in Casa Blanca. Between 1958 and 1966, Flores served on the Riverside Planning Commission. With this, along with John Sotelo, Flores became one of the pioneering Latinos to enter political service in Riverside. In 1965, Flores participated on the Advisory Committee for Integrated Schools, a multi-ethnic group of community members working for citywide school integration.

Flores was also a pioneering business owner in the Latino community. By the 1960s, his businesses included Teen’s Furniture, King’s Drive-Inn, and Teen’s Drive-Inn. In 1961, he received an award from the Riverside Junior Chamber of Commerce. In 1966, Flores was invited by US President Lyndon Johnson to participate in a White House conference on national Hispanic affairs.

His experience as a World War II veteran was formative for Flores. For many years, he was a central, powerful presence in the American GI Forum, serving as head of the organization between 1968 and 1973, as well as an active civic leader for the Latino community.

**Figure 165 Augustine Flores, World War II veteran, Latino business owner, and co-founder of American GI Forum**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

*Community Service Organization and Voter Registration Drive, 1960*

The Community Service Organization (CSO) was formed in 1947 in Los Angeles, “to empower Mexican Americans to secure civil rights through neighborhood-based activism.”<sup>446</sup> In 1960, the CSO’s Los Angeles branch was led by a young César Chavez. That year, the CSO and Chavez focused their efforts on Riverside County and Casa Blanca, in “a massive campaign to register hundreds of Riverside County’s Latin-American citizens” in advance of the November 1960 elections:

According to Cesar Chavez of Los Angeles, a representative of the organization, the Riverside County drive will be concentrated in those areas with a large Latin population, including Riverside, Corona, Perris, Indio, and Coachella. But the main concentration this year is on Casa Blanca, where more than 90 per cent of the population is Latin. This makes it the most heavily Spanish-speaking community in the county.<sup>447</sup>

Helping Chavez was a small army of long-time community leaders and organizers in Riverside’s Latino community. Among them was Simona Valero, CSO chairperson, Mrs. Mary Ayala, CSO county chapter president, John Sotelo, as well as local leaders from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Throughout the spring of 1960, volunteers worked in neighborhoods throughout Riverside to register voters. The main event was a door-to-door campaign. For Riverside, Chavez had “two lines of attack” in Riverside to register voters:

His assistants, who have been made deputy registrars, will be at churches on Sunday, grocery stores, movie houses—places where large groups of people come. And for those missed by this effort a door-to-door canvassing will be undertaken.<sup>448</sup>

**Figure 166 Mrs. Frank Diaz and Mrs. Glen Ayala register a citizen of Casa Blanca to vote, 1960**



Source: Riverside Public Library, Shades of Riverside

The CSO had first attempted to encourage registration in Casa Blanca in 1947, though these efforts were not as successful. As Chavez noted in the 8 August 1960 issue of the *Riverside Independent Enterprise*, “the main problem is apathy. In many cases the people don’t feel they are a real part of the American community.” He continued, saying,

‘It’s a very odd illness, something that started many years ago when these barrios were permitted to set up independently... They were encouraged by the dominant white community. Now, they have these feelings of being ostracized. This we’re trying very desperately to break. ...Not only are we registering voters and awakening their sense of civil responsibility...but we are awakening others to the fact that these people are loyal Americans.’

Their efforts paid off. As of April 12, one week before the registration deadline, the CSO reported having registered more than 1,200 voters. The American GI Forum registered 150 new voters, and the NAACP another 500.<sup>449</sup>

The early 1960s heralded not only a significant increase in Latino and minority voter registration but also the end of the City’s at-large voting system. John Sotelo later described the uphill battle he had in his own City Council campaign:

‘We used to have elections at large in the city of Riverside, and we [Mexican Americans] never had representation... We found out that all the city officials...the mayor and council members were all from within a four block area [of] downtown Riverside...We fought to change the charter...That was the first I ever heard of gerrymandering.’<sup>450</sup>

These efforts to reform electoral policy in Riverside were successful, the City reverted to its former district-based electoral system. With this, seven new wards were established. John Sotelo won a seat on the City Council for Ward 2. “By the time he left office, at least one Mexican American or African American had a place on twenty-eight of the twenty-nine boards and commissions maintained by the city.”<sup>451</sup>

Figure 167 Community Service Organization, voter registration drive in Casa Blanca, 1960



Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 18 August 1960

### *Community Action Group*

The Community Action Group was established in the 1960s as a multifaceted, community-based civil rights and advocacy group. Riverside had at least two chapters, one in Casa Blanca and another in Eastside.

In Casa Blanca, one early leader of the group—and the first president—was Casa Blanca native, Richard Roa. As a young man, Roa attended school in Riverside, then enlisted in the US Army, where he advanced to the position of corporal and served in Japan and Korea as part of the 40<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.<sup>452</sup> Upon returning to Riverside, Roa started working for Helgeson Buick before beginning his career in community service. Roa was appointed Community Relations Coordinator for the City of Riverside and became the first president of the Casa Blanca Community Action Group.

In those early years, one of the frontlines in the struggle for Latino civil rights regarded the community's relationship with the local police department. After a number of high-profile cases involving extreme police abuse and racial profiling, Roa and members of the group, such as community organizer Robert Roman, worked to address these problems. Roa and members of the Community Action Group stayed active in this struggle for many years. In 1992, as vice chair-elect of the Community Action Group, Roa told the *Los Angeles Times* that “the police [in Riverside] take it upon themselves to be judge, jury and executioner. To me, the police are just like another gang.”<sup>453</sup> Roa continued his tireless efforts on behalf of the community for nearly a half century.

Roa passed away in 2004. In a congressional tribute to Roa, US House of Representatives member Joe Baca said that, through Roa's work with the Community Action Group, he had helped to

redress the problems of an area that needed his caring touch. At Casa Blanca, Richard found himself fighting for improved housing, increased business development, and the creation of important neighborhood public services. He always advocated for those in need and was beloved by those around him.<sup>454</sup>

A current, long-time member of the group is Casa Blanca native, Morris Mendoza. Reflecting on nearly 50 years of work by the group, Mendoza said in 2011, “We had to organize to ask for what we thought we needed in the community.”<sup>455</sup> Mendoza began his community involvement after a notorious incident in 1975, when Riverside police used excessive force to break up a party in Casa Blanca. As a result, the police department was found guilty of federal civil rights violations. The event was symptomatic of a long period of police abuses toward Latino and ethnic communities and a resulting lack of trust on the part of the community.<sup>456</sup> Still active in Casa Blanca, the Community Action Group has relied on the support and work of many community leaders and members over the years.

### *Unity Leagues*

Throughout Southern California, Unity Leagues were launched by the efforts of Ignacio Lopez, editor of *El Espectador*. Lopez is said to have gathered a group of 50 Mexican-Americans in Pomona and Ontario, “most of them veterans of World War II,” to form the Unity League, “an organization dedicated to increasing Mexican American political power and awareness in advancing civil rights.”<sup>457</sup> As of 1946, the director of the Casa Blanca Unity League was long-time resident Mrs. Belen Reyes. The Unity League participated in a wide variety of community initiatives, including voter registration and neighborhood improvement projects, such as the street lighting campaign led by Augustine Flores in 1956.

Unity Leagues “emerged as a significant organization in Southern California, proliferating across the San Gabriel Valley and San Bernardino citrus belt. Predating the Community Service Organization, the first Unity League formed in 1946 in Pomona. While the Leagues spoke out on issues like police brutality and segregation, their main focus was voter registration and campaigning for minority candidates.”<sup>458</sup> While the Unity Leagues gradually lost momentum, the group did “inspire the formation of the Community Service Organization in 1947, a more long-lived organization that emerged as the leading civil rights advocacy group in Los Angeles and the state.”<sup>459</sup>

### *Mexican American Political Association (MAPA)*

Founded in 1959 by Edward Roybal, Bert Corona, and Eduardo Quevedo in Fresno, the Mexican American Political Association, or MAPA, was a state-level organization that “grew out of the many Mexican American grassroots groups throughout California that tried to elect their own representatives to local and state government.”<sup>460</sup> As scholar Richard Griswold del Castillo wrote,

MAPA grew out of the frustrations born of the electoral defeats of Mexican American candidates. MAPA was a nonpartisan political association that was based on the premise that increased political representation and voice for Mexican Americans would influence legislation and policy in the arena of civil rights.<sup>461</sup>

MAPA sought to bring more Mexican-American voters in American electoral politics, both as voters and as candidates. During the organization’s height, there were 90 local branches of MAPA throughout California. Throughout the postwar period, there was a high level of overlap and collaboration between organizations. Community Service Organization workers collaborated closely with MAPA, for example, and more often than not, the organizations shared many members and leaders. Riverside had a very active chapter of MAPA. Based on interviews with MAPA members from Riverside, historian Paul Viafora wrote that

the nucleus of this new group consisted of former members of the Mary O’Keefe Democratic Club and GI Forum. In part, the founding of MAPA reflected the disillusionment of some Chicanos with the GI Forum’s low level of political activity and their design for more progressive leadership. The basic goals of MAPA are increased educational opportunities for Chicanos, registration of potential Chicano voters, and bringing out the vote. MAPA also created a small scholarship fund with grants of \$150-200 going to the most outstanding Chicano and Chicana high school students each year.<sup>462</sup>

MAPA was also a factor in John Sotelo’s 1963 campaign for city council. In later years, the Riverside chapter of MAPA remained active, participating in the 1994 student walk-outs and other activities.

### *The Chicano Civil Rights Movement*

The era of reform that defined the 1960s brought a new energy and a new generation of Latino leaders to the fore in Riverside (and beyond). The Civil Rights Movement resulted in increased political power, access, and legislative victories for Latinos and communities of color throughout California and the United States. In addition, though primarily focused on politics and social issues, “the agenda of the movement...also generated a cultural renaissance in art, music, theater, and literature.”<sup>463</sup> In the political realm, by the late 1960s and into the 1970s,

the drive for full political rights reached a high point... Activists became more confrontational and assertive in demands for full inclusion into the American political system, and Latinos began scoring a series of significant electoral victories and establishing a permanent presence within the political parties.<sup>464</sup>

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

The Chicano Civil Rights Movement spanned a wide range of issues. Groups across the political spectrum worked to increase the community’s political presence and power and to embrace and celebrate Chicano identity and heritage. As before, central issues included fighting for an end to discrimination, in schools, places of employment, and public spaces. This work was buoyed by civil rights legislation of the 1960s. In addition, Latinos in Riverside and throughout California fought for an end to the practice of gerrymandering. This was a long, uphill battle. As Latino Councilman John Sotelo said with regards to gerrymandering,

‘If you don’t have good representation, it is much easier to be discriminated against. And it is much easier for the legislature to act out this discrimination because they never see the victims of their programs and policies. But it hits just the same. Whether it’s the teacher in the classroom or the assemblyman in the legislature, discrimination affects the Mexican-American.’<sup>465</sup>

As a result of these lobbying efforts in the early 1970s, a reapportionment bill was passed by the California state legislature in 1971. The bill was then vetoed by Republican Governor Ronald Reagan. This issue remained central for the Chicano civil rights movement, however. As Jesse Ybarra said,

‘The power structure...had it so well worked out that the Chicano was kept out of the mainstream of politics. If Chicanos are to be included, we’d better make some rearrangement in reapportionment, because we don’t have our share of Mexican-Americans in the state legislature.’<sup>466</sup>

Through the 1960s and 1970s, civil rights battles increasingly included issues of equal opportunity and hiring as well as police relations with the community. High-profile cases of police abuse against Latinos and minorities catalyzed the movement’s involvement in this respect. In 1979, the CBS television program “60 Minutes” aired a segment on Casa Blanca; in the program, Riverside police department members made derogatory comments about Casa Blanca. With this, community leaders such as Jesse Ybarra, Leo Lueras, and Joe Cantaoi spoke out and met with Riverside Mayor Ab Brown. Through the years, discrimination and police abuse remained pressing problems for the community. However, that Ybarra, Lueras, and Cantaoi were at the table with the Riverside City Mayor signaled a new era in Chicano representation and political influence.

**Figure 168 From left, Joe Cantaoi, Leo Lueras, and Jesse Ybarra meet with Riverside Mayor Ab Brown regarding “60 Minutes” segment on Casa Blanca, 1979**



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 19 January 1979; courtesy of Luana Ybarra Hernandez

### THE INFLUENCE AND INSPIRATION OF CÉSAR CHAVEZ AND “EL MOVIMIENTO”

The Chicano Rights Movement gathered momentum through the mid-1960s, inspired in part by the work of revered labor organizer César Chavez and the United Farm Workers (UFW). For his part, Chavez had a long association with the City and County of Riverside. In 1960, as an organizer for the Community Service Organization, Chavez worked to register Latino voters in Casa Blanca. Chavez visited UC Riverside on two occasions, and in 1968, Chavez and the UFW worked to organize Riverside County farm workers. The UFW grape strike arrived in Riverside County in the late 1960s. Chavez inspired Latinos throughout California: “Acknowledged by many to be the spiritual father of the chicano movement, Chavez symbolized and sparked the urge for a better life.”<sup>467</sup>

By the mid-1960s, as historian Paul Viafora noted, “the Inland Empire began to feel the effects of the growing Chicano movement”:

When César Chavez’s farm workers initiated a labor strike against the grape industry in Delano, California, the call of the national grape boycott reached Riverside. Hundreds of local Chicanos, mostly young, rallied behind Chavez’s banner. Numerous local rallies and demonstrations were held to lend moral and financial support to the strikers.<sup>468</sup>

In June 1993, after Chavez passed away, the City Council voted to change the name of the Riverside Community Center to the César E. Chavez Community Center. In 2012, the City broke ground for a memorial honoring the legacy and life of Chavez. Designed by artist Ignacio Gomez, the bronze memorial was dedicated in 2013 on the mall on University and Main, near the UC Riverside/California Museum of Photography. At the dedication of the memorial, City Council member Andy Melendrez praised the symbolism of the memorial design, commenting that:

This monument will show César moving forward in an upward direction with a strong stride, humbly clothed and the farm laborers rising behind him. The farm worker families are transitioning from a stooped position to one where they are reaching upwards towards César and the sky.<sup>469</sup>

**Figure 169 César Chavez Memorial, City of Riverside**



Source: City of Riverside

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

In Riverside, by the late 1960s, the spirit of the Chicano civil rights movement had spread throughout the community. At UC Riverside, along with the new Chicano Studies Department and Student Programs, young people founded their own groups. A branch of United Mexican-American Students (UMAS) was established at UC Riverside in 1968. As *The Press-Enterprise* noted in 1972, “Although the group’s primary emphasis was on education—especially the recruitment of high school Chicano students to UCR—it also stressed community-wide activism to improve every aspect of brown existence.”<sup>470</sup> UMAS was instrumental in advocating for a Chicano Studies department at UC Riverside and sponsored a number of events. The group later aligned itself with a broader students’ movement known as *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán* (Chicano Student Movement of Aztlán, or MECHA). With young people taking the lead, the movement for Aztlán signaled a shift toward a full embrace and appreciation for Mexican-American heritage and identity:

Rallying around the concept of ethnic pride and identification, these groups concentrated on trying to make reforms in the educational system, which they considered basically unresponsive to the needs of Chicano students. These young activists confronted school administrators with a number of demands to improve the quality of education they were receiving.<sup>471</sup>

The idea of Aztlán, “a nation, a union of free pueblos” for Mexican-Americans became a touchstone in the movement. The symbol of Aztlán was based on “a profound sense of pride, of homeland,” as Cecilia Rios, a county probation officer explained. “It’s an identity that says I’m a chicana and I’m proud of where I came from.”<sup>472</sup> This symbol for Mexican-American identity wasn’t just for the students. Explaining the idea to *Press-Enterprise* reporter Douglas Martinez in 1972, Grace Bailón, head librarian of the Casa Blanca Branch of the Riverside Public Library, said that “Aztlán” symbolizes the chicano ‘struggle in the sense that we know there has to be change. We all must be recognized. The Bill of Rights isn’t just for certain people, it’s for everybody.”<sup>473</sup> For many Latinos in Riverside, Aztlán “is a realization by Mexican-American people, a crystallized pride and mission to correct injustice,” said Leo Lueras.<sup>474</sup>

Even as a greater sense of empowerment and identity were emerging, a number of crises during the Civil Rights Movement rocked the Latino community and launched new groups in response. One well-known group that represented the new generation of activists was the Brown Berets. Founded in East Los Angeles to serve and protect Latino communities, the approach of the Brown Berets was more assertive and unafraid of confrontation. One well known and respected leader of the Brown Berets in Riverside was Gilberto Chávez. Casa Blanca’s Brown Beret chapter was established in 1970 in response to several police killings of Mexican-American youths. Historian Paul A. Viafora cited the 1969 killing of Jesse Salcido by a Riverside police officer as a direct catalyst in the formation of the Brown Berets. The Brown Berets became a vocal, active force in addressing and correcting police abuse, racial profiling, and continuing discrimination.

In this era, a number of other local groups emerged from the Chicano Civil Rights Movement. One group founded in Riverside was the Brown Baggers, established in mid-1969. During the height of the Chicano movement, the Brown Baggers met each week at the community Settlement House, to discuss issues affecting the community:

Average weekly attendance is between twenty and thirty. Brown Baggers look for solutions to problems facing the Chicano community, provide information to the Chicano community on employment, job rights, and local welfare and social agency services, and provide increased communications between governmental agencies and Riverside Chicanos.<sup>475</sup>

The groups and voices that emerged in Riverside’s Chicano Civil Rights Movement were varied and represented a diverse range of opinions, approaches, ages, and socioeconomic positions. According to Chicano historian Paul A. Viafora, one of the most important groups to emerge during the Chicano Civil Rights Movement was a group that brought them all together, Coalition de la Raza. Founded in 1971, the group brought together “nearly two dozen Riverside Chicano organizations ranging from conservatives groups like the Progresistas to activist groups” such as MECHA and the Brown Berets.<sup>476</sup>

In 1973, Viafora took stock of progress made in the Chicano Civil Rights Movement to that point. While much work remained to be done, one “encouraging note” cited by Viafora was the increase in Latinos and African-Americans in political office. “By 1972,” Viafora wrote, “Chicanos and Blacks held 16 per cent of the city’s appointive positions, whereas prior to World War II only one person of Spanish surname (Estudillo) had ever held an appointive office.”<sup>477</sup> Although progress in employment and housing integration was slow, Viafora observed, “Chicano political involvement has born fruit”:

John Sotelo, first elected to the City Council in 1963, was reelected twice and served until 1973. Augustine Flores, a former G.I. Forum leader, served on the City Planning Commission, while Joseph Aguilar and Ernest Lopez were elected to the boards of trustees of Riverside City College and the Riverside Unified School District Board, respectively. Finally, MAPA succeeded in placing a Chicano on the local draft board.<sup>478</sup>

This progress has continued to the present day. As of 2018, just as one example, John Sotelo’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward City Council seat is currently held by Councilman Andrew Melendrez, Jr., son of decorated World War II veteran Andrew Melendrez, Sr., and protégée of John Sotelo.

**Figure 170 Long-time City Councilmember Andrew Melendrez, Jr. and John Sotelo (left); Sotelo and family, ca. 2008 (right)**



Source: *El Chicano Weekly*, 3 September 2009

Figure 171 Mrs. Simona Valero, in 2011 in Casa Blanca



Source: Fuentes, KCET, 2011

Figure 172 Photo collage and homage to Simona Valero, February 2012



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

*Spotlight on: Simona Valero, Life-Long Community Organizer, Activist, and Social Worker*

In 1990, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors proclaimed February 21<sup>st</sup> as Simona Valero Day, in honor of this Casa Blanca native's life-long service to her community and the citizens of Riverside County.

Valero was born in Casa Blanca on 21 February 1922, to parents who had come to Casa Blanca in circa 1910, escaping the tumult of the Mexican Revolution.

For many decades, Valero has been a champion of and fighter for the Latino community. The focus of her early work was Casa Blanca, where she was born and raised. She attended Casa Blanca Elementary School in the 1920s and 1930s during an era of segregation. During World War II, Valero capitalized on an opportunity to leave agricultural work and accepted an aircraft assembly job. This job led to an office-based administrative position, and in the postwar period, Valero combined her knowledge of her community and its needs, and the professional skills she had acquired, and became a social worker and administrator, serving the community for many years.

In the 1960s, as the County's Economic Opportunity Board was searching for community leaders to staff its Casa Blanca Community Services Center, Valero was one of two people selected, along with Mrs. Georgette White. She served in this position, as well as a Social Service Assistant, for 25 years. She continued her education with extension classes at UC Riverside.

Valero's civic involvement and commitment included (and includes) works in the "PTA, Home of Neighborly Service, Casa Blanca Villegas Center and Park activities and innumerable other activities in Casa Blanca, as well as the Riverside Inland Epilepsy Foundation."<sup>479</sup> In addition, along with her husband, John, Valero was an instrumental leader and organizer of the *Sociedad Progresista Mexicana*, for nearly four decades.

Valero was one of the many community members who lobbied for the creation of Villegas Park and Community Center, a project that came to fruition in the postwar period.

As a child, Valero's family belonged to the Casa Blanca Presbyterian Church, on Madison Street. Remembering the difficult days of the Great Depression, Valero recalled that the Presbyterian Church was active in distributing food and clothing to community members in need. Later, as she recalled in 2015, she joined the Pentecostal movement, attending the Church of God on Diamond Street.

Valero and her husband John were married for 46 years before John passed away. The couple raised their four children in Casa Blanca, in the family home on Diamond Street. The Riverside County Board of Supervisors recognized Valero for the "exemplary life of service to all people whose lives touched hers." At the age of 96, Valero still lives in, contributes to, and loves her community of Casa Blanca.

Figure 173 John Sotelo, US Navy, World War II, circa 1943



Source: Courtesy of Phyllis Sotelo Salinas

*Spotlight on: John Martin Sotelo, "Father of the Eastside Community"*

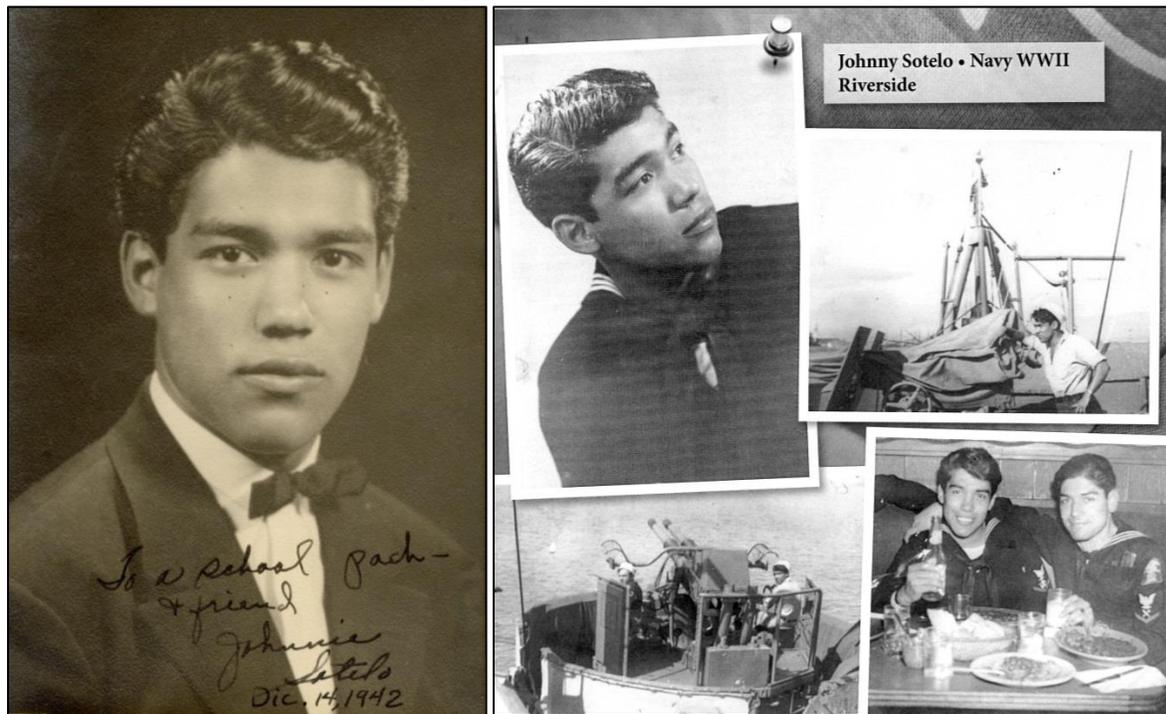
Born in 1925, Sotelo was the son of Meliton Sotelo and Feliciano Escobedo.<sup>480</sup> Meliton arrived in Riverside in 1910 from Guanajuato, Mexico. After working at a cement plant and saving, Sotelo's father opened a grocery store, which served the Eastside community. The Great Depression hit the family hard, however, and the Sotelo family grocery store went out of business. With this, Sotelo's family joined the ranks of itinerant farm workers. Sotelo described the exhausting travel schedule:

The navel oranges in Riverside would start in late November... 'til May; the Valencias came in early May... 'til June. And then... a lot of [farm workers] took off, as my mom did with [her] children... Some went to Hemet 'cause Hemet was [the] apricot center in the area... From there... we went to pick grapes in the Fresno area... and then we could go... to San Jose to pick prunes.<sup>481</sup>

During these years, it was common for Mexican-American children of farm workers to attend school through junior high, then to begin working. Sotelo was an exception, graduating from Riverside's Polytechnic High School in 1943. Sotelo excelled in technical classes such as auto shop, which he later translated into his first job. During his senior year, he was the only Mexican-American selected among a group of students for an apprenticeship with Riverside auto dealers. He earned a position with the Rubidoux Cadillac dealership, where he remained until enlisting in the US Navy to serve in World War II. Upon his return, Sotelo married Ramona Estrada. The couple had four children.

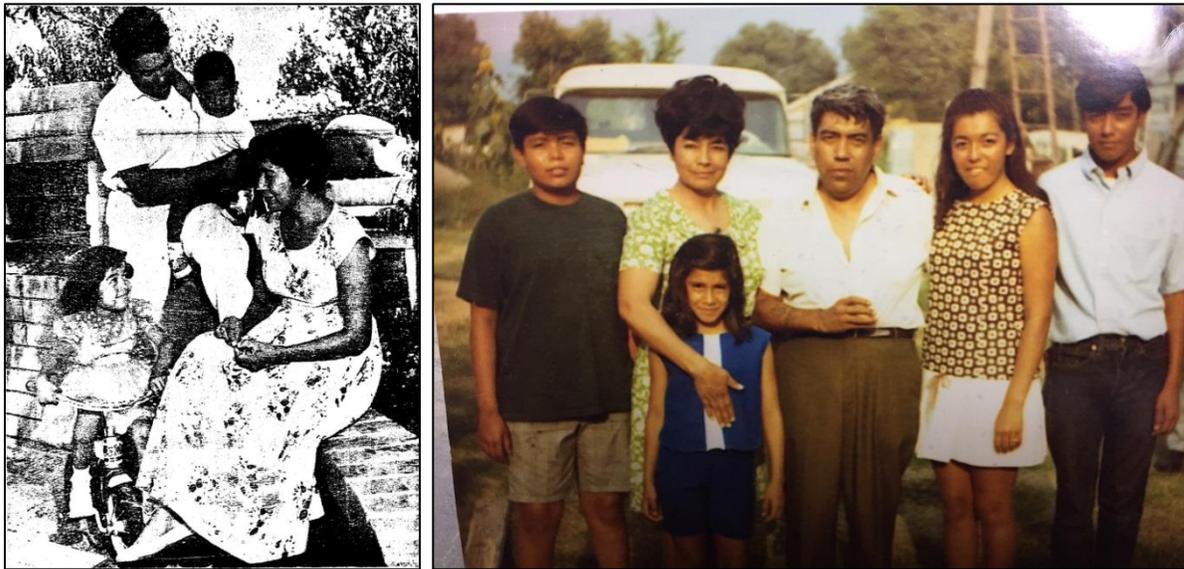
Upon returning from the war, Sotelo visited his former employer at Rubidoux Cadillac and was promptly asked to don a pair of coveralls so he could help with some car repairs. Sotelo remained on at Rubidoux Cadillac until the mid- to late 1950s. In 1957, Sotelo capitalized on an opportunity to start his own business, a Shell gas station, auto towing company, and shop at the corner of 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Victoria Avenue (now an Arco Gas Station), which Sotelo named Victoria Shell Station.

**Figure 174 Johnny Sotelo, in 1942 (left) and during World War II service (right)**



Source: Riverside Metropolitan Museum and Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Figure 175 John & Ramona Sotelo, with children Phyllis & Ken, 1956 (left); Sotelo family, circa 1970



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 15 August 1956 and courtesy of Phyllis Sotelo Salinas

World War II proved to be a defining, empowering experience for Sotelo. Looking back on the experience in 1972, he recalled that “World War II was the biggest thing, leaving our little town, mixing, it made me feel I was not a second-class citizen, that I had fought for this country and I was just as good as anyone else.”<sup>482</sup> When Sotelo returned from the war, he began actively working for equal rights and access, quickly earning a reputation as an effective community activist. Recalling one early story, Sotelo recounted his efforts on behalf of a young Mexican-American student who was denied entry to a segregated school:

‘A young [Mexican American boy was not admitted to ...school...so I told the mother, ‘You take him back to school’...And they sent him home [again]...and I went up to the superintendent of schools (Ira C. Landis], and I told him that I was going to go to the newspaper[s], and I was gonna get some money to hire a lawyer and we were gonna sue the school. So, he admitted the boy. They personally came in a car and picked the boy up after the third day.’<sup>483</sup>

In 1963, Sotelo was elected Riverside’s first Mexican-American City Council member, where he was able to broaden his work in advocacy and civil rights. He also helped inspire a new generation of Latino politicians:

Sotelo served as a model, mentor and friend. Ward 2 Councilman Andy Melendrez and Riverside Community College Trustee Mary Figueroa both recalled how when they were growing up John Sotelo was someone they looked up to and aspired to be like. ‘He became a role model for many of us,’ Figueroa said... ‘He’s a great Latino story and a great Riverside story,’ added Riverside County Supervisor Bob Buster.

After his passing in 2009, *El Chicano* writer Cynthia Mendoza remembered Sotelo’s life and legacy:

Throughout his life Johnny Sotelo worked to improve the lives of others. His work took on many different forms but the bottom line remained the same: serving and enriching lives. During his last interview with this reporter in July of 2008, Sotelo concluded by saying ‘Stay in school,’ his advice to all young people about what it takes to be successful in life.<sup>484</sup>

## Subtheme: Latinos in Labor History

### *Labor Movement*

While little information has been identified to date on the history of the Latino labor movement in Riverside, this section details the broader history and related union activities in the region. This information is intended to serve as a starting point for future research.

In California, the labor movement started in earnest in the early twentieth century.<sup>485</sup> As noted in the pioneering 1988 study, *Five Views*, in 1903, “more than 1,000 Mexican and Japanese sugar-beet workers carried out a successful strike near Ventura.”<sup>486</sup> In these early years, the first large-scale union serving Mexican-born and Mexican-American workers was the *Confederacion de Uniones Obreros Mexicanos* (Federation of Mexican Workers Union, or CUOM). CUOM’s primary goals were “equal pay for Mexican and Anglos doing the same job, termination of job discrimination against Chicano workers, and limitation on the immigration of Mexican workers into the United States.”<sup>487</sup>

In the Inland Empire citrus industry, one significant event in the labor movement occurred in 1917, when citrus workers from a number of communities went on strike. Workers’ demands were modest; in a number of communities, the workers asked for a .25-cent daily wage increase, from \$2.25 to \$2.50, for each day’s 9-hour shift of work. In Highland in March 1917, approximately 100 citrus workers went on strike over daily wages.<sup>488</sup> The strike affected Highland growers, including Gold Buckle and West Highland Citrus Association, among others. However, in response to the worker shortage and “labor agitation,” Highland growers went around striking workers and brought in 200 Mexican laborers from El Paso to pick oranges. In this way, workers had an uphill battle at best in organizing strikes for better pay or conditions

In the lemon groves of Corona, just southwest of Riverside, striking workers demanded the same a daily .25 cent raise—from \$2.25 to 2.50 for nine hours of work. One tactic employed by Corona lemon ranchers was threatening to fire not just striking workers but “every Mexican in their employ” and vowing to “not hire Mexicans in the future”:

Now that the Mexicans have made demands, which the fruit men deem unreasonable, they have decided to turn them down and hire none but white help in the future. The fruit men mean business; they will pay from \$2 to \$2.25 a day to white men.

As an aftermath of the strike of the Mexican lemon pickers at Corona...the people of the Circle City have sent out a call in all directions for help. And it must be white help, too. They have decided to give the white man the preference in the future, and to this end have asked the Press to state that any Riverside men looking for work picking fruit can get it at Corona.<sup>489</sup>

The workers’ strike arrived in Riverside in 1917, as well. On 27 March 1917, a meeting took place in Casa Blanca involving “practically every Mexican orange picker in the Arlington Heights fruit district.”<sup>490</sup> The local press blamed “Corona agitators” for the discussions (rather than low wages, long days, and grueling work conditions). Arlington Heights citrus workers went on a large-scale strike in Riverside, greatly slowing production during a busy season. On 28 March 1917, an estimated 400 workers walked out of Riverside’s Arlington Heights groves, a majority of them Mexican and Mexican-American, joined by Japanese and Japanese-American workers.<sup>491</sup>

This strike spread throughout the Inland Empire. By April, according to newspaper accounts of the day, the strike included “nearly 1,000 Mexicans” throughout the citrus groves of San Bernardino and Riverside counties; the strike eventually spread to the Colton cement plant, as well. By April, the

strike had spread to include “Mexican orange and lemon pickers” in Riverside, Redlands, Colton, Highlands, East Highlands, Mentone, Crafton, Redlands Junction, Rialto and Upland.<sup>492</sup>

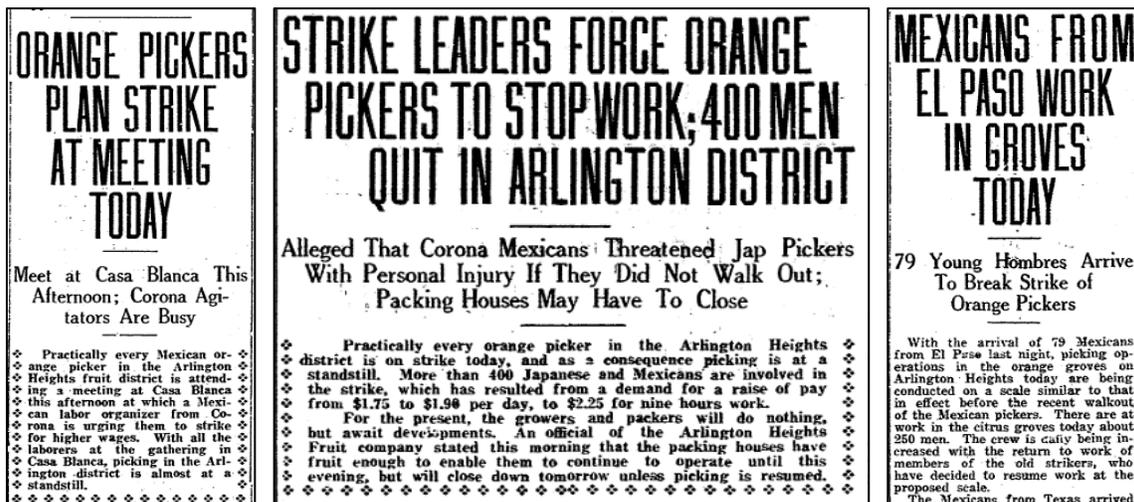
In Riverside, Arlington Heights citrus ranchers blamed “outside agitators” for the walkout and brought in strike breakers: “With the arrival of 79 Mexicans from El Paso last night, picking operations in the orange groves on Arlington Heights today are being conducted on a scale similar to that in effect before the recent walkout of the Mexican pickers. There are at work in the citrus groves today about 250 men.”<sup>493</sup> With this, many workers were forced to capitulate: “The crew is daily being increased with the return to work of members of the old strikers, who have decided to resume work at the proposed scale.”<sup>494</sup>

In this way, citrus ranchers understood the economic power they wielded over workers. Indeed, news coverage noted how “peculiar” it was that Mexican workers would go on strike since, “Mexicans have, as a rule, no reserve funds on which to fall back for the necessities of life. They have never before made a concerted move in the labor circles in Southern California.”<sup>495</sup> Rather than honoring workers’ requests, ranchers preferred to fire or replace striking workers. During the 1917 strike, F.A. Little and W.G. Fraser, superintendent and general manager of the Riverside Orange Company, explained their unwillingness to meet worker demands in this way:

Most of the associations have conceded to the demands of the Mexicans. Some of our men have come back but we are short now and what are we going to do? ...We find that our troubles do not end with the raising of wages. There is still the shortage of labor and when they get one raise, they want more, just as they have in Redlands, shortly after receiving concessions demanding shorter days. There is no telling where it will end.<sup>496</sup>

The solution of Arlington Heights citrus growers to hire strike breakers was short lived, however. As the *Riverside Daily Press* reported on 5 April 1917, most of the El Paso striker breakers themselves refused to go to work, upon learning that their pay would only be \$1.80 a day and that they were be responsible for paying a \$24 railroad fare, as well as daily room and board.<sup>497</sup> As a result, “Several packinghouses in the Riverside area were shut down and picking halted for several days. Owners and strikers finally agreed to a piece work rate increase from three cents to five cents a box—a victory for the workers.”<sup>498</sup>

**Figure 176 Coverage of Riverside 1917 citrus strike in Arlington Heights: from planning meeting in Casa Blanca (March 27), to walk-out of 400 workers (March 28), and rancher’s response (April 4)**



Source: Riverside Independent Press, 27 March 1917, 28 March 1917, and 4 April 1917

While workers' groups and unions did exist in Riverside, ranchers clearly wielded the power, understanding that workers had no recourse and few resources for sustaining a long walk-out. This, coupled with the draconian measures taken in response to strikes, dampened any momentum that might have resulted from the 1917 strikes in and around Riverside.

In subsequent decades, on the topic of workers' rights, press coverage at the time was notably unsympathetic, as local newspapers characterized workers' demands as "communists seeking control of the food industry" and prompted by visits from outside "agitators."<sup>499</sup> In the 1930s, the anti-union, Red Scare tactics were elevated, as attempts to organizers Riverside and Corona citrus workers was denounced in the news as a "grave danger" to American capitalism launched by Moscow itself.<sup>500</sup>

Even so, during the Great Depression, the labor movement gained momentum, as approximately 40 agricultural unions were established by Mexican and Mexican-American workers in California. Strikes in 1933 that began in El Monte and San Joaquin Valley spread throughout the state, ultimately involving thousands of workers.

The unions still faced an uphill battle, as ranchers, with the help of local law enforcement officials, used extreme means and measures to halt strikes and intimidate workers into compliance. In 1930, when hundreds of Mexican and Filipino field workers went on strike in the Imperial Valley, six of the strike leaders ended up not only fired but imprisoned in San Quentin, prosecuted under the California Criminal Syndicalism Act. Ranchers and farmers would also throw workers and their families out of the homes. Efforts to unionize during the Great Depression were fought by the farmers, who founded the group Associated Farmers to counter unionization. Even so, California became a hotbed for union activity throughout the 1930s.

In the 1930s, other strikes that are likely to have involved Latino laborers included a widespread citrus and milk workers strike in 1934 throughout Southern California. In a familiar scenario, ranchers called in deputies and law enforcement officials for "protection against what they termed 'communists seeking control of the food industry.' They demanded enactment of an anti-picketing ordinance, threatening to form vigilante groups unless their demands were met. Strike leaders denied communist affiliations, declaring they wanted a higher wage scale."<sup>501</sup> The strike affected Riverside, San Bernardino, and Orange Counties, where "deputies were ordered to guard roads" after 600 pickers and packing house workers walked out of work. In order to stop strikes, special deputies were sworn in, "usually Anglo employees of the grove owners, to protect against labor agitation. These deputies were to patrol the groves to prevent the outbreak of strikes and agitation from outsiders."<sup>502</sup>

In the early 1930s, another call for a widespread citrus workers' strike arrived in the Inland Empire. This time, officials acted quickly to shut it down. In January 1934, two organizers from the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union, Harvey and William Foster, were arrested in Corona after efforts to organize Mexican-American citrus workers on charges of "vagrancy."<sup>503</sup>

In early 1934, citrus workers had planned a meeting in Eastside at the Mercantile Hall, at Thirteenth Street and Park Avenue, to discuss a possible strike. Before the event began, however, Riverside police and sheriff officers violently broke up the meeting and arrested the strike leaders, all of whom were from San Bernardino: Frank Moreno, Earl Ambrose, Frank Winters, and Chester Stewart. The strike, said to have been launched by "community agitators," ultimately was not successful.<sup>504</sup>

In addition, on 15 January 1934, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors passed an emergency measure "prohibiting the obstruction of public highways and sidewalks," aimed at stopping strikes: "The ordinance makes it unlawful for any person to 'loiter or to stand or sit in or upon any public

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highway, alley, sidewalk or cross walk in the unincorporated territory of Riverside county.”<sup>505</sup> The law was adopted in order to “deal more effectively in unincorporated territory with labor agitators and others seeking to incite strikes such as are now being attempted in the county citrus districts.”<sup>506</sup> As historian Paul Viafora noted, “by the late 1930s, no less than 31 of California’s 59 counties had passed anti-picketing ordinances.”<sup>507</sup>

With the advent of the Cold War and escalation of the Red Scare, union organizing continued to be seen as the work of communist agitators, and ranchers continued to deal with strikes or worker demands in a harsh manner.

The most significant forward movement for the labor movement arrived in the postwar period, through the leadership of César Chavez, Dolores Huerta, and many others through the United Farm Workers movement. With this movement, in the mid-1960s, labor organizing saw resurgence and renaissance, as “hundreds of local Chicanos, mostly young, rallied behind Chavez’s banner.”<sup>508</sup> There was widespread support for the Delano grape strike in Riverside, as “numerous rallies and demonstration were held to lend moral and financial support to the strikers.”<sup>509</sup> In addition, in 1973, Chavez led a grape boycott in nearby Coachella Valley that greatly raised awareness of the issues facing farm laborers.

**Figure 177 Jesse Ybarra and American GI Forum members, leading food and clothing drive for striking grape workers in Delano, 1965**



Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 30 December 1965

**Figure 178 César Chavez's March to Delano, 1965 Grape Strike**



Source: "The Land Is Rich: 1966 United Farm Workers," California Agricultural Labor, 1966

**Figure 179 César Chavez and Robert F. Kennedy, 1966**



Source: "The Land Is Rich: 1966 United Farm Workers," California Agricultural Labor, 1966

**Figure 180 Riverside County Sheriff Deputies arrest striking grape worker in Coachella, 1973**



Source: United Farm Workers, 1973 footage of Coachella Valley strike, available on YouTube

## 5 Associated Property Types

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The following sections describe the property types and eligibility standards that apply to the themes of significance: Theme #1, Making a Home and a Nation, Theme #2, Making a Living, Theme #3, Making a Life, and Theme #4, Making a Democracy.

In order to ensure consistency with the state-level framework, this section includes excerpts from the 2015 California Office of Historic Preservation study, *Latinos in Twentieth Century California*. Excerpts from the state-level guide for conducting evaluations have been adapted and tailored where appropriate for Riverside.

The present project did not include a citywide survey or intensive-level evaluations. However, research and site visits have identified a number of potentially eligible resources and significant associations warranting further study, survey, evaluation, and designation.

In general, the properties identified might include a potentially significant individual or business, but research conducted to date has not verified properties reflecting the period of significance. In other cases, research conducted to date has not yet verified the addresses or extant resources reflecting the individual, group, or business. It is recommended that these resources or associations be carried forward for subsequent research and intensive-level evaluation.

Appendix A presents a summary of potentially eligible resources recommended for survey, further research, and possible evaluation and/or designation.

## 5.1 Theme #1: Making a Home and a Nation

### **Property Types Associated with Immigration and Settlement**

*Buildings, Sites, and Objects associated with Early Founding Years*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

While rare, built environment resources qualifying under this category would be buildings, objects, or sites that have a strong association with the founding years of the Latino community in Riverside. This would include (but might not be limited to) the early settlement sites at Agua Mansa and La Placita, Latino labor at Jensen Alvarado Ranch, or other related resources. Historic archaeological sites might also qualify under this theme.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Extant buildings, objects, or sites that reflect the early settlement years of the Latino community in Riverside may qualify for federal, state, and/or local listing under Criteria A/1/1.

#### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

In order to qualify under this theme, resources have a demonstrated, strong association with the founding years of the Latino community in Riverside (1840s through 1900). Integrity considerations should consider the rarity of such resources. A higher level of alteration is permissible, given the relative rarity of these resources.

#### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Trujillo Adobe, 1863 (Locally designated)
- Agua Mansa Bell, 1865

*Headquarters and Offices of Prominent Organizations*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context were the headquarters or offices of organizations that supported Latino immigrants. Few organizations had the means to erect buildings during their formative years, and many organizations survived for only brief periods. Thus, they operated out of donated or rented spaces such as churches, theaters, and commercial buildings. In limited cases, organizations were able to raise funds to purchase existing buildings or to construct new ones. These buildings are typically small in scale and modest in design and include large meeting rooms, a few offices, and restrooms. Such buildings may be found throughout the state in large cities and small towns alike.

The architectural qualities of office buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Buildings that were used by organizations that supported Latino immigrants may qualify for federal, state, and/or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local or state level depending on their sphere of

influence. An important early group was the *mutualista*, or mutual aid society. At the beginning of the twentieth century, numerous mutualistas emerged throughout California. The swell of immigrants in the 1910s expanded the membership of existing mutualistas such as *La Sociedad Progresista* and *La Sociedad Hispano Americano*, both of which operated in Riverside.

Most mutualistas operated by charging dues and pooling resources to provide insurance, loans, and burial assistance. Many also supported the indigent in their communities with medical care, food, and clothing. These groups typically had a nationalistic orientation and sponsored patriotic events. Some also organized libraries and schools to supplement the education their children received in public schools. Mutualistas are significant in this context because they fostered cultural bonds and social networks that were critical in the subsequent development of more political groups.

During the latter half of the twentieth century, mutualistas became engaged in political activism, and new organizations were formed to assist immigrants in securing legal status in the United States.

## ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

**Individual Properties:** To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, buildings must be strongly associated with a prominent organization that supported Latino immigrants. It is not necessary for the organization to have constructed the building, only to have occupied some part of it during the period in which it gained significance. Buildings should retain sufficient integrity to convey their character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be present in the evaluation of integrity. Buildings may be modest in their workmanship and materials due to the limited financial resources of most organizations. Primary interior spaces such as large meeting rooms might be extant. Acceptable alterations might include the removal and replacement of some original materials and features.

**Historic District:** If a significant concentration of buildings associated with Latino immigration and settlement exists in a defined geographic area, it may constitute a historic district. Historic districts associated with this context may be found in large cities as well as small towns. Immigrants tended to settle near their places of employment in neighborhoods frequently known as barrios and colonias. These neighborhoods were often located on the outskirts of towns, because racially restrictive covenants prevented people of Mexican descent from living in white communities. By the 1930s, settlement patterns began to shift to urban areas as Mexicans sought work in the transportation, construction, and industrial sectors.

Company towns and labor camps were more organized forms of settlement for Mexican immigrants. Company towns could include elementary schools, community halls, and recreational facilities in addition to small wood frame houses. They were particularly common in the citrus regions of southern California including Riverside, Fullerton, Whittier, and Ventura. There are no known surviving examples.

Historic districts associated with Latino immigration and settlement may be eligible for federal, state, and/or local listing at the local or state level under Criteria A/1/1 depending on their age and rarity. While the Latino population in California is diverse, it has historically been dominated by Mexican Americans. A complex set of push and pull factors drew Mexicans to California. These included labor demands and shortages, transportation improvements, and public policies on both sides of the border.

Predominately Latino neighborhoods and towns may reflect the settlement patterns of Latinos at various points during the twentieth century. During the first half of the century, they may be

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significant for documenting the limited housing options that were available to Mexican Americans. Racially restrictive covenants and discrimination in education and employment segregated Mexican immigrants from Anglo communities. Segregationist policies resulted in barrios and colonias that were culturally self-sustaining, and residents observed a variety of patriotic and religious celebrations from their home country. During the second half of the century, Latinos had more, not necessarily unfettered, housing options. Existing barrios and colonias either disappeared or became more cohesive. In addition, working class neighborhoods and suburbs emerged in formerly white areas.

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/3, historic districts must be located in one of the primary areas of settlement by Latinos within a city or county. Primarily residential neighborhoods are significant in the context of early settlement if they contain important businesses and institutions such as churches or schools, thereby reflecting the complexity and nuances of the Latino community. The neighborhood must have been predominately Latino for a significant period of time to qualify, and not all predominately Latino neighborhoods are eligible.

Historic districts should reflect the period of time they were settled and occupied by Latinos. The evaluation of integrity should focus on the totality and overall characteristics of the historic district, not the individual contributing buildings. Additions and alterations should be compatible with the overall design, materials, and scale of the original portion of the contributing buildings.

**EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Community Settlement Association/House (4366 Bermuda Avenue). NRHP listed. Local evaluation and designation should include any associated recreational spaces, support structures, or artwork as extant.
- Home of Neighborly Service (7680 Casa Blanca Street); evaluation should include associated recreational spaces, support structures, and artwork (such as Roy Duarte murals from 1972)
- Riverside office space or headquarters of La Sociedad Progresista Mexicana, La Beneficia Sociedad, and La Sociedad Hispano Americano
- The “Hub” or historic center of Casa Blanca (pre-1945 settlement area)
- The Streeter Housing Tract, Eastside (one of three postwar housing tracts open to minority buyers); pending survey; roughly bounded by 14th Street (north), Sedgwick Street (east), Pennsylvania Avenue (south), and High Street (west)
- Los Ranchitos Housing Tract, Casa Blanca (one of three postwar housing tracts open to minority buyers); pending survey; roughly bounded by Lincoln Avenue (north), Sonora Place (east), Santa Rosa Way (south), and Madison Street (west)
- Woods Subdivision, Eastside (one of three postwar housing tracts open to minority buyers)

## 5.2 Theme #2: Making a Living

### Property Types Associated with Agricultural Labor and Citrus Industry

*Labor Camps, Citrus Colonias, Packinghouses/Related Properties, Residences*

#### DESCRIPTION

Individual properties associated with this context might include a broad array of building types associated with Latino labor, such as labor camps, bracero camps, citrus groves, packinghouses, and offices (as a cultural landscape), offices, or residences of long-time citrus workers or braceros. Historic districts and/or cultural landscapes might include long-time areas of settlement by citrus workers and their families, adjacent citrus groves, packinghouses, and other support structures, and other properties directly reflecting the association with citrus-worker settlement.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

Buildings, sites, cultural landscapes, historic districts, and other spaces strongly associated with Latino labor in Riverside's citrus industry may be eligible for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local level. Those properties with a strong association to a long-time, accomplished citrus worker or bracero might qualify under Criteria B/2/2.

#### ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, properties must show a strong, long-term association with Latino citrus labor or citrus-worker housing and settlement. To be eligible under Criteria B/2/2, the property should show a strong association with a prominent, long-term citrus industry worker. Eligibility under Criteria B/2/2 would generally be the residences of citrus workers.

Properties reflecting this theme and era are relatively rare. Integrity considerations should include the scarcity of the resource; a higher degree of alterations is permissible for resources with few known examples. In addition, consideration should be given to the relatively limited access to financial resources that the owners and builders of associated properties might have had; potential resources might appear modest and exhibit some degree of alteration and addition over time.

Research conducted to date has not yet revealed any surviving remnants of labor camps or bracero camps in Riverside. Should further research identify built environment traces of such camps, the eligibility requirements described here would apply.

#### EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY

- Casa Blanca Citrus Workers Settlement; evaluation should consider the boundaries and representative, intact examples of residences, planning features, and other associated properties reflecting the early era of Latino citrus-worker settlement in Casa Blanca.
- Arlington Heights Fruit Exchange, 3391 Seventh Street; property listed in the NRHP; designation could be updated to add "Making a Living" theme of significance, to capture association with Latino labor in the citrus industry
- Subsequent research should focus on identifying the residences or other associated properties for long-time, accomplished citrus workers; some examples might include (but not be limited to) Jess Avila, Henry Bermudez, Virginia Rodriguez Solorio, Ilario Alfaro, and

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Melchor Rangel, one of Riverside's best known field foremen from the 1930s through the 1950s, among many others

- Subsequent survey should focus on intact citrus-industry properties (groves, packinghouses, related support structures) adjacent to Latino neighborhoods

## Property Types Associated with Business and Commerce

*Commercial and Office Buildings, Schools, and Other Related Properties*

### DESCRIPTION

**Individual Properties:** Properties associated with this context include a broad array of commercial building types such as offices, markets, banks, restaurants, funeral homes, bakeries, dance halls, record stores, and general retail shops. (This could also include educational facilities, for pioneering educators or administrators.) Some served basic needs, while others provided entertainment or professional services. Most often they are located on major corridors and within historically Latino neighborhoods. In early years in Riverside, some businesses were located in residences or outbuildings in residential neighborhoods. This context might also include buildings associated with the citrus industry in Riverside and Latino labor.

While some significant businesses were housed in stand-alone buildings, many were located in strip malls or as one storefront in a multi-storefront building. Therefore, building size, massing, and form will range from small, one-story, single storefront varieties to large, multi-story, multi-storefront examples. In addition to office and retail spaces, some buildings associated with this context may include light industrial spaces, used for manufacturing and/or storage. The architectural qualities of commercial buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

**Historic Districts:** If a significant concentration of buildings associated with Latino business and commerce exists in a defined geographic area, it may constitute a historic district. Historic districts associated with this context will typically be located along corridors or at intersections. In some cases they may extend onto adjacent streets within a neighborhood. They may be small, consisting of a single block or intersection, or large, consisting of multiple contiguous blocks. Architectural styles in the district may vary from building to building based on date of construction. Size, form, and massing may also vary, though most will likely be low- to mid-rise in height. A complex of related buildings dedicated to one particular business, such as a plant or campus, may also constitute a district.

### SIGNIFICANCE

Commercial buildings and districts associated with the history of Latinos may be eligible for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local or state level. During the twentieth century, trends in Latino business and commerce followed trends in population growth and settlement. As populations in given areas increased, the demand for goods and services also increased, and entrepreneurial Latinos established businesses to meet the rising demand.

Most of these businesses were small, neighborhood, family-owned operations serving basic community needs. Often, they remained within the same family for multiple generations and became important community institutions. While many Latino businesses remained small local shops, some grew into franchises or large corporations, especially toward the end of the twentieth century.

In terms of NRHP eligibility, buildings associated with long-standing neighborhood businesses would be significant only at the local level; those associated with far-reaching franchises or corporations may be significant at the local or state level. Likewise, for NRHP eligibility as a historic district, a grouping of buildings associated with neighborhood businesses would be significant as a historic district at the local level; a complex of buildings associated with a franchise or corporation may be significant as a historic district at the local or state level.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

**Individual Properties:** To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, individual commercial buildings must be strongly associated with an important long-standing Latino business. The business must have been or continue to be an important fixture within the community in which it is located. It may have achieved symbolic meaning as a gathering place for special occasions or for providing specific services or goods. It will often be the oldest or longest lasting business of its particular type within a neighborhood or community.

Commercial buildings must retain sufficient integrity to evoke their use and character from the period of significance. They should possess integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. They may be modest in terms of workmanship and materials depending on their architectural style and original level of design detail. Limited materials replacement or alteration may have occurred. An important business may have changed locations over time and may be associated with more than one property. In this case, the property or properties associated with the business during the period in which the business achieved significance would be eligible. Previous or subsequent locations should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for eligibility, based on period of significance and length of tenure at the location.

**Historic Districts:** To be eligible under Criteria A/1/3, historic districts must be comprised of buildings that were, and possibly continue to be, strongly associated with Latino business and commerce. Districts must be important commercial centers within their communities or they must be complexes of buildings associated with a single important business. In addition to contributing buildings, districts will likely have other contributing features from the period significance, such as planning features, circulation patterns, street lights, decorative paving, and designed landscaping. Districts should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their significance as centers of commerce or corporate complexes, as well as their character from the period of significance. They should possess integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. They may be modest in terms of workmanship and materials depending on the architectural styles present. Limited materials replacement or storefront alterations may have occurred.

### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Ahumada Market and Restaurant, Casa Blanca
- Bob's TV and Radio
- Former Camp Anza and nearby Latino-owned businesses, such as Mars Barbershop, owned by Mars Macias, 8739 Cypress Avenue; Leo and Mela's Market, Cypress Avenue; real estate office of Leo and Mela Lueras
- Carlos's Market (2993 Fourteenth Street), Eastside
- Chavarrias Store/Tony's Market (4098 Park Avenue), Eastside
- Chavez Auto Store (Madison and Evans Streets), Casa Blanca

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- Checkie’s Café (4120 Park Avenue), Eastside
- Leon’s Mexican Restaurant (7778 Evans Street), Casa Blanca
- Manuel’s Café (Cary and Evans Streets), Casa Blanca
- Mendoza Market/El Amigo Market (3199 Madison Street)
- Victoria Shell Station/Arco Station (14<sup>th</sup> and Victoria Streets), Eastside
- Teen’s Furniture Store
- Zacatecas Café (Park and University Avenues, 1963-1985; 2472 University Avenue, 1985-2016; pending research to select most appropriate location)
- Concentrations of commercial properties on University Avenue, Park Avenue, Madison Avenue, among others
- Subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

*Residences and Offices of Pioneering Entrepreneurs, Businesspeople, Educators, and Professionals*

**DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include the residences and places of business of significant Latino entrepreneurs and professionals. Their size, style, and architectural detail will be based upon the location and date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria B/2/2.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Throughout the twentieth century, Latino entrepreneurs and professionals served as important leaders within their communities. The residences and offices of prominent Latino entrepreneurs and professionals in California may be eligible under Criteria B/2/2 at the local or state level, depending on the person’s sphere of influence.

In the first half of the century, many Latinos started small businesses or opened firms and practices that provided a wide variety of goods and services, ranging from basic necessities to entertainment to legal and medical counsel. They often facilitated trade with their home countries, sustaining important cultural and commercial connections. After World War II, with the passage of the G.I. Bill and the impact of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement, Latinos’ access to education and small-business funding improved, leading to an increase in entrepreneurship, as well as increases in employment with major corporations and in professional fields, such as law, medicine, and accounting.

Persons significant in the context of Latinos in Business and Commerce are men and women who founded important business or achieved great success within their chosen field. They were often also engaged in a variety of civic organizations and trade associations. For a professional to be considered significant, they must have been the first Latino to ascend to a particular level or receive a particular accolade within his or her industry, or they must have used their professional skills for the greater good of their communities, rather than just for personal gains. Properties that are closely associated with the productive lives of these individuals may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria B/2/2 at the local or state level, depending on the person’s sphere of influence.

## ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

**Individual Properties:** To be eligible under Criteria B/2/2, buildings must be closely associated with a significant Latino entrepreneur or professional.

Determining the property that best represents the person's productive life needs to be carefully evaluated. Most often, the person's place of business during the period in which he or she achieved significance will be the property that best represents his or her work. Residences may also be eligible, if the other properties associated with the individual no longer exist or do not retain integrity. On a case-by-case basis, properties associated with living persons may qualify, so long as the association warrants this recognition and the individual has already retired. (National Park Service Bulletin No. 22, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance within the Past Fifty Years*, should serve as reference for any evaluation or designation for properties associated with living persons or fewer than 50 years of age.) Properties should retain their integrity from the period of time in which the significant individual lived or worked there.

The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. A basic integrity test for a property associated with an important person is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists at the time of evaluation.

## EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY

- Residence of Miguel Estudillo, 4515 – 6<sup>th</sup> Street, home of Estudillo between 1918 and 1950
- Residence of Raymond Buriel (Cassia Street, as of 1968, and 257 Cannon Road, 1989-2016); research and survey recommended to determine representative, intact properties
- Residence of Eugene Cota-Robles, pioneering Chicano professor and administrator within the University of California system; research and survey recommended to determine representative, intact properties
- Residence of Ernest Z. Robles, educator, administrator, and cofounder of Hispanic Scholarship Fund; research recommended to determine representative, intact properties
- Residence of Richard Leivas, pioneering Latino businessperson (Luther Street); research and survey recommended to determine representative, intact properties
- Residence of Leo and Mela Lueras, pioneering Latino business owners, real estate professionals and developers
- Subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

## Property Types Associated with Military History

### *Social Halls*

#### DESCRIPTION

Buildings associated with this context include social halls that were used by veterans organizations. In their early years, veterans organizations did not have dedicated buildings. Rather, meetings might be held in residences, churches, libraries, or other available spaces until enough funds could be raised to purchase or construct a building. Social halls, often referred to as posts, may be found in cities with large concentrations of Latino veterans. These buildings are typically small in scale and modest in design and include large meeting rooms, a few offices, and restrooms. The architectural

qualities of such buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Social halls associated with the history of Latinos in California may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local level. In the aftermath of two American wars during the second half of the nineteenth century, several veterans organizations were formed. These organizations included the Veterans of Foreign Wars (1899) and The American Legion (1919) among others. Veterans organizations provided financial, social, and emotional support to members of the Armed Forces.

Due to discrimination, Latino veterans often did not seek assistance from these organizations. Thus, Latinos sometimes formed their own chapters, including branches of the American GI Forum. Established in Texas in 1948, the American GI Forum specifically addressed the concerns of Latino World War II veterans who were denied entrance to other veterans groups. Often these organizations played other roles in the community such as providing scholarships to Latino students, organizing Veterans Day and Memorial Day parades, and sponsoring Cinco de Mayo and Mexican Independence Day celebrations.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, social halls must be strongly associated with the Latino community in which they are located. Only the social halls connected with the oldest Latino veterans organizations in California established in the 1950s and 1960s will qualify at this time. Social halls should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their original use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Social halls may be modest in their workmanship and materials due to the limited financial resources of most organizations. Primary interior spaces such as large meeting rooms might be extant.

### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Ysmael Villegas American Legion Post, established in 1949 (research needed to determine representative property)
- American Legion Post for Dario Vasquez
- Office, headquarters, or founding place of Riverside branch of the American GI Forum
- Memorials, social halls, and other related sites as identified through research
- Subsequent research will identify additional examples warranting survey

### *Residences of Prominent Persons*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include the residences of Latino war heroes and may be found throughout the state. They may include single-family or multifamily residential buildings. Their size, style, and architectural detail will be based upon the location and date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criterion B.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

Latinos have served in all branches of the military since the American Revolution. Military service has been used by Latinos to express their patriotism for the United States as well as to advance their equal treatment and integration within US society. Persons significant in the context of Latinos in the Military are men and women who served in the Armed Forces and were highly decorated for their bravery. These distinguished veterans symbolize the contribution that Latinos have made to American military history. These would include and not necessarily be limited to the following Medal of Honor recipients from Riverside:

- Ysmael R. Villegas, Army, World War II, Casa Blanca
- Salvador J. Lara, Army, World War II, Casa Blanca
- Jesus Duran, Army, Vietnam War

As the accomplishments of such individuals occurred overseas in battle, there are no properties in Riverside that reflect their contributions to military history. Because these individuals are held in such high esteem by the Latino community for their wartime sacrifices, their residences may qualify for federal, state, and/or local listing under Criteria B/2/2 at the local level.

## **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criterion B, the residence must be closely associated with a Latino person who made important contributions to US military history. Determining the residence that best represents the person's life needs to be carefully evaluated. As many war heroes die in battle, the best representative may be their childhood home. In other cases, the best representative may be their residence after returning from overseas. The length of the association should be an important factor when there is more than one property associated with an individual. Properties associated with living persons may qualify, so long as they have completed their military service.

Residences should retain their integrity from the period of time in which the significant individual lived there. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. A basic integrity test for a property associated with an important person is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists at the time of evaluation.

## **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Ysmael Villegas residence (3105 Madison Street), Casa Blanca
- Sergeant Jesus S. Duran residence, Vietnam War veteran, Medal of Honor recipient (research needed to determine representative, intact properties)
- Staff Sergeant Salvador J. Lara residence, World War II veteran, Medal of Honor recipient (research needed to determine representative, intact properties)
- Andrew Melendrez, Sr., World War II recipient of Silver Star, Purple Heart, and Bronze Star (research needed to determine representative, intact properties)
- Dario Villegas residence (3105 Madison Street), Casa Blanca
- Corporal Dario G. Vasquez residence, World War II casualty, winner of Bronze Star and Purple Heart (11<sup>th</sup> Street, Eastside)

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- World War II casualties, Gold Star Families, Venturo Macias, Gus Cabrera, Manuel Rangel, and Theodoro Molindo residence (research needed to determine most representative properties)
- Isidro Diaz residence, World War I veteran, Casa Blanca (research needed to determine level of significance and representative, intact properties)
- Subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

#### *Sites of Historic Events*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Historic sites associated with this context might include churches, buildings, parks, or memorials that hosted significant memorials or events associated with Latino military service.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Latinos played a significant role in US military history and service. This theme is intended to capture those events and memorials with a direct association with a significant event in Latino military history. Such events could include the site of the Lincoln Park World War II memorial for Gold Star families, the memorial service for Staff Sergeant Smiley Villegas in the Casa Blanca Elementary School auditorium, high mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, the World War II victory parade route, or other events as identified through subsequent research.

#### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, a historic site must be the location of a key historic event or memorial significant in the Latino community. To be eligible, the historic site should retain its integrity of location, setting, and feeling from the period in which the event occurred.

## 5.3 Theme #3: Making a Life

### **Property Types Associated with Religion and Spirituality**

#### *Religious Buildings*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context were used by religious institutions that ministered to the Latino community. They may include churches, and associated rectories, ministry centers, and parish halls, parochial schools, settlement houses, and offices for charitable organizations affiliated with religious institutions. Church buildings were constructed throughout Riverside to serve the Latino community. In other cases, existing church buildings were adopted by Latinos as their numbers rose in the community. Their size, style, and architectural detail will be based upon the location and date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

The Catholic Church tended to favor the Spanish Colonial Revival and Mission Revival styles, while Protestant churches tended to favor the Gothic Revival and Classical Revival styles. The earliest

church buildings constructed specifically for Latinos are typically small in scale and modest in design. They were often referred to on Sanborn Maps and City Directories as missions, implying that these were outposts designed to serve foreigners. Parochial schools are sometimes situated next to churches, and in other cases they are independent buildings. Settlement houses and the offices of charitable organizations will primarily be located in large cities and may or may not have been purpose built.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

Religious buildings associated with the history of Latinos may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local or state level. During the early part of the twentieth century, Catholic and Protestant churches sought to minister to Latinos. While these ministries addressed the spiritual needs of the community, they were also focused on Americanizing Mexican immigrants who had their own religious traditions and practices.

Charitable organizations, settlement houses, and parochial schools were also established with the purpose of turning immigrants into good American citizens. By mid-century, Latinos began to form their own churches, which allowed them to freely express their religious beliefs and traditions. The Catholic Church and Protestant denominations became more responsive to the needs of the Latino population in the 1970s and became active in supporting Central American immigrants in the 1980s.

## **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

This context statement does not address the architectural merit of properties, only their historical importance. Religious properties may be eligible for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 if they are significant in the ethnic and/or social history of the Latino community in Riverside.

For NRHP listing, religious buildings that meet Criteria Consideration A and Criterion A are those that played a larger role in the history of the Latino community in which they are located. For example, in one Orange County example, the Sacred Heart Mission in Anaheim was established in 1926, and was the spiritual, social, and cultural center of the Colonia Independencia. The original church building still stands and is used as the parish center. In some cases, religious buildings may be significant because they represent the Americanization programs of churches to acculturate Mexicans. A prime example of such a property is Forsythe Memorial School for Mexican Girls, established by the Presbyterian Church in 1914. Located in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles, the school operated until 1934.

Churches that were founded by and for Latinos may be significant, as well as churches that played important roles in the Sanctuary movement. An example in Riverside is the Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, constructed primarily by and for the Latino community in Eastside in 1929-1931.

Churches are not significant in this context merely because the congregation is or was predominately Latino. It is not necessary for the congregation to have constructed the building, only to have occupied it as their primary place of worship during the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Religious buildings may be modest in their workmanship and materials due to the limited financial resources of most congregations. The application of newer materials, such as stucco or stone, on top of original materials should not automatically exclude the building from eligibility, especially if the alteration occurred during the period of significance and if the essential form and other major design features are present. Additions and related buildings such as parsonages, Sunday school

buildings, and social halls should also be evaluated and included in nominations if they were present during the period of significance and retain their integrity.

#### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine (2858 Ninth Street), 1929 (constructed) to present, Eastside; may be eligible for NRHP and as possible National Historic Landmark
- St. Anthony's Catholic Church (3056 Madison Street), 1975-1976 (constructed on site of 1923 church), Casa Blanca
- Other churches, assembly halls, or buildings throughout City that might be intact; subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

### **Property Types Associated with Sports and Recreation**

#### *Recreational Facilities*

##### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings, structures, and sites associated with this context include a broad array of recreational facilities, including and not limited to baseball fields, boxing gyms and arenas, handball courts, and football stadiums. They may be found throughout the City.

Recreational facilities such as boxing clubs are typically located in older buildings that were designed for other uses. Facilities associated with amateur athletics and community-based athletic teams are likely to be located in public parks or school campuses. Structures may be large in scale, as in the case of boxing arenas or football stadiums, or smaller in scale, as in the case of handball courts. Their style and architectural detail, if present, will be based upon the date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Recreational facilities associated with the history of Latinos in California may be eligible for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1. Over the course of the twentieth century, Latinos utilized sports to reinforce community identity and neighborhood pride, to counteract negative stereotypes, to obtain access to higher education, and to develop leadership skills. They formed their own amateur sports teams, and their presence in professional sports increased as the century progressed.

Most amateur sports teams were neighborhood-oriented and often were a source of pride for a community. Team sports such as baseball and soccer also served as social events and a means of gathering together the community's youth. Some sports teams remained based in the community in which they originated, while others went on to become significant to the state's Latino community at large.

Facilities associated with a particular neighborhood or community would be significant at the local level, while those associated with teams that became more widely known may be significant at the local or state level. Prime examples of recreational facilities associated with this context include the baseball field at Grant Park in Sacramento, home of the Mexican American Octubre Club from 1931 to 1957 and the Grand Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles, the premier boxing arena in California and the place where Latino boxers such as Art Aragon competed.

## ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, buildings, structures, cultural landscapes, or sites must be strongly associated with Latino sports. Neighborhood facilities must be strongly associated with the Latino community in which they are located. Not all facilities associated with Latino sports will qualify under Criteria A/1/1. Only those that were associated with Latino sports over an extended period of time will qualify.

Recreational facilities associated with individual athletes or coaches significant within this context are unlikely to qualify for eligibility under Criteria B/2/2 unless no other associated resources are extant. Recreational facilities should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their original use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Alterations that were required to accommodate changes in the related sport should be expected and should not automatically exclude the facility from eligibility.

## EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY

- Ysmael Villegas Park (evaluate as potential cultural landscape, including recreational fields, handball court, murals/artwork)
- Lincoln Park (evaluate as potential cultural landscape)
- Bordwell Park, 2008 Martin Luther King Boulevard, Eastside
- Lincoln Boxing Club, Eastside
- Fields or recreational areas in Latino neighborhoods that were important venues for sporting activities

### *Residences of Prominent Persons*

#### DESCRIPTION

Buildings associated with this context include the residences of significant Latino athletes and coaches. They may include single-family or multi-family residential buildings. Their size, style, and architectural detail will be based upon the location and date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria B/2/2.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

Latinos became increasingly prominent in sports over the course of the twentieth century. Persons significant in the context of Latinos in Sports include men and women who were important sports figures, either within their community in the case of amateur sports, or in the world of professional sports. These can include players or coaches who achieved great success within their chosen sport. For an individual to be considered significant, their activities must be demonstrably important within the context of Latinos in Sports. They may have been the first Latino to ascend to a particular level or receive a particular accolade within his or her sport. They may also have used their success in sports to contribute to the good of their communities. As most athletes and coaches played at numerous recreational facilities throughout their careers and are not closely associated with any one facility, their residences will likely be the property that best represents their productive life. Residences associated with the productive lives of these individuals may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria B/2/2 at the local or state level, depending on the person's sphere of

influence. Professional athletes and coaches may be significant at the local or state level, while amateur sports figures, most frequently significant in the community in which they lived, may be significant at the local level.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria B/2/2, the residence must be closely associated with a significant Latino sports figure. Determining the residence that best represents the person's life needs to be carefully evaluated. Many professional sports figures moved from one city to another. If more than one residence is associated with a person, the residence in which they spent the productive period of their life would be the most representative. In addition, the length of the association should be an important factor when there is more than one property associated with an individual

Properties associated with living persons may qualify, so long as they have retired from playing sports. Residences should retain their integrity from the period of time in which the significant individual lived there. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. A basic integrity test for a property associated with an important person is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists at the time of evaluation.

### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Ernest Benzor, coach (research needed to determine level of significance and representative, intact properties)
- Glen Ayala, Villegas Park director (research needed to determine level of significance and representative, intact properties)
- Emma Galvan, women's fast-pitch softball player (research needed to determine level of significance and representative, intact properties)
- Subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

## **Property Types Associated with the Arts**

### *Performing Arts Venues*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include purpose built and non-purpose built performing arts venues. Purpose built spaces may include freestanding theaters and nightclubs as well as auditoria in multi-purpose buildings such as schools and churches. They will primarily be located in large cities and metropolitan areas. Non-purpose built spaces may include restaurants and outdoor spaces where musicians performed informally, at least initially. Building size, massing, and form will vary greatly, depending on architectural style, location, and date of construction. The architectural qualities of such buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

Performing arts venues associated with Latinos may qualify for federal, state, or local listing in the under Criteria A/1/1 at the local level. During the twentieth century, Latinos utilized these venues to perform plays and music that reflected their experiences in the United States and often blended Anglo and Mexican cultural traditions. During the 1920s, many plays were written and performed in Spanish to cater to the growing population of Mexican immigrants. During and after World War II, plays reflected the increasing political awareness and activism of Latinos. Perhaps the most influential theater company during the Chicano movement was *El Teatro Campesino* that formed in 1965. In some cases theater companies toured throughout the state and in other cases they were based in particular theaters. During the 1970s, Latino theatre became accessible to a wider audience due to the broadcasting of performances on public television stations and to the construction of more theater spaces.

Latino musical groups sometimes performed at these theaters as well, and generally toured throughout the state. Latino music is as diverse as the population itself and the work of one musician may be significant for achievement in a particular genre, while the work of another musician might be significant for successfully melding styles. Some music venues are significant for their association with a particular musical group. For example, La Fonda Restaurant was the permanent home of Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano and attracted locals as well as tourists. Other venues are significant for their association with a particular genre or period.

## **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, performing arts venues must be strongly associated with Latino performing arts, including theater and music. The significance of the theater or musical group must be established and illustrated in order for a venue associated with them to be considered significant.

Venues should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their original use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Buildings may be modest in terms of workmanship and materials depending on their architectural style and original level of design detail. Limited materials replacement or alterations may have occurred. Primary interior spaces, especially performance spaces, should remain intact.

### *Cultural Centers*

## **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include cultural centers used by Latinos. In most cases, cultural centers are located in older buildings designed for other uses. In a few instances, organizations were able to raise funds for the construction of new buildings. They may be found in cities with large concentrations of Latinos. Building size, massing, and form vary greatly, depending on architectural style, location, and date of construction. The architectural qualities of such buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

Cultural centers may qualify for federal, state and/or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local level. Such centers arose primarily during the late 1960s and early 1970s when Latinos began to reclaim their cultural history. Larger cultural centers could be multidisciplinary venues that offered

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educational programs for the community as well as exhibition and performance space for visual artists, musicians, dancers, poets, playwrights, etc. Small cultural centers could be limited to one form of art and were sometimes the homes of artist collectives. In either case, cultural centers played important roles in the communities in which they were located as cultivators of Latino art as well as meeting places and havens for local youth. Programming at cultural centers was often free to the community and featured artists and groups that were ignored by mainstream galleries and museums. As a point of comparison for future evaluations, examples of related cultural centers outside of Riverside include:

- Social Public Art Resource Center (SPARC), Los Angeles County
- Plaza de la Raza, Los Angeles County
- Bilingual Foundation for the Arts, Los Angeles County
- Galeria de la Raza, San Francisco County
- Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, San Francisco County
- Centro de Artistas Chicanos, Sacramento County

Research conducted to date has not identified any related sites in Riverside; should subsequent research identify related events or sites, the following eligibility standards would apply.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, cultural centers must be associated with significant Latino artist collectives or prominent Latino arts organizations. They must have played an important role in the creation and/or dissemination of Latino art in the twentieth century. It is not necessary for the collective or organization to have constructed the building, only to have occupied it during the period in which they gained significance.

Cultural centers should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their original use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Buildings may be modest in terms of workmanship and materials depending on their architectural style and original level of design detail. Limited materials replacement or alterations may have occurred. Primary interior spaces, especially exhibition and performance spaces, may be extant.

### *Murals*

### **DESCRIPTION**

Murals associated with the history of Latinos in Riverside are most likely to be present in Latino neighborhoods, such as Casa Blanca, Eastside, Arlington Heights, Northside, and Arlanza, among other neighborhoods. Murals are most frequently located on the exterior of buildings and can also be found on interior common spaces as well, such as dining rooms in restaurants or lobbies in commercial and institutional buildings. They are often found on buildings belonging to Latino businesses or institutions. Murals may be found in other public spaces, such as freeway retaining walls and bridge supports.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Murals by important Latino artists or art collectives may be eligible for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria C/3/4 as the work of a master Latino artist or for their high artistic value. Murals may also be eligible under Criteria A/1/1 if they illustrate the development of Latino or Chicano visual arts in the twentieth century, often most notably the art of the Chicano movement.

There are too many Latino artists to mention here individually, and many artists are still alive and working. By way of comparison, for future evaluations, examples of important Latino art collectives include, for example: the Mexican American Liberation Art Front in Oakland; Self-Help Graphics in Los Angeles; Toltecas en Aztlan and Congreso de Artistas Chicanos de Aztlan in San Diego; Broche del Valle in the Salinas Valley; Mujeres Muralistas in the San Francisco Bay Area; Royal Chicano Air Force in the Sacramento Valley; and the Royal Chicano Navy in the Fresno area.

For much of the twentieth century, murals provided Latinos with a means for public artistic expression, often in response to events or circumstances in the community. Latinos utilized murals to express opinions, political ideas, and emotion. Though occurring since the first decades of the twentieth century and pulling inspiration from the muralism movement in Mexico, murals as an art form became widespread during the Chicano movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

## ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

To be eligible under Criteria C/3/4 as the work of a master, the artist responsible for the mural must meet the definition of a master. A master is a figure of generally recognized greatness in the field. Furthermore, the mural must represent a particular aspect of the artist's work or phase in his or her career. Murals that possess high artistic value are those that are recognized as important achievements in Latino muralism.

Extant resources reflecting this theme in Riverside are relatively rare. Evaluations should include the scarcity of these resources. In addition, National Park Service Bulletin No. 22, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance within the Past Fifty Years*, should serve as reference for any evaluation or designation for murals and other "fragile or short-lived resources" that might have acquired significance but are not yet 50 years old.

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, murals must be strongly associated with the Latino community in which they are located. Under either criteria, murals may be significant at the local or state level, depending upon the importance and scope of the artist(s) who painted them and the degree to which their influence was felt around the state. Murals should retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

## EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY

- Virgen de Guadalupe mural, Casa Blanca Elementary School, Roy Duarte and Jim Gutierrez
- Grandesa Azteca mural, Ysmael Villegas Park, Jim Gutierrez
- Roy Duarte murals, Ysmael Villegas Park and Home of Neighborly Service, 7680 Casa Blanca Street (interior and exterior examples)
- Daniel "Chano" Gonzales mural, UC Riverside Chicano Student Programs office
- Subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

### *Residences and Studios of Prominent Persons*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include the residences and studios of significant Latinos in the arts. They may include single-family or multi-family residential buildings. Their size, style, and architectural detail will be based upon the location and date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria B/2/2.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Latinos have played an important role in the arts throughout the twentieth century. They have contributed greatly to art created for both a general audience and a specifically Latino audience. Persons significant in the context of Latinos in the Arts may include musicians, composers, playwrights, and visual artists.

For an individual to be considered significant, his or her activities must be demonstrably important within this context. The artist may have received a particular accolade such as a National Heritage Fellowship, a lifetime honor presented by the National Endowment for the Arts. For example, Eduardo "Lalo" Guerrero (1916-2005) received a National Heritage Fellowship in 1991. He was a highly acclaimed composer, singer, and bandleader who is considered the father of Chicano music. Artists may also have contributed to the good of their communities by founding arts organizations. For example, Carmen Zapata (1927-2014) began her acting career in the musical *Oklahoma!* in 1946 and worked steadily on Broadway. She moved to California in 1967 and appeared in many television shows and films. In 1972 she co-founded the Screen Actors Guild Ethnic Minority Committee. The following year she co-founded the Bilingual Foundation for the Arts. Properties that are closely associated with the productive lives of prominent persons may qualify for listing in the National Register at the local or state level, depending on their sphere of influence.

#### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria B/2/2, buildings must be closely associated with a Latino who is significant for his or her contributions to the arts. Determining the property that best represents the person's productive life needs to be carefully evaluated. Visual artists and musicians often worked out of studio spaces that may or may not have been connected to their residences. Thus the building in which his or her studio is located would best represent their productive life. If that building no longer exists, the artist or musician's residence may be the only property remaining that is able to represent his or her life's work, and therefore may be eligible. Writers, on the other hand, often worked out of rooms in their homes. As a result, the place that would best represent their productive life would likely be their residence during the period in which they achieved significance.

Properties associated with living persons may qualify, so long as they are no longer creating art, in whatever form that may be. Properties should retain their integrity from the period of time in which the significant individual lived or worked there. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Limited materials replacement or alterations may have occurred. A basic integrity test for a property associated with an important person is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists at the time of evaluation.

## 5.4 Theme #4: Making a Democracy: Latino Struggles for Inclusion

### Property Types Associated with Struggles for Inclusion

#### *Headquarters and Offices of Prominent Organizations*

##### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context were used by Latino civil rights organizations. Few organizations had the means to erect buildings during their formative years, and many organizations survived for only brief periods. Thus, they operated out of donated or rented spaces such as churches, theaters, and commercial buildings. Even as organizations grew and their influence expanded during the 1960s and 1970s, few appear to have constructed their own buildings, preferring instead to rent space in traditional office buildings. In some cases organizations occupied entire buildings; others occupied a few offices or floors in larger buildings. The architectural qualities of such buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Buildings that were used by Latino civil rights organizations in Riverside may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local or state level, depending on their sphere of influence. By 1900, Mexicans began forming organizations to foster community cohesion and mutual support. These groups became critical foundations for activism in later decades. An important early group was the mutualista, or mutual aid society. The Latino civil rights movement in California gained critical momentum in the 1930s as it intersected with the labor movement. Job inequality continued to be considered a civil rights issue for Latinos in subsequent decades.

Several organizations were formed that reflect this vital link between labor rights and civil rights. While these organizations may not have had a presence in Riverside, they are included here by way of comparison, to guide future research and evaluations. Organizations throughout California that might have had a presence in or around Riverside include El Confederación de Uniones Obreras Mexicanas and La Unión de Trabajadores Mexicanos.

Organizations reflected a range of political orientations from conservative to progressive. The League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC) was founded in Texas and spread to California by 1940. LULAC was known to be more conservative in its approach to civil rights and race relations. The group brought about important lawsuits against school segregation. The Congress of Spanish Speaking People (El Congreso) was one of the most important Latino civil rights groups in California. Active from 1939 to approximately 1945, they worked on a variety of issues including housing, voting rights, immigration, police brutality, and education.

In addition, Latino World War II veterans were instrumental in forming several community-based organizations including the Unity Leagues and Community Service Organization, both of which had an active presence in Riverside. Both organizations advocated on a broad array of civil rights issues, and focused on voting rights and electoral politics. In the 1960s and 1970s, the struggle accelerated with the rise of the Chicano movement. Several key national groups were formed in 1968 including the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund and the National Council for La Raza, a national alliance of community-based organizations. In California, affiliates included The East Los Angeles Community Union. Buildings associated with the local chapters of organizations would be significant only at the

local level; those associated with statewide organizations may be significant at the local or state level.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, buildings must be strongly associated with a prominent Latino civil rights organization. It is not necessary for the organization to have constructed the building, only to have occupied it during the period in which the organization gained significance. Buildings should retain sufficient integrity to convey their character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Buildings may be modest in their workmanship and materials due to the limited financial resources of most organizations. Limited materials replacement or alteration may have occurred.

### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Riverside office space, headquarters, or founding place of organizations such as the Community Service Organization, Office of Economic Development, American GI Forum, MAPA, School Integration Advisory Committee, and others

#### *Residences and Offices of Prominent Persons*

### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include the residences and offices of Latino civil rights leaders. Their size, style, and architectural detail will be based upon the location and date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria B/2/2.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Latinos endured widespread discrimination and segregation, despite their significant contributions to California history. This inequity drove a long, unyielding fight for full equality and inclusion in American society. The Latino struggle for inclusion in Riverside and throughout California was led by many individuals from various walks of life, generations, and political orientations.

Persons significant in the context of Latino Struggles for Inclusion may include politicians, attorneys, educators, union organizers, volunteers, community organizers, and housing advocates working on local as well as statewide issues.

By way of example, for future research and evaluations, Edward Roybal (1916-2005) is a prime example of an early Latino civil rights activist who would be significant in this context. Many of his accomplishments occurred more than 50 years ago. Roybal was a co-founder of the Community Service Organization in 1949, served on the Los Angeles City Council from 1949 to 1962, helped organize the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA) in 1960, and served in the US House of Representatives from 1963 to 1993. Properties that are closely associated with the productive lives of prominent persons may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria B/2/2 at the local or state level, depending on their sphere of influence.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria B/2/2, the building must be closely associated with a person who played a prominent role in Latino civil rights history. Determining the property that best represents the person's life needs to be carefully evaluated. If the organization with which the person was affiliated

did not have headquarters or offices, the best representation of his or her productive life may be their residence. Residences may also be eligible if the other properties associated with the individual no longer exist. Properties associated with living persons may qualify, so long as they have retired. Properties should retain their integrity from the period of time in which the significant individual lived or worked there. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association must be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. A basic integrity test for a property associated with an important person is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists at the time of evaluation.

#### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- John Martin Sotelo residence (Streeter Tract, 2427 Pennsylvania Avenue), 1950-1972
- Josephine Lozano residence (2346 12th Street)
- Jesse Ybarra residence (2706 Pleasant Street), 1963-2007
- Simona Valero residence (7443 Diamond Street), Casa Blanca
- Augustine Flores residence (needs research to determine representative, intact properties)
- Juan Acevedo residence (needs research to determine representative, intact properties)
- Subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

#### *Mexican Schools*

##### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include so-called “Mexican schools,” created by public school districts throughout the state for communities with large Mexican populations. As Mexican children were not encouraged or expected to attend school past the eighth grade, Mexican schools were typically designed for elementary school children and located within walking distance to Latino colonias and communities. Mexican schools were often stand-alone classroom buildings and were modest in size and amenities, especially compared with their Anglo counterparts.

The architectural qualities of such buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1. There are at least three known examples remaining in California: Cypress Street School and Westminster School in Orange County, and Casa Blanca School in Riverside. Buildings associated with this context also include schools associated with efforts to end segregation.

As one of three known examples of “Mexican schools” in California, Casa Blanca School in Riverside is recommended as eligible for the NRHP and CRHR, as a local landmark, and as a potential National Historic Landmark.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Schools designated for Mexicans may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local or state level depending on their age and rarity. During the first half of the twentieth century, the vast majority of school districts in California with large Mexican populations practiced segregation. Mexican children were not just physically separated from their Anglo peers, they were usually taught in more crowded classrooms, with less experienced teachers, and with outdated books and materials.

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The greatest difference between schools was the curricula. Mexican schools focused on Americanization and on teaching boys industrial skills and girls domestic skills, as opposed to writing, math, or science. By the end of the 1920s, Mexican children were by far the most segregated ethnic group in the public school system in California. There were numerous grassroots efforts around the state focused on challenging these policies. Early legal victories included *Roberto Alvarez v. Board of Trustees of the Lemon Grove School District* (1931), *Mendez, et al v. Westminster School District of Orange County* (1946), and *Romero v. Weakley* (1950). These court decisions collectively ended de jure educational segregation by the 1950s, but de facto school segregation persisted. Mexican schools are significant in this context because they symbolize the way Mexicans were shut out of mainstream American society and denied equal access to education.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, a school must have been designated for Mexicans by the school district in which it is located, or actively associated with desegregation efforts. Schools with predominately Latino student bodies by virtue of exclusionary housing policies are not eligible in this context.

Schools should retain sufficient integrity to convey their use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Schools may be modest in their workmanship and materials given the limited funds that were spent on their construction. Limited materials replacement or alterations may have occurred, especially if the buildings have been adaptively re-used.

### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Casa Blanca School (3060 Madison Street), 1923-1967 (evaluate along with any associated secondary structures, artwork, such as mural on front elevation; as one of three known “Mexican” schools in California identified by the State Office of Historic Preservation, the Casa Blanca School appears eligible for the NRHP and potentially as a National Historic Landmark)
- Independiente School (though closed in 1948 and re-opened as Hawthorne Elementary School, warrants research to determine if any of the original buildings survive)
- Irving Elementary School (4341 Victoria Avenue); warrants research to determine strength of association and extant buildings
- Lowell Elementary School (4690 Victoria Avenue); warrants research to determine if any original buildings remain
- Parochial school of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church (Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine)

### *Sites of Historic Events associated with the Struggle for Inclusion*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Historic sites associated with this context include places that symbolize injustices and struggles for inclusion as well as the locations of demonstrations and marches related to the Latino civil rights and Chicano movements. These events typically occurred in streets and public parks or in front of public buildings. Unless the public building came to symbolize the historical event, the site should be considered the documented boundaries of the assembly space. These events may be associated

with private buildings as well, and the location of the event has more value than any extant buildings.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

The Latino struggle for inclusion in California was in response to widespread discrimination and segregation that intensified after 1900. Latinos were hemmed into particular neighborhoods and confined to low-wage jobs. The formation of barrios and colonias reinforced segregation in other forums such as churches, recreational facilities, and schools. Latinos used a variety of tactics to reverse discriminatory policies from demonstrations to lawsuits.

By way of comparison, beyond, Riverside, early important actions against educational discrimination were the Los Angeles “Blow-Outs” in the spring of 1968, a series of protests by high school students in East Los Angeles. (In June 2018, the five Los Angeles Unified School District campuses associated with the 1968 Blow-Outs were added to the National Trust of Historic Preservation’s 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in the United States.

In Orange County, the 1943 case *Doss et al. v. Bernal et al.* is an example of a significant legal victory for Latinos in this context. The case revolved around the Bernal family who were sued by their white neighbors for violating the race restrictive covenant on their property. The Bernals hired their own attorney who successfully argued that race restrictive covenants violated the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments. The Bernals' house still stands, and its parcel symbolizes the place and time Latinos broke the color barrier.

In Riverside, similar properties that are closely associated with such events may qualify for federal, state or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local or state level, depending on the impact of the event.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, the historic event must be demonstrably important within the context of Latino Struggles for Inclusion. These will likely be pivotal events that changed the course of the Latino civil rights and Chicano movements. These events must have occurred prior to 1975. To be eligible, the historic site must retain its integrity of location, setting, and feeling from the period in which the event occurred.

### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Lincoln Park and Plunge and Arlington Park and Plunge (if extant representative buildings or features remain)
- Fairmount Park and Plunge (research should determine strength of association, should no remaining examples of segregated parks and pools be identified)
- Lowell Elementary School (4690 Victoria Avenue); warrants research to determine if any extant buildings remain

*Sites of Historic Events*

**DESCRIPTION**

Historic sites associated with this context include the locations of anti-war demonstrations and marches. These events typically occurred in streets and public parks or in front of public buildings. Unless the public building came to symbolize the historical event, the site should be considered the documented boundaries of the assembly space.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Latinos played a significant role in the anti-war movement in the U.S., and eventually decided that they needed to form an all-Chicano group to oppose the war. Rosalio Muñoz and Roberto Elias formed the National Chicano Moratorium Committee, focused on the disproportionately high death rate of Mexican American soldiers in Vietnam. Muñoz and Elias organized anti-war demonstrations and marches throughout the Southwest, including California. The largest of these marches was held in East Los Angeles on August 29, 1970. As such, the march route may qualify for listing in the National Register at the state level. This march, as well as demonstrations held in other cities, helped to bring about an end to the war and shed light on social injustices Latinos faced at home. Other historic sites may qualify for federal, state, or local listing at the local level.

Research conducted to date has not identified any related events or sites in Riverside; should subsequent research identify related events or sites, the following eligibility standards would apply.

**ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, a historic site must be the location of a key demonstration or march in the anti-war movement in Riverside. These events must have occurred during the height of the anti-war movement, November 1969 to August 1971. To be eligible, the historic site must retain its integrity of location, setting, and feeling from the period in which the event occurred.

## 6 Summary and Recommendations

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Riverside is home to one of the oldest, most cohesive Latino communities in California. Across generations, this community was built by pioneering immigrants, migrant workers, community organizers and civil rights leaders, teachers and artists, business owners and volunteers. For well over a century, the Latino community in Riverside has made a vital, immeasurable contribution to the City's growth and prosperity. This Historic Context Statement provides a framework for evaluations, in order to ensure that resources reflecting significant associations with the City's Latino community are identified.

As the City moves forward in using this study and identifying resources significant to the Latino community, several next steps are recommended:

### 1. Carry forward identified resources for intensive-level research, evaluation, and possible landmark designation

This project did not include a citywide survey or intensive-level evaluations. However, based on literature and site visits completed, a number of potential historic resources were identified.

It is recommended that these resources be carried forward for survey, additional research, intensive-level evaluation, and possible landmark designation.

Some resources warrant further research and intensive-level evaluation in order to confirm eligibility. In some cases, research carried out as part of this project has identified a potentially significant individual, organization, or business, but additional information is needed to verify the representative, intact properties and to evaluate its significance and retention of integrity. In other cases, information was not readily available to verify addresses or extant resources reflecting the individual, group, or business. It is recommended that these resources or associations be carried forward for subsequent research and intensive-level evaluation.

### 2. Conduct focused, thematic oral history interviews with community members

For many years, the Latino community's history and contributions in Riverside were marginalized. As a result, the available literature has many data gaps.

In order to continue recuperating the themes, people, and places that were significant to the community over time, it is recommended that the City conduct focused, thematic oral history interviews with community members. In order to optimize the output of the oral histories, these sessions would be interactive, with interviewers preparing in advance the specific research questions to explore, along with available materials.

While data gaps exist for each theme of significance, some of the areas warranting additional research include topics relating to cultural life, arts, music, murals, and literature; recreational life, sports, baseball, boxing, and other activities of importance to the community; settlement and important places for the Latino community in neighborhoods beyond Casa Blanca and Eastside, such as Arlanza, Northside, and Arlington Heights.

Future research should also focus on post-1975 cultural developments, in particular as relates to the Chicano Civil Rights Movement, and Chicano cultural expression.

**3. Implement a neighborhood-by-neighborhood historic resources survey to identify additional resources significant to the Latino community**

Since each neighborhood has a distinct history when it comes to the people, places, and settlement patterns, it is recommended that a city-wide survey of Latino resources take place. Given the differences in settlement patterns and chronology, it is recommended that this survey be phased by neighborhood, in order to ensure that surveyors can correct for any data gaps encountered in the course of research.

**4. Coordinate with local groups and historians (Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society, UC Riverside, California Citrus State Park, among others) to collect and share information (oral histories, photographs and historic documents) in order to continue recuperating the history of Riverside's Latino community.**

In order to recuperate and continue telling the story of Riverside's Latino community, input from the community itself is crucial. This could take the form of focused oral history interviews, photo and document collection, panels and workshops, and other initiatives.

While beyond the scope of the current project, as of 2018, numerous opportunities exist for carrying this project forward in this respect, in order to provide a more comprehensive view of the Latino experience in Riverside.

Focused interviews with community leaders, historians, and long-time members are needed in order to fill the data gaps in topics that are not adequately represented or reflected in the available literature. Ongoing data collection, through collaboration with groups such as the Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society, UC Riverside, California Citrus State Park, and other groups, represents a key next step in order to explore and document the story of the Riverside Latino community.

## 7 Timeline and Milestones<sup>510</sup>

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- 1821 *End of Spanish rule over Mexico, Mexican Independence*
- 1847 *Treaty of Cahuenga signed; the United States takes control of Los Angeles*
- 1848 *California becomes part of the United States as Mexico cedes control in the Treat of Hidalgo*
- 1850 *California becomes the 30<sup>th</sup> state of the United States*
- 1874 In Riverside, the new Anglo-American community creates the Trujillo School District to serve Anglo residents of La Placita, thereby isolating the Mexican community and initiating a nearly century-long period of school segregation
- 1880 Riverside population reaches an estimated 1,358
- 1880 Production of oranges in Riverside climbs from 19 carloads in 1880-1881 to 1,500 carloads by 1889/1890 (with 286 boxes per carload)
- 1890 Riverside population reaches an estimated 4,683
- 1900 Riverside population reaches an estimated 7,973
- 1902 Mexican-American community in Riverside forms the Sociedad de la Vella Union de Trabajadores, a mutual benefit society
- 1906 The Riverside City School Board reaffirms the 1874 decision by ruling that all children must attend school in the attendance district in which they lived, continuing school segregation
- 1907 Mexican-American community in Riverside organizes the Superior de la Union Patriotica y Beneficia Mexicana, dedicated to providing aid and assistance to the community
- 1910 *Mexican Revolution begins in November and spans the next decade, creating unrest in Mexico and triggering widespread immigration to the United States*  
Riverside population reaches an estimated 15,212
- 1915 *The “Home Teachers Act” is passed in California, encouraging the assimilation of immigrant students in the public school system*
- 1917 *Passage of US Immigration Act – “Marks a turning point in US immigration policy, while the new law does not significantly reduce the numbers of people emigrating from Mexico, it does have an impact on the circular pattern of migration established in previous decades.*  
*US enters World War I; 4,900 Mexicans and Mexican-Americans voluntarily register for the draft. Faced with labor shortage, US allows for influx of “temporary” Mexican workers, who are encouraged to come to the United States.*
- 1920 Riverside population reaches an estimated 19,341
- 1921 *Immigration Act of 1921 imposes limits on legal immigration; LA LHCS: “agricultural businesses from California and Texas successfully oppose efforts to limit the immigration of Mexicans who are critical to their success”*
- 1924 *Immigration Act of 1924 creates the Border Patrol*

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- 1925 *US Congress creates Border Patrol in order to decrease illegal border crossings. Initial focus is on Chinese immigrants.*
- 1926 *Spanish-language newspaper La Opinion founded.*
- 1927 *Establishment the first large-scale union serving Mexican and Mexican-American workers, the Confederacion de Uniones Obreras Mexicanas (Federation of Mexican Workers Union, CUOM)*
- 1930 Rise of nativist, anti-immigrant sentiment with the onset of the Great Depression.
- 1930 Riverside population reaches an estimated 29,696
- 1932 *As Great Depression takes hold, US government begins “voluntary” repatriation program, which results in the expulsion and deportations of an estimated 500,000 Mexican-Americans through the course of the decade.*
- 1940 Riverside population reaches an estimated 34,696
- 1941 *US entry into World War II again creates a labor shortage and allows an increasing number of Mexican-Americans to branch out from jobs in agriculture and to secure employment in new sectors, such as defense-related employment and manufacturing*
- Hundreds of thousands of Latinos enlist to serve in the armed forces during World War II, including dozens from Riverside
- The Fair Employment Practices Committee formed by federal government to review complaints of job discrimination. Among initial complaints, more than one-third are filed by Latino workers from the US southwest.*
- 1942 *The Bracero Program established, allowing temporary residency status for Mexican workers in the United States.*
- 1943 *Zoot Suit riots in Los Angeles, a ten-day period during which young Latinos are harassed and beaten by US sailors.*
- 1945 Riverside population reaches an estimated 43,939
- 1947 *As a result of Mendez v. Westminster, racial segregation of schools is found unconstitutional under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment.*
- Community Service Organization is founded to organize and engage Mexican-American voters. In 1960, Cesar Chavez leads voter registration drives in Riverside.*
- 1948 *Through Shelley v. Kraemer, the US Supreme Court finds that exclusionary deed restrictions are unenforceable.*
- 1950 Riverside population reaches an estimated 46,764; citrus groves and agricultural lands increasingly give way to new housing tracts and development.
- 1953 *US Immigration Service rounds up an estimated 3.8 million Latinos throughout the country, as part of “Operation Wetback.” Many US citizens and activists unjustly deported.*
- 1954 *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education ruling by US Supreme Court finds state laws providing for segregated public schools unconstitutional.*
- 1960 Riverside population reaches an estimated 84,332

- Cesar Chavez’s Community Service Organization leads voter registration drives in Riverside’s Casa Blanca neighborhood.
- 1964 *The landmark Civil Rights Act is signed into law, outlawing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The law further prohibited discrimination and segregation in schools, the work place, and public spaces and institutions.*
- 1965 *The Immigration and Nationality Act becomes law, establishing strict quotas for numbers of immigrants permitted from countries throughout the Western Hemisphere.*
- 1965 Riverside population reaches an estimated 133,200
- Following pressure from a multi-ethnic coalition of Latino and African-American parents and their allies, Riverside Unified School District announces plans for school desegregation in October. The controversial plans called for immediate closure of Lowell Elementary, Irving Elementary, and Casa Blanca Elementary.
- Led by Cesar Chavez, the United Farm Workers start a strike in Delano, California, protesting poor working conditions by grape growers.*
- 1966 Riverside population reaches an estimated 136,800
- 1968 *“Blowouts” in East Los Angeles high schools, as thousands of Latino students stage walk-outs and protests*
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund established*
- Federal Bilingual Education Act becomes law; Martin Luther King, Jr. assassinated; Federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability*
- 1969 UC Riverside launches one of the first Mexican-American/Chicano Studies departments in the US, led by Professor Carlos Cortés and Alfredo Castaneda
- Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MECHA) founded at UC Santa Barbara*
- 1970 *US Department of Health, Education and Welfare prohibits denial of education to non-English speakers*
- Prominent Los Angeles Times journalist Ruben Salazar killed during Chicano Moratorium in Los Angeles.*
- The Riverside Unified School District releases “The Mexican American,” a source book to assist the classroom teacher in Riverside “in better understanding and teaching about the Southwest’s largest minority, the Mexican American.” Publication funded through Title I and sponsored by the federal Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- 1974 *US Congress enacts the Equal Educational Opportunity Act to increase availability to bilingual education*
- 1975 *US Voting Rights Act expanded to require language assistance for voters at polling stations, increasing access and representation for Latinos in the United States*

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# Appendix A

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Summary of Potentially Eligible Resources and Resources Recommended for Further Survey and Research

**Table 1 Previously Designated/Potentially Eligible Resources Warranting Further Survey and Research**

| CHS Status Code | Property Name (Date of Construction)          | Address  | Applicable Theme(s) of Significance   | Criteria        | Current Eligibility Status and Recommended Next Steps   |
|-----------------|---|--|---|-----------------|---|
| 1S              | Community Settlement Association (1947)       | 4366 Bermuda Avenue  | "Making a Nation" and Theme #3: Making a Life (OHP, 2015)   | A               | NRHP listed in 12/2017; automatically added to CRHR<br><br>Local landmark designation recommended   |
| 3S              | Trujillo Adobe (1863 ca)                      | Center and North Orange Streets<br><br>(Last remaining adobe residence from 1860s)   | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Immigration and Settlement<br><br>Designated as a County and City of Riverside Landmark  | A/1/1,<br>C/3/3 | Locally designated<br><br>Eligible for NRHP and CRHR<br><br>One of Hispanic Access's Top 10 Latino sites in the US  |
| 3S              | Casa Blanca Depot Canary Island trees         | Former location of Casa Blanca Train Depot   | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Immigration and Settlement   | D               | Depot foundations and associated trees identified as NRHP eligible (PCR, 2001)  |
| 3S              | Casa Blanca Elementary School (1923)          | 3060 Madison Avenue<br><br>(Survey should include school as well as any related support structures, recreational fields, artwork)                            | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Community Building and Mutual Assistance<br><br>Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Cultural Development<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Education                               | A/1/1,<br>C/3/3 | Eligible for NRHP, CRHR, as a local landmark<br><br>OHP identified as one of three known "Mexican schools" in California<br><br>Potentially eligible as National Historic Landmark<br><br>High priority for intensive-level study and designation |
| 3S              | Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine (1929) | 2858 Ninth Street<br><br>(Survey should include church, as well as adjacent school, related support structures, recreational fields, artwork as appropriate) | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Community Building and Mutual Assistance<br><br>Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Religion and Spirituality<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation | A/1/1,<br>C/3/3 | Eligible for NRHP, CRHR, as a local landmark<br><br>Potentially eligible as National Historic Landmark<br><br>High priority for intensive-level study and designation   |

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| CHS Status Code             | Property Name (Date of Construction)   | Address   | Applicable Theme(s) of Significance   | Criteria        | Current Eligibility Status and Recommended Next Steps  |
|-----------------------------|--|---|---|-----------------|--|
| Pending research and survey | St. Anthony’s Catholic Church (congregation established 1921; church constructed 1975) | 3056 Madison Street<br>(Church and associated properties)   | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Community Building and Mutual Assistance<br><br>Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Religion and Spirituality<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation | A/1/1,<br>C/3/3 | Pending additional research and survey<br><br>Congregation dates to 1921; 1923 church was replaced in mid-1970s.   |
| 3S                          | Casa Blanca Home of Neighborly Service   | 7680 Casa Blanca Street<br>(Office building, grounds, murals where extant)  | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Community Building and Mutual Assistance<br><br>Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Culture/Arts  | A/1/1           | Potentially eligible for NRHP, CRHR and as local landmark<br><br>Further research and evaluation should include associated recreational spaces, and artwork (such as Roy Duarte murals from 1972, on interior and exterior spaces)   |
| Pending survey and research | Casa Blanca Citrus Workers Settlement, 1900-1930                                       | Roughly centered on Casa Blanca “hub” near railroad tracks, along Madison Street, to include concentration of early 20 <sup>th</sup> -century Hall and Parlor houses along Evans Street | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Immigration and Settlement<br><br>Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Citrus and Agriculture Workers  | A/1/1           | Potentially eligible as a historic district for NRHP, CRHR and/or for local designation<br><br>Survey and evaluation to consider the boundaries and representative, intact examples of residences, planning features, and other associated properties reflecting the early era of Latino citrus-worker settlement in Casa Blanca |
| 1S                          | Riverside-Arlington Heights Fruit Exchange (Sunkist Building or Citrus Exchange)       | 3391 Seventh Street   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Citrus and Agriculture Workers   | A/1/1           | Property was listed in NRHP in 1979.<br><br>Pending research, designation could be updated to add Theme #2: Making a Living theme of significance, to capture association with Latino labor  |
| 3S                          | Victoria Shell Station (Arco Station)  | 14 <sup>th</sup> Street and Victoria Street   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education  | A/1/1           | Potentially eligible as a pioneering, Latino-owned business, established by John Sotelo<br><br>Further research and survey recommended   |

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| CHS Status Code | Property Name (Date of Construction)      | Address   | Applicable Theme(s) of Significance  | Criteria        | Current Eligibility Status and Recommended Next Steps   |
|-----------------|---|---|--|-----------------|---|
| 3S              | John Martin Sotelo, residence (1950-1972) | 2427 Pennsylvania Avenue  | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Building a Civil Rights Movement   | B/2/2           | Potentially eligible as long-time home of Riverside Latino business owner, World War II veteran, politician, and civil rights leader, John Martin Sotelo<br><br>High priority for designation<br><br>Research, survey, and landmark designation recommended                               |
| 3S              | Simona Valero residence                   | 7443 Diamond Street   | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Community Building and Mutual Assistance<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Building a Civil Rights Movement          | B/2/2           | Potentially eligible as home of life-long Casa Blanca community leader, organizer, activist, and anti-poverty worker, Simona Valero<br><br>High priority for subsequent research and survey   |
| 3S              | Mendoza Market/El Amigo Market            | 3199 Madison Street   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education   | A/1/1,<br>B/2/2 | Potentially eligible as one of the earliest Latino-owned businesses in Riverside<br><br>Potentially eligible for association with Victor and Lola Mendoza<br><br>High priority for subsequent research and survey   |
| 3S              | Zacatecas Café (Commercial property)      | Park and University Avenues (1963-1985); 2472 University Avenue, 1985-2016) | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation | A/1/1           | Potentially eligible as a significant, long-time Latino-owned business, still in operation<br><br>Significant community gathering place during era of segregation<br><br>Further research and survey recommended to determine which location is most appropriate for landmark designation |

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| CHS Status Code | Property Name (Date of Construction)   | Address  | Applicable Theme(s) of Significance   | Criteria | Current Eligibility Status and Recommended Next Steps  |
|-----------------|--|--|---|----------|--|
| 3S              | Chavarrias Store (1939-1985)/Tony's Market   | 4098 Park Avenue   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education  | A/1/1    | Potentially eligible as an important, long-time Latino-owned business, still in operation<br><br>Further research and survey recommended                           |
| 3S              | Ysmael Villegas residence  | 3105 Madison Street  | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Latinos in the Military  | B/2/2    | Potentially eligible<br><br>High priority for further research and survey  |
| Pending         | Sergeant Jesus S. Duran residence  | Pending research to identify extant, representative property           | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Latinos in the Military  | B/2/2    | Vietnam War veteran and one of three Congressional Medal of Honor recipients from Riverside Latino community<br><br>High priority for further research and survey  |
| Pending         | Staff Sergeant Salvador J. Lara residence  | Pending research to identify extant, representative property           | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Latinos in the Military  | B/2/2    | World War II veteran and one of three Congressional Medal of Honor recipients from Riverside Latino community<br><br>High priority for further research and survey |
| Pending         | Corporal Dario G. Vasquez residence  | Pending research to identify extant, representative property           | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Latinos in the Military  | B/2/2    | Decorated World War II veteran and casualty<br><br>High priority for further research and survey   |
| 3S              | Ysmael Villegas Park (includes recreational fields, handball court, overall configuration, circulation corridors, and other features)<br><br>1941 to present | 3091 Esperanza Street (Park; evaluate as potential cultural landscape) | Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Rec/Sports<br>Subtheme: Culture/Arts<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation | A/1/1    | Potentially eligible for NRHP, CRHR, or as a local landmark<br><br>High priority for additional research and survey  |

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| CHS Status Code             | Property Name (Date of Construction)  | Address  | Applicable Theme(s) of Significance   | Criteria        | Current Eligibility Status and Recommended Next Steps   |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|-----------------|---|
| 5S                          | Agua Mansa Bell (1865)  | Mission Inn (currently housed in hotel art collection)   | Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Religion and Spirituality  | 1               | Potentially locally eligible<br><br>Rare remnant of early settlement in Riverside<br><br>Associated with Latino labor<br><br>Recommended for further research to confirm eligibility  |
| 3S                          | Daniel “Chano” Gonzales mural, UC Riverside, Chicano Student Programs   | 145 Costo Hall, University of California, Riverside  | Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Culture/Arts   | A/1/1,<br>C/3/3 | 1975 mural, created by Chano Gonzales for the UC Riverside Chicano Student Programs office in Rivera Library.<br><br>Mural relocated to 145 Costo Hall.<br><br>High priority for further research and survey                |
| 3S                          | Josephine Lozano residence  | 2346 - 12th Street   | Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation<br>Subtheme: Building a Civil Rights Movement  | B/2/2           | Potentially eligible as long-time home of Riverside community leader, organizer, and civil rights activist, Josephine Lozano<br><br>High priority for further research and survey   |
| Pending survey and research | Office space, headquarters, or founding location of La Sociedad Progresista Mexicana, La Sociedad Hispano Americano (and other organizations) | Addition intensive-level research needed to determine original locations and representative properties | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Community Building and Mutual Assistance<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation   | A/1/1           | Limited information is available on the original locations, meeting places, or founding places for these organizations.<br><br>Further research is recommended  |
| Pending survey and research | Jesse Ybarra residence  | 2706 Pleasant Street (Ybarra family home from 1963-2007)   | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Community Building and Mutual Assistance<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation<br>Subtheme: Building a Civil Rights Movement | B/2/2           | Potentially eligible as long-time home of Riverside community leader, organizer, and civil rights activist, Jesse Ybarra<br><br>High priority for designation<br><br>Research, survey, and landmark designation recommended |

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| CHS Status Code             | Property Name (Date of Construction)            | Address   | Applicable Theme(s) of Significance   | Criteria        | Current Eligibility Status and Recommended Next Steps  |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|-----------------|--|
| Pending survey and research | Juan Acevedo residence                          | Pending research and survey   | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Community Building and Mutual Assistance<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation<br>Subtheme: Building a Civil Rights Movement | B/2/2           | Potentially eligible for association with first Latino member of the California Youth Authority Board, early Community Settlement House director, civil rights activist, and American GI Forum co-founder and member, Juan Acevedo<br><br>High priority for subsequent research and survey |
| Pending survey and research | Streeter Housing Tract, Eastside (1950)         | Pending survey; roughly bounded by 14 <sup>th</sup> Street (north), Sedgwick Street (east), Pennsylvania Avenue (south), and High Street (west) | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Immigration and Settlement<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Housing  | A/1/1,<br>C/3/3 | Postwar housing tract<br><br>One of three housing tracts in Riverside open to minority buyers, prior to 1968 Federal Fair Housing Act  |
| Pending survey and research | Los Ranchitos Housing Tract, Casa Blanca (1954) | Pending survey; roughly bounded by Lincoln Avenue (north), Sonora Place (east), Santa Rosa Way (south), and Madison Street (west)               | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Immigration and Settlement<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Housing  | A/1/1,<br>C/3/3 | Postwar housing tract<br><br>One of three housing tracts in Riverside open to minority buyers, prior to 1968 Federal Fair Housing Act  |
| Pending survey and research | Woods Subdivision (ca. 1955)                    | Eastside neighborhood, pending survey; roughly bounded by 12 <sup>th</sup> Street (north) and Kansas Street (west)                              | Theme #1: Making a Home<br>Subtheme: Immigration and Settlement<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Housing  | A/1/1,<br>C/3/3 | Postwar housing tract<br><br>One of three housing tracts in Riverside open to minority buyers, prior to 1968 Federal Fair Housing Act  |
| Pending survey and research | Augustine Flores residence                      | Research needed to determine representative, extant property  | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Building a Civil Rights Movement  | B/2/2           | Potentially eligible as long-time home of Riverside Latino business owner, World War II veteran, city commissioner, and American GI Forum leader, Augustine Flores<br><br>Research and survey recommended  |

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|-----------------------------|--|--|--|----------|--|
| Needs research              | Citrus-related properties                            | Pending survey   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Citrus and Agriculture Workers  | A/1/1    | Recommend additional survey work focusing on intact citrus-industry properties (groves, packinghouses, related support structures) adjacent to Latino neighborhoods that reflect early history of Latino labor |
| Needs research              | Residences of long-time, accomplished citrus workers | Pending survey and research; examples might include homes of Jess Avila, Henry Bermudez, Ilario Alfaro, Melchor Rangel, among others | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Citrus and Agriculture Workers  | B/2/2    | Research should focus on identifying the residences or other associated properties for long-time, accomplished citrus workers  |
| Pending survey and research | Lincoln Park (1924 to present)                       | 4261 Park Avenue (Park; evaluate as potential cultural landscape)  | Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Rec/Sports<br>Subtheme: Culture/Arts<br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation            | A/1/1    | Potentially eligible for NRHP, CRHR, or as a local landmark<br>High priority for additional research and survey  |
| Pending survey and research | Bordwell Park  | 2008 Martin Luther King Blvd. (Park; evaluate as potential cultural landscape)   | Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Rec/Sports<br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation                                      | A/1/1    | Pending survey and research  |
| Pending survey and research | Lincoln Boxing Club                                  | Pending subsequent research to identify representative property  | Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Rec/Sports  | A/1/1    | Pending survey and research  |
| Pending research and survey | Checkie's Café (1940s)                               | 4120 Park Avenue, Eastside   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education<br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation | A/1/1    | Potentially eligible as an important, long-time Latino-owned business<br>Provided a community gathering place during era of segregation<br>Further research and survey recommended                             |

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| <b>CHS Status Code</b>      | <b>Property Name (Date of Construction)</b> | <b>Address</b>  | <b>Applicable Theme(s) of Significance</b>   | <b>Criteria</b> | <b>Current Eligibility Status and Recommended Next Steps</b>  |
|-----------------------------|---|---|--|-----------------|---|
| Pending research and survey | Mars' Barbershop                            | 8739 Cypress Avenue, Arlanza  | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education   | A/1/1,<br>B/2/2 | Potentially eligible as an important, long-time Latino-owned business<br>Further research and survey recommended  |
| Pending research and survey | Leo and Mela's Market                       | 8041 Cypress Avenue, Arlanza (this was address for new expanded store in 1960; research needed) | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education   | A/1/1,<br>B/2/2 | Potentially eligible as an important, long-time Latino-owned business<br>Further research and survey recommended  |
| Pending research and survey | Teen's Furniture Store                      | Pending research and survey   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education   | A/1/1,<br>B/2/2 | Potentially eligible as an important, long-time Latino-owned business<br>Further research and survey recommended  |
| Pending research and survey | Bob's TV and Radio                          | Pending research and survey   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education   | A/1/1           | Potentially eligible as an important, long-time Latino-owned business<br>Further research and survey recommended  |
| Pending research and survey | Carlos's Market                             | 2993 Fourteenth Street, Eastside  | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education   | A/1/1,<br>B/2/2 | Potentially eligible as an important, long-time Latino-owned business<br>Further research and survey recommended  |
| Pending research and survey | Leon's Mexican Restaurant                   | 7778 Evans Street, Casa Blanca  | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation | A/1/1           | Potentially eligible as an important, long-time Latino-owned business<br>Provided a community gathering place during an era of segregation<br>Further research and survey recommended |

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| CHS Status Code             | Property Name (Date of Construction)                                  | Address   | Applicable Theme(s) of Significance  | Criteria        | Current Eligibility Status and Recommended Next Steps   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|--|-----------------|---|
| Pending research and survey | Manuel’s Cafe   | Cary and Evans Street, Casa Blanca (pending survey)   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation | A/1/1           | Potentially eligible as an important, long-time Latino-owned business<br><br>Provided a community gathering place during an era of segregation<br><br>Further research and survey recommended |
| Pending research and survey | Ahumada Market and Restaurant   | Casa Blanca (location appears to have changed; research recommended to confirm historic and current location)         | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education<br><br>Theme #4: Making a Democracy<br>Subtheme: Community Responses to Segregation | A/1/1           | Potentially eligible as an important, long-time Latino-owned business<br><br>Provided a community gathering place during an era of segregation<br><br>Further research and survey recommended |
| Pending research and survey | Chavez Auto Store   | Madison and Evans Streets   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education   | A/1/1           | Potentially eligible as an important, long-time Latino-owned business<br><br>Further research and survey recommended  |
| Pending survey and research | Concentrations of Latino-owned businesses, along commercial corridors | Possible areas include University Avenue, Park Avenue, Madison Avenue, Evans Street, among others throughout the city | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education   | A/1/1,<br>B/2/2 | Further research and survey recommended to identify any intact concentrations of Latino-owned businesses meeting registration requirements  |
| Pending survey and research | Dr. Raymond Buriel residence  | Cassia Street, Riverside; and 257 Cannon Road, Riverside, 1989-2016   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education   | B/2/2           | Potentially eligible for association with Dr. Raymond Buriel<br><br>Further research and survey recommended to identify representative, extant property                                       |
| Pending survey and research | Ernest Z. Robles residence  | Research needed to identify representative property   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Pioneers in Commerce, Business, and Education   | B/2/2           | Potentially eligible for association with leading community educator and administrator Ernest Z. Robles<br><br>Further research and survey needed to identify representative, extant property |

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

| CHS Status Code             | Property Name (Date of Construction)   | Address   | Applicable Theme(s) of Significance                            | Criteria        | Current Eligibility Status and Recommended Next Steps  |
|-----------------------------|--|---|--|-----------------|--|
| Pending research and survey | Ysmael Villegas American Legion Post (1949)  | Research needed to identify representative, extant property                   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Latinos in the Military | A/1/1           | Potentially eligible as a postwar American Legion Post established for Mexican-American veterans of World War II<br><br>Further research and survey needed to identify representative, extant property |
| Pending research and survey | Dario Vasquez American Legion Post   | Research needed to identify representative, extant property                   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Latinos in the Military | A/1/1           | Potentially eligible as a postwar American Legion Post established for Mexican-American veterans of World War II<br><br>Further research and survey needed to identify representative, extant property |
| Pending research and survey | Riverside Branch, American GI Forum  | Research needed to identify representative, extant property                   | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Latinos in the Military | A/1/1           | Potentially eligible as a highly influential Mexican-American veterans group created in response to segregation<br><br>Further research and survey needed to identify representative, extant property  |
| Pending research            | US Army soldier Isidro Diaz residence  | Pending research to identify extant, representative property                  | Theme #2: Making a Living<br>Subtheme: Latinos in the Military | B/2/2           | One of few known Latino veterans of World War I from Riverside<br><br>Research and survey recommended  |
| Pending survey and research | Roy Duarte murals, where extant (Home of Neighborly Service, Villegas Park, Casa Blanca School, among other locations) | Pending further research and survey to identify extant, representative murals | Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Culture/Arts              | A/1/1,<br>C/3/3 | One of two identified Chicano muralists from Riverside practicing in the late 1960s and early 1970s<br><br>High priority for further research and survey   |
| Pending survey and research | Jim Gutierrez murals, where extant (Villegas Park, Casa Blanca School, among other locations)                          | Pending further research and survey to identify extant, representative murals | Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Culture/Arts              | A/1/1,<br>C/3/3 | One of two identified Chicano muralists from Riverside practicing in the late 1960s and early 1970s<br><br>High priority for further research and survey   |

**Latino Historic Context Statement**

| CHS Status Code             | Property Name (Date of Construction) | Address  | Applicable Theme(s) of Significance               | Criteria                  | Current Eligibility Status and Recommended Next Steps  |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|---------------------------|--|
| Pending survey and research | Esau Quiroz residence (or murals)    | Pending further research and survey to identify extant, representative associated property or murals | Theme #3: Making a Life<br>Subtheme: Culture/Arts | A/1/1,<br>B/2/2,<br>C/3/3 | Chicano artist, native of Mexico, and UC Riverside student, practicing in the early 1970s<br><br>High priority for further research and survey |

# Appendix B

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Dates of Construction, by decade, for Casa Blanca, Eastside, Arlanza, and Northside  
Neighborhoods

City of Riverside  
Latino Historic Context Statement

Figure 1 Construction Dates, 1910-1919, Casa Blanca Neighborhood



City of Riverside  
Latino Historic Context Statement

Figure 2 Construction Dates, 1920-1929, Casa Blanca Neighborhood



Figure 3 Construction Dates, 1930-1939, Casa Blanca Neighborhood



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Figure 4 Construction Dates, 1940-1949, Casa Blanca Neighborhood



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Figure 5 Construction Dates, 1950-1959, Casa Blanca Neighborhood



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Figure 6 Construction Dates, 1960-1969, Casa Blanca Neighborhood



City of Riverside  
 Latino Historic Context Statement

Figure 7 Compiled Construction Dates, 1880-2000, Casa Blanca Neighborhood

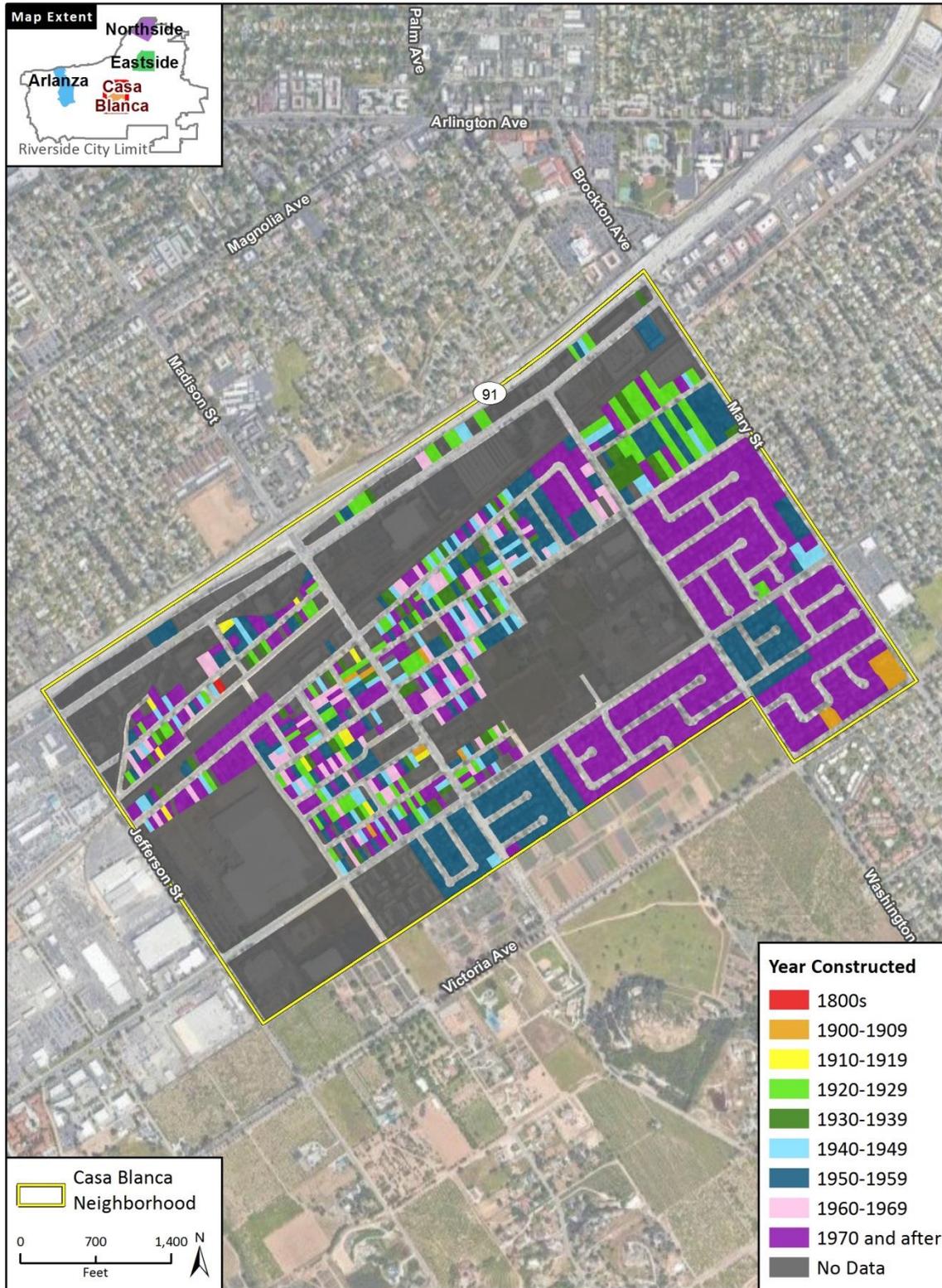
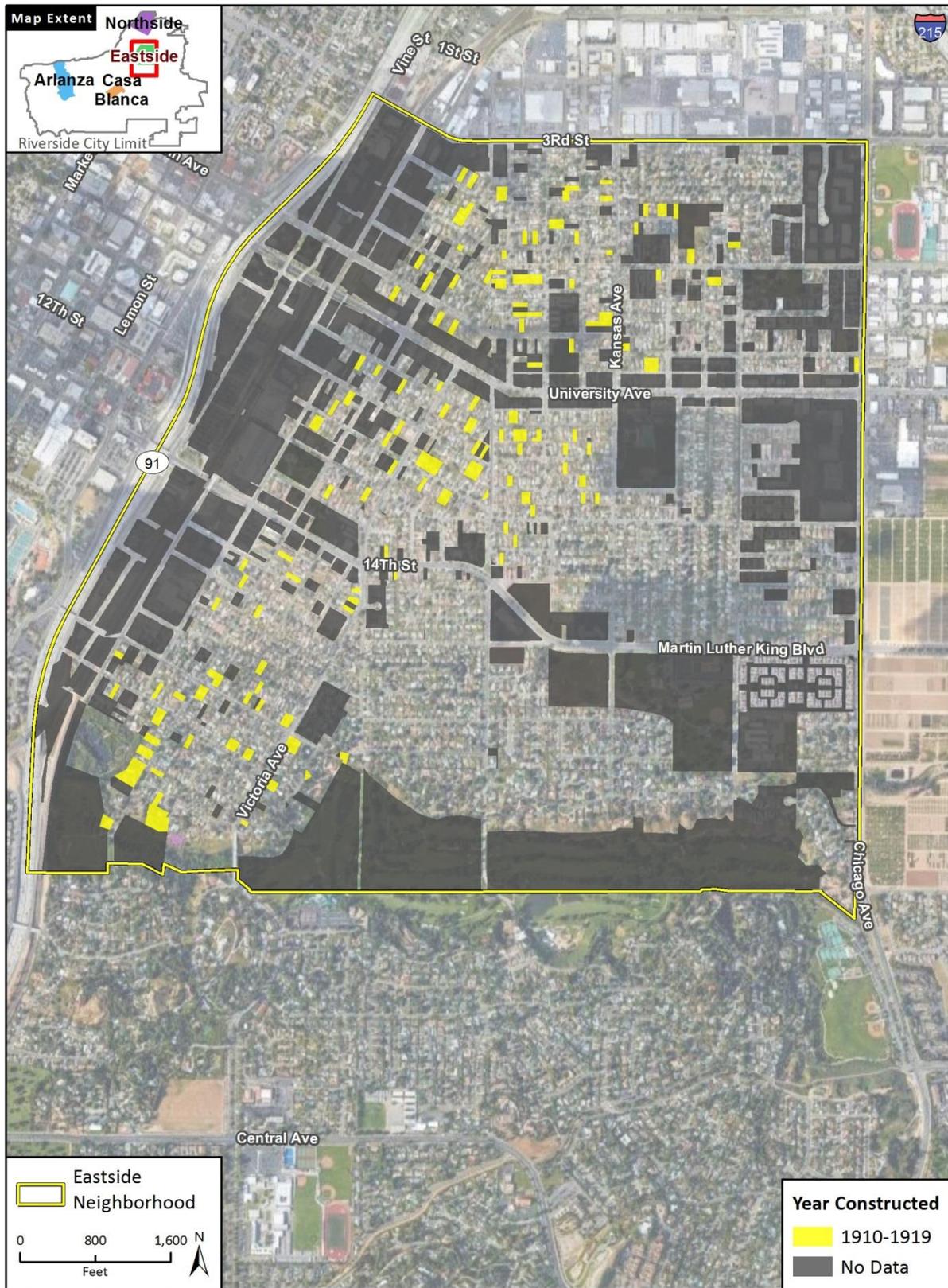
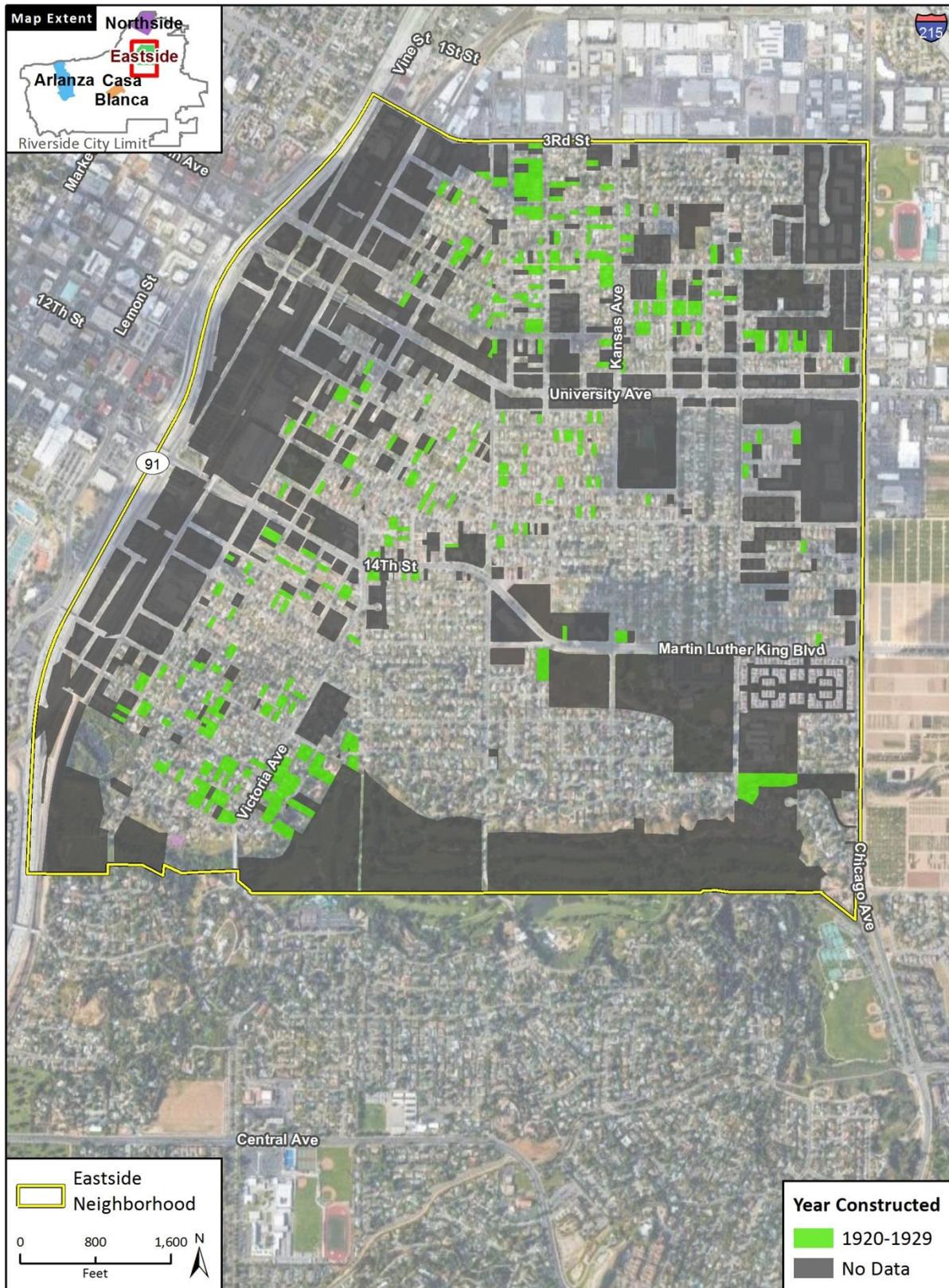


Figure 8 Construction Dates, 1910-1919, Eastside Neighborhood



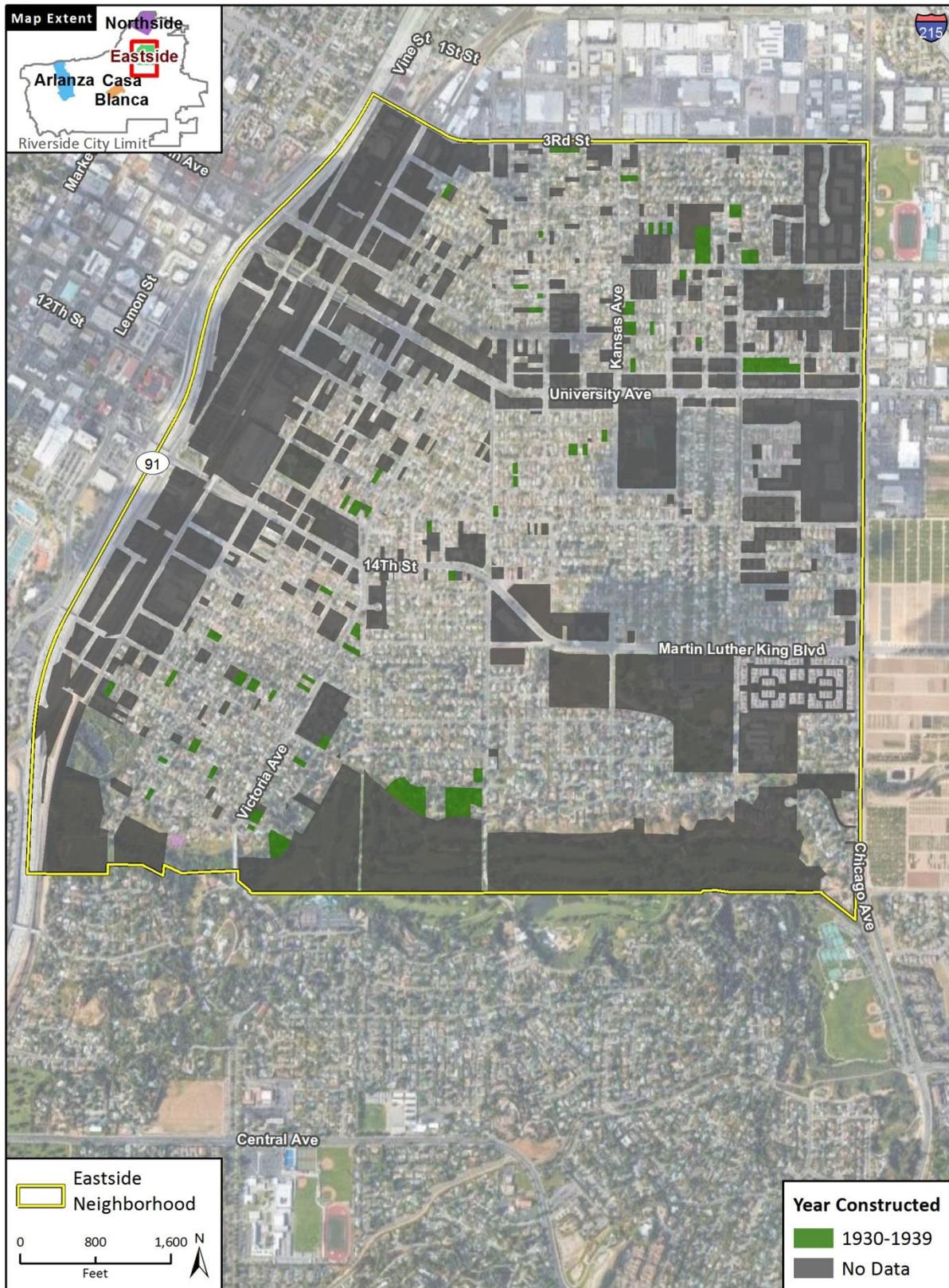
City of Riverside  
Latino Historic Context Statement

Figure 9 Construction Dates, 1920-1929, Eastside Neighborhood



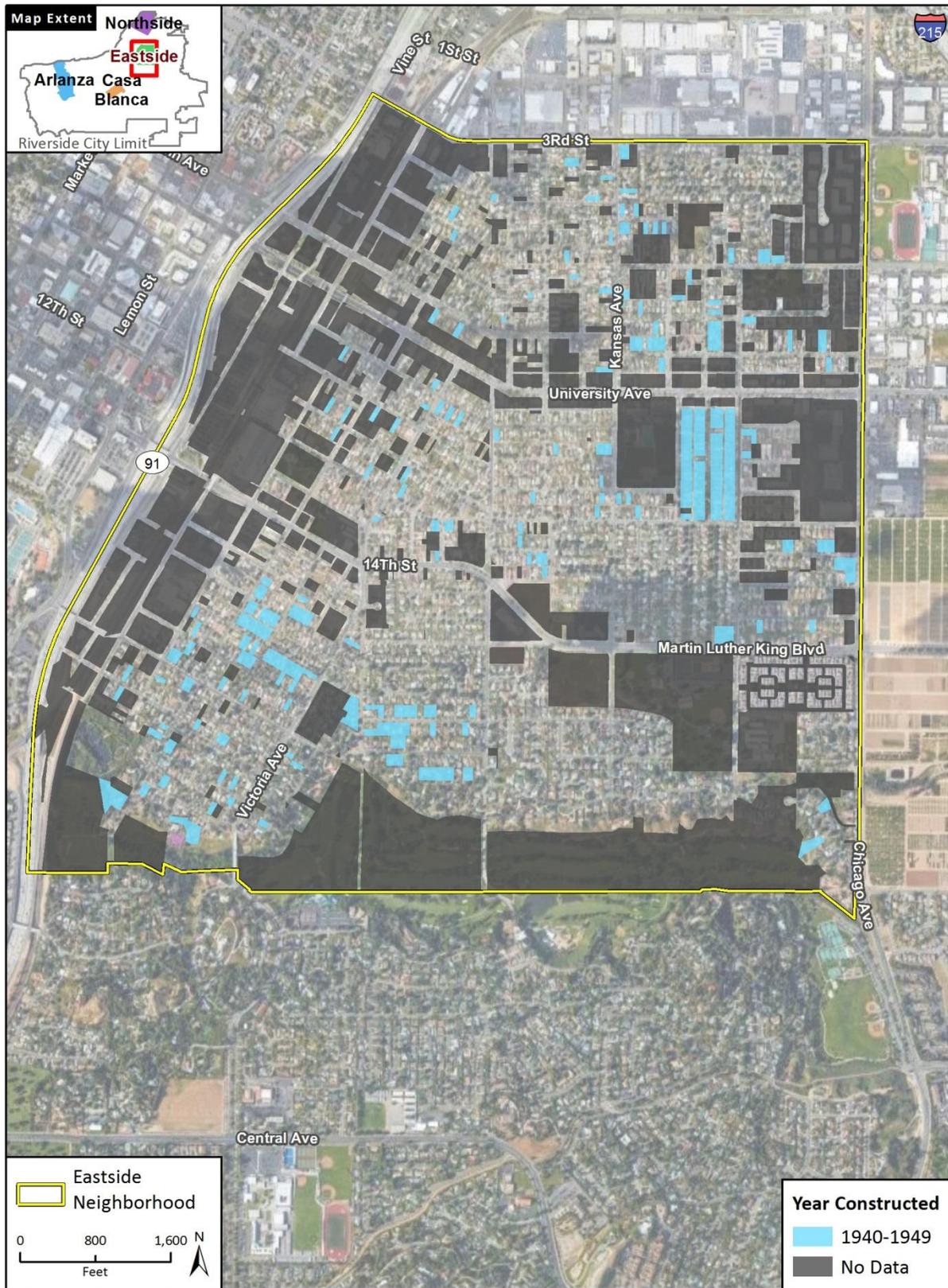
City of Riverside  
 Latino Historic Context Statement

Figure 10 Construction Dates, 1930-1939, Eastside Neighborhood



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Figure 11 Construction Dates, 1940-1949, Eastside Neighborhood



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Figure 12 Construction Dates, 1950-1959, Eastside Neighborhood

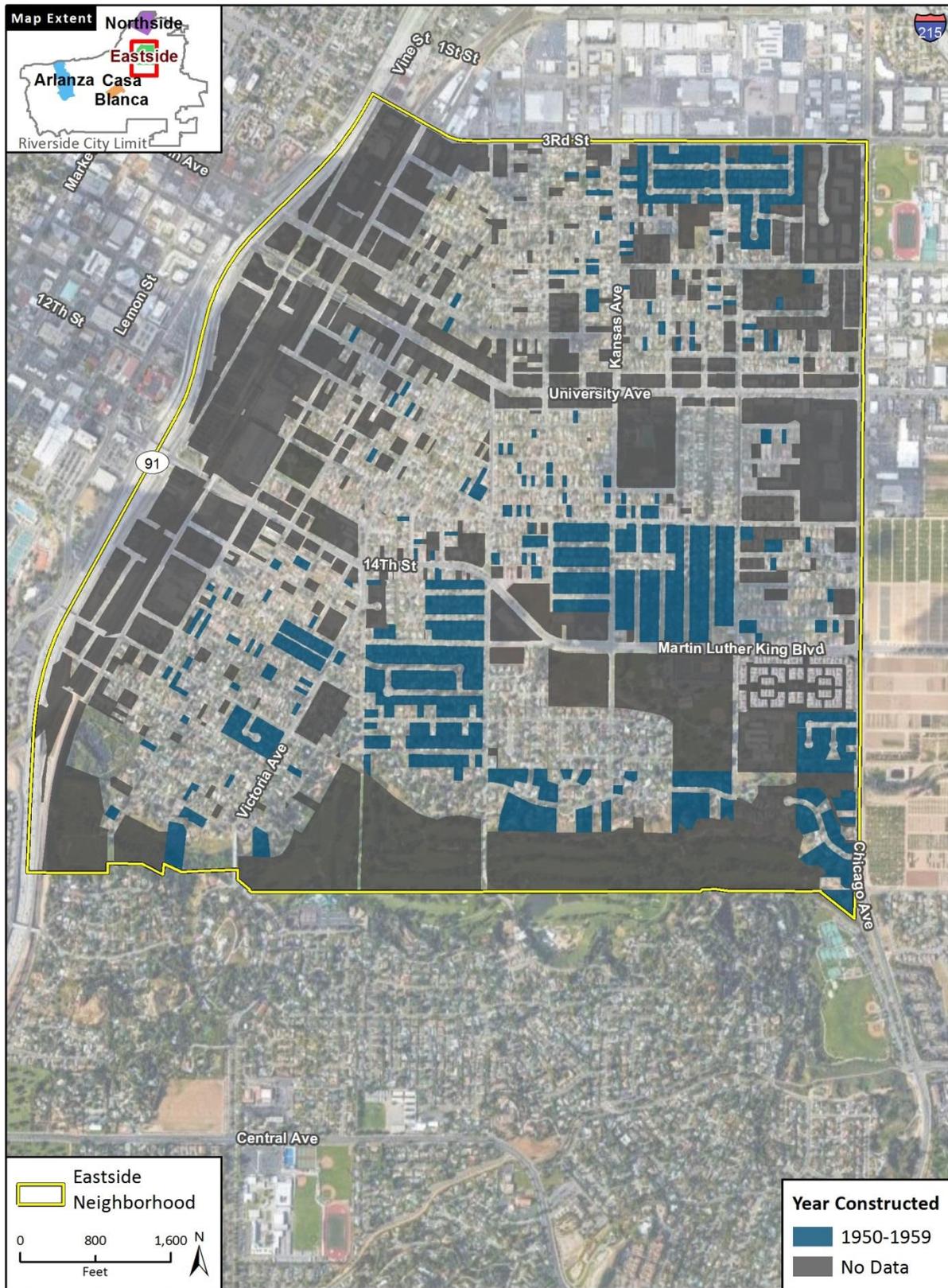
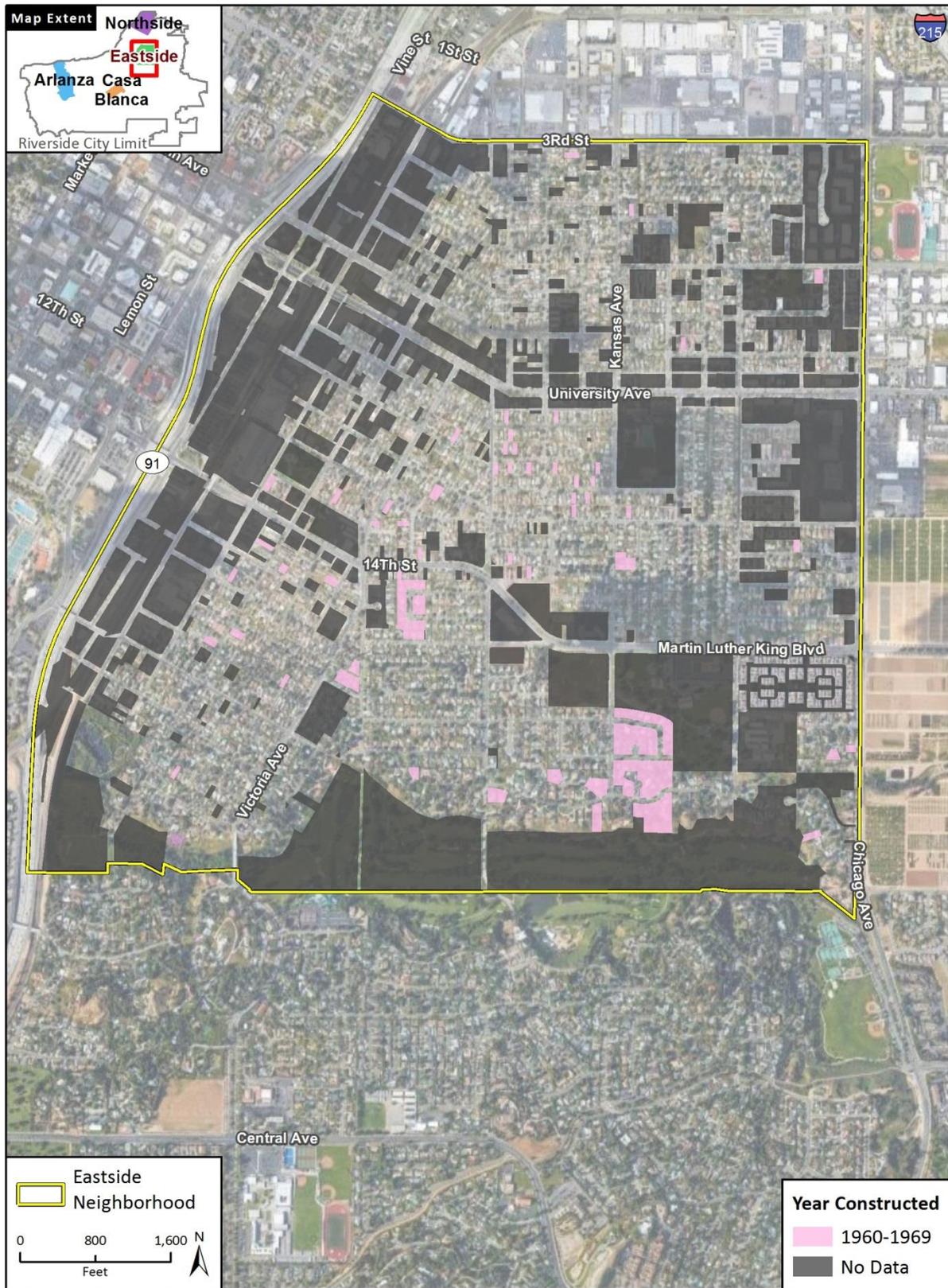
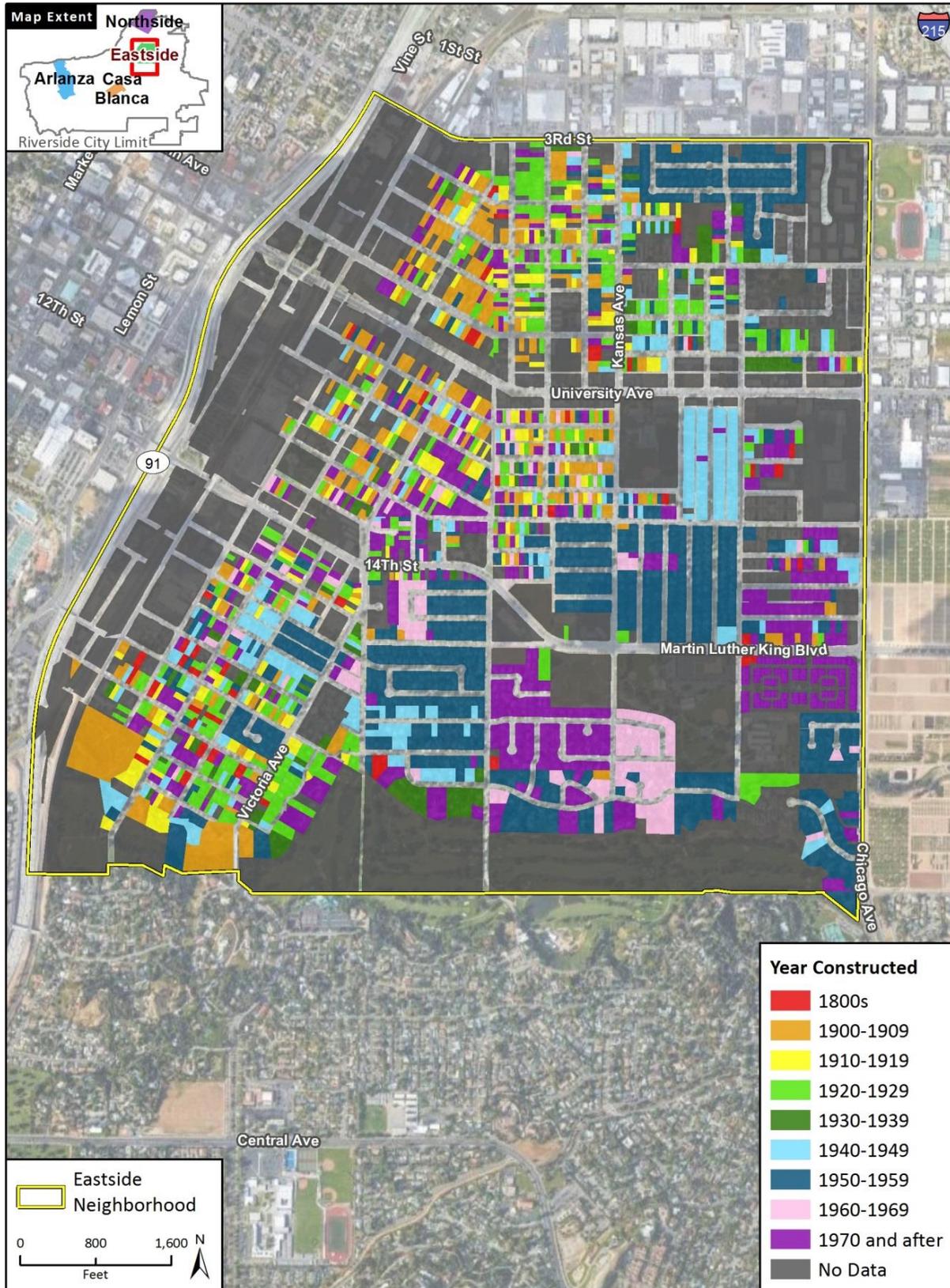


Figure 13 Construction Dates, 1960-1969, Eastside Neighborhood



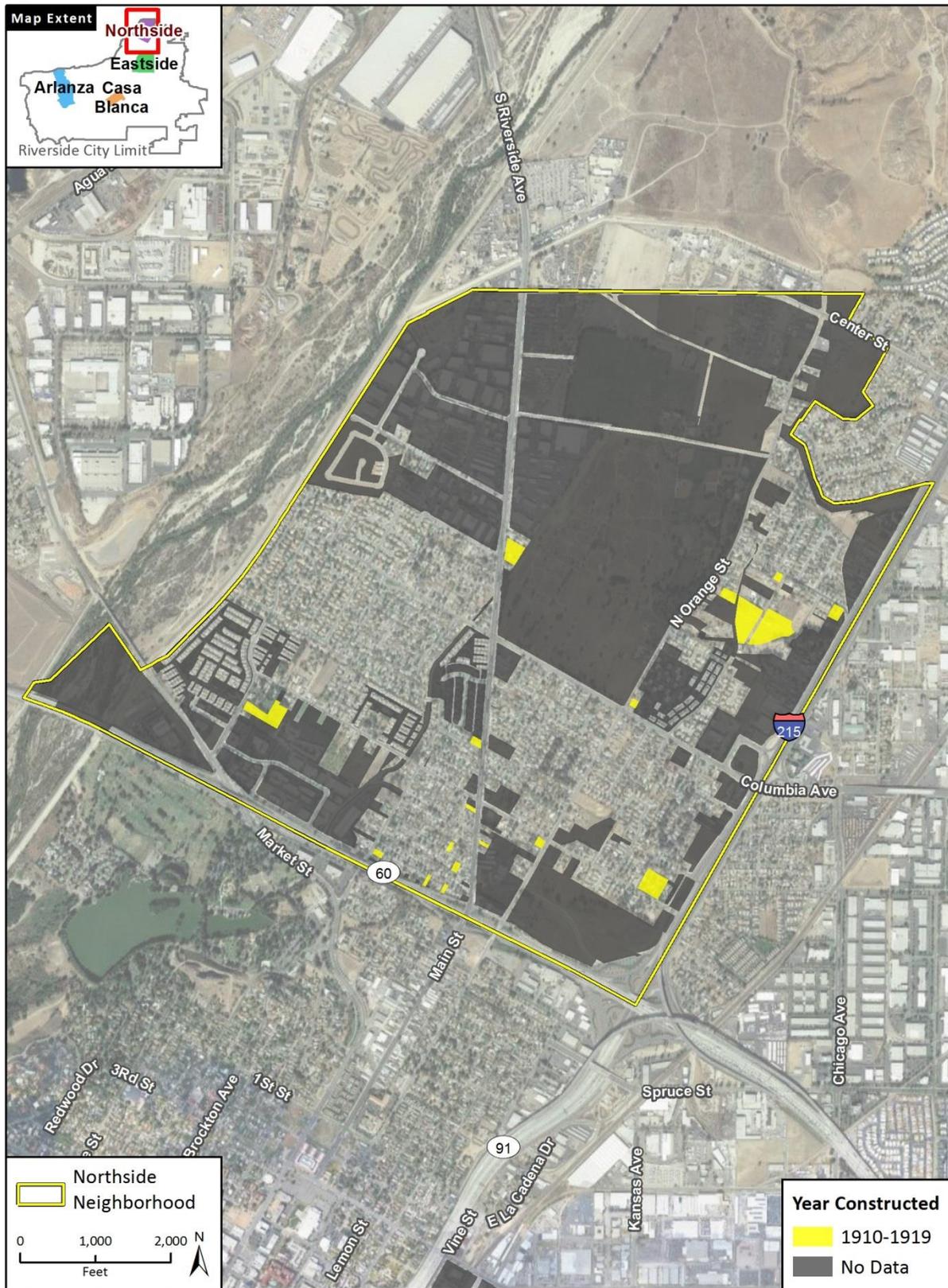
City of Riverside  
 Latino Historic Context Statement

Figure 14 Compiled Construction Dates, 1880-2000, Eastside Neighborhood



City of Riverside  
 Latino Historic Context Statement

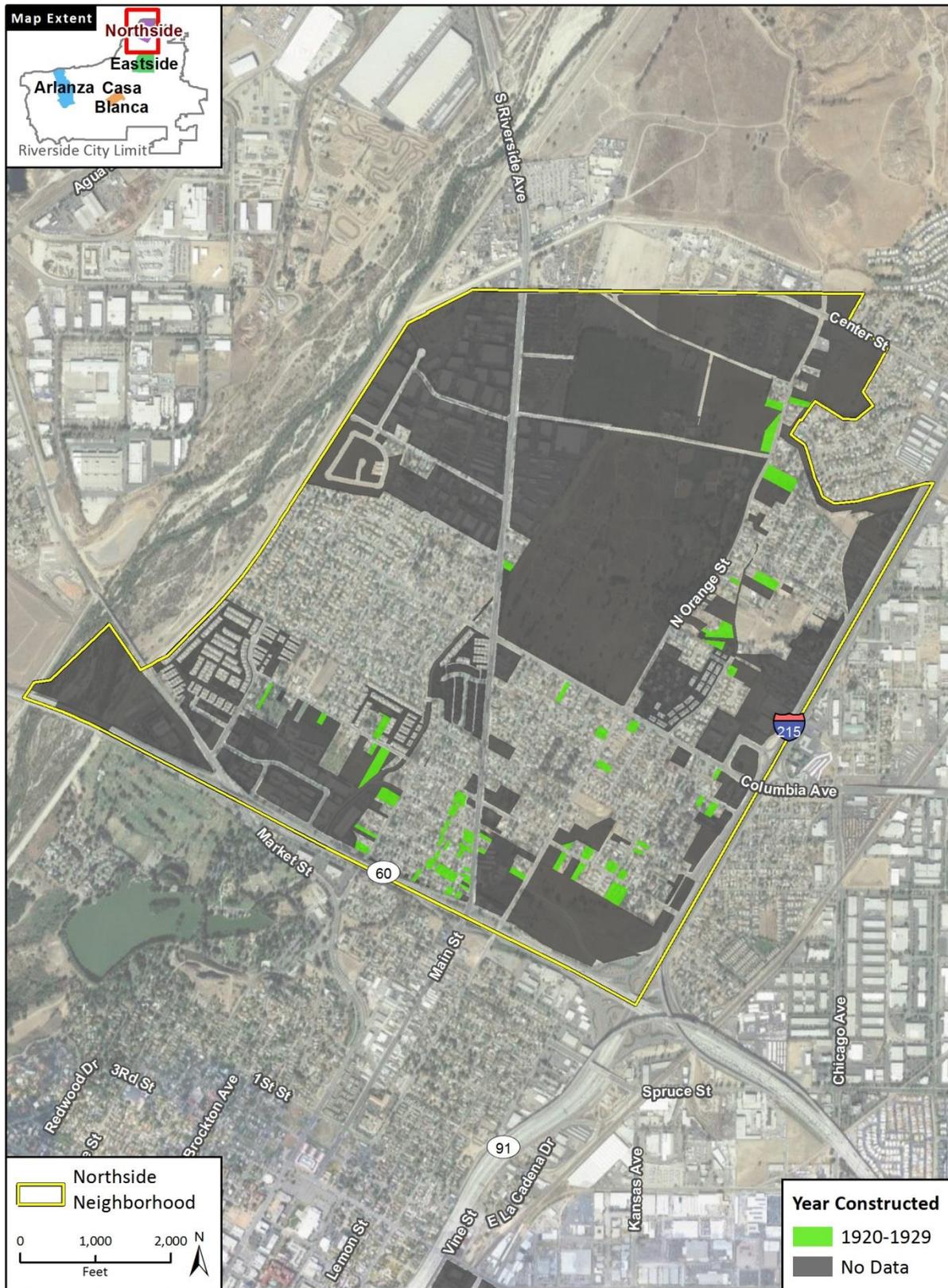
Figure 15 Construction Dates, 1910-1919, Northside Neighborhood



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City of Riverside  
 Latino Historic Context Statement

Figure 16 Construction Dates, 1920-1929, Northside Neighborhood



City of Riverside  
 Latino Historic Context Statement

Figure 17 Construction Dates, 1930-1939, Northside Neighborhood

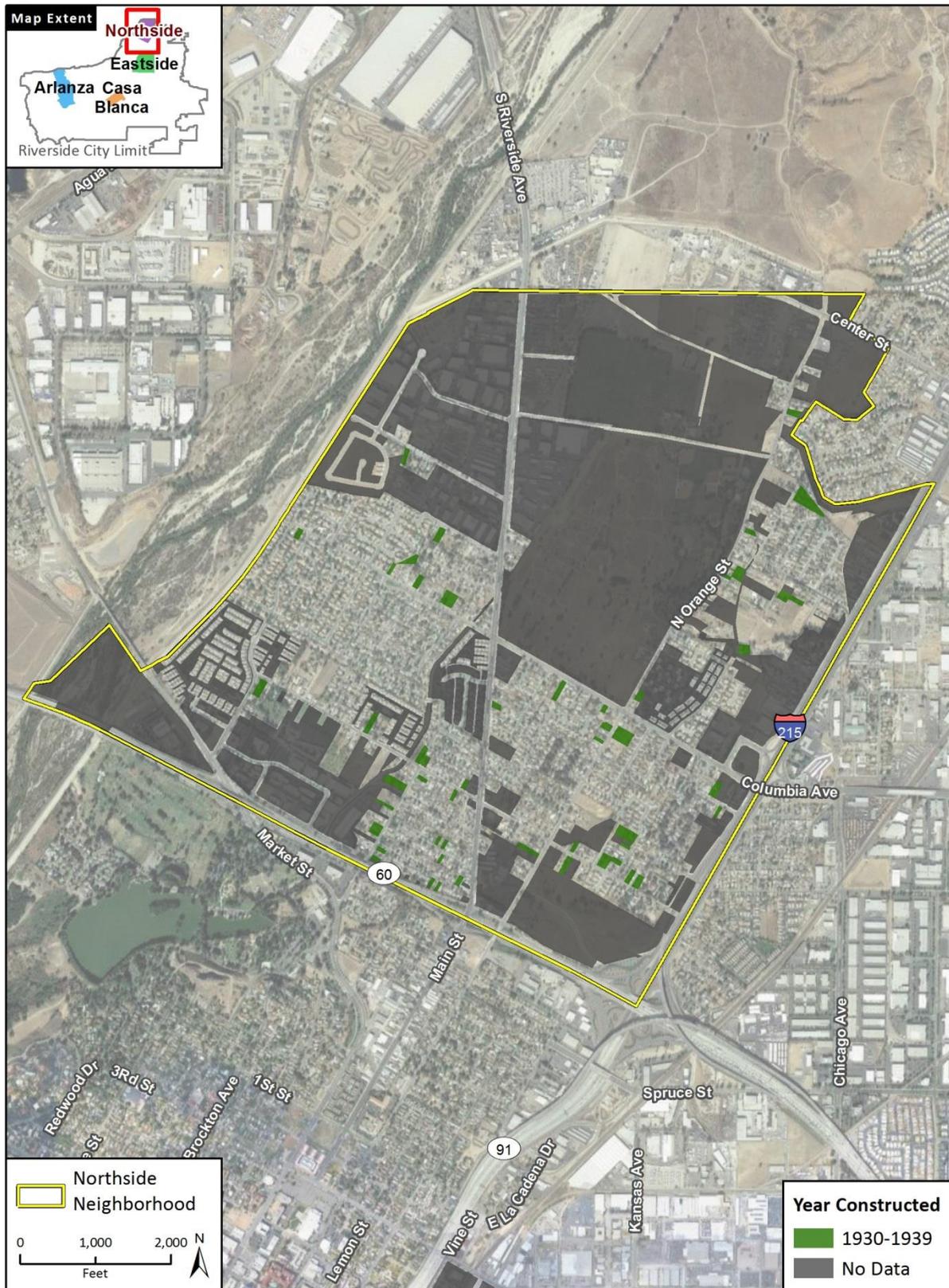
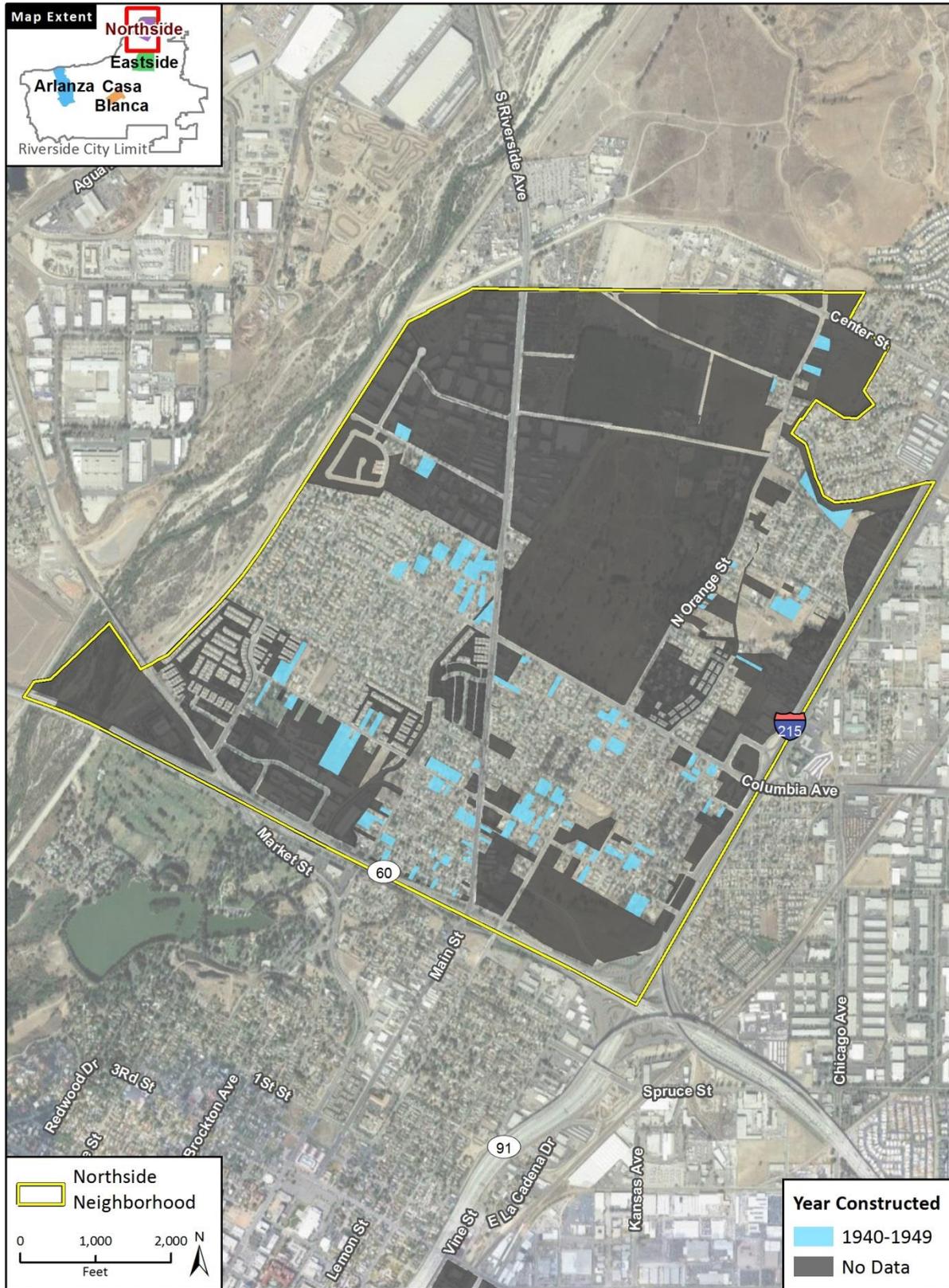


Figure 18 Construction Dates, 1940-1949, Northside Neighborhood



City of Riverside  
 Latino Historic Context Statement

Figure 19 Construction Dates, 1950-1959, Northside Neighborhood

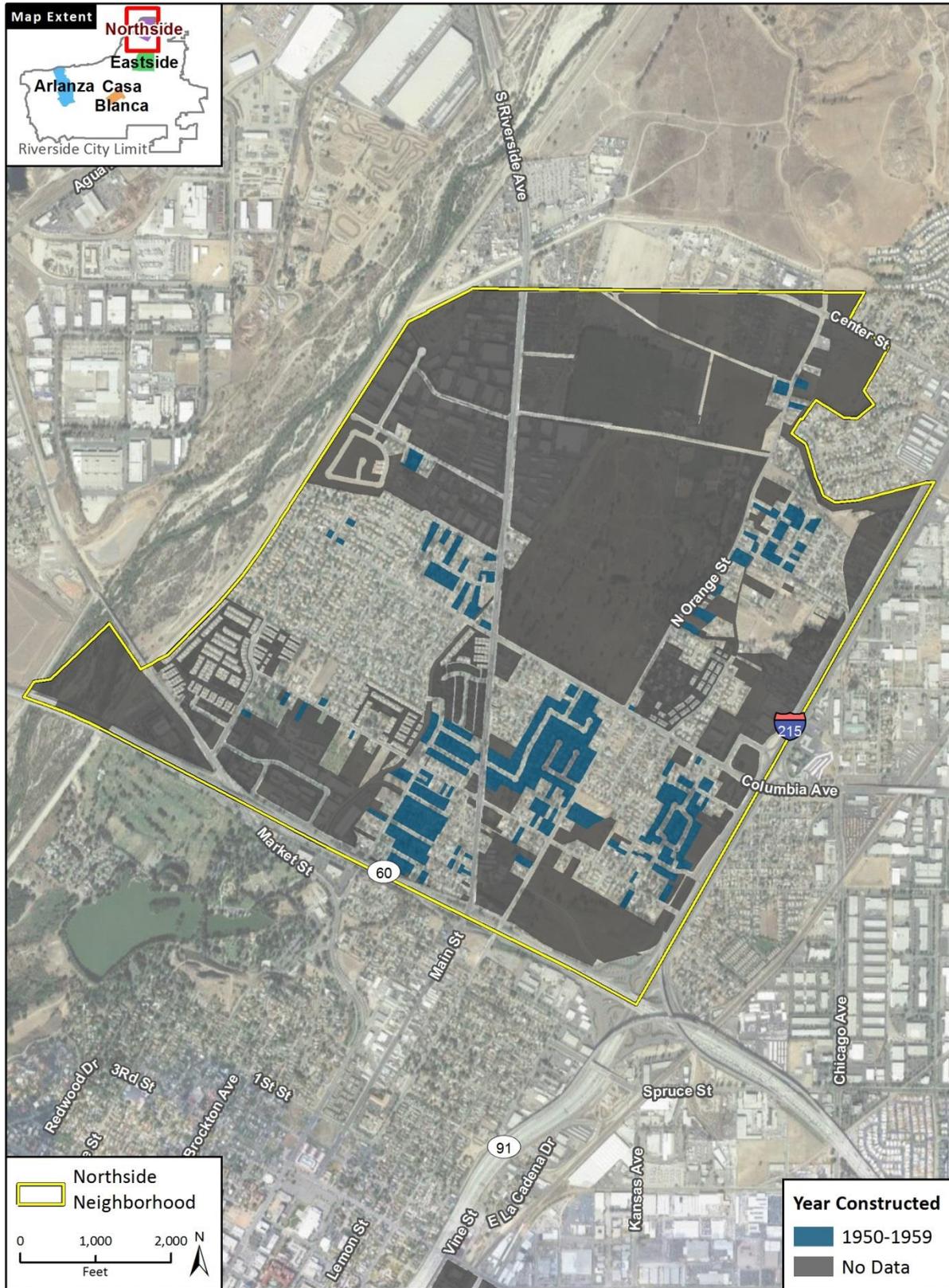
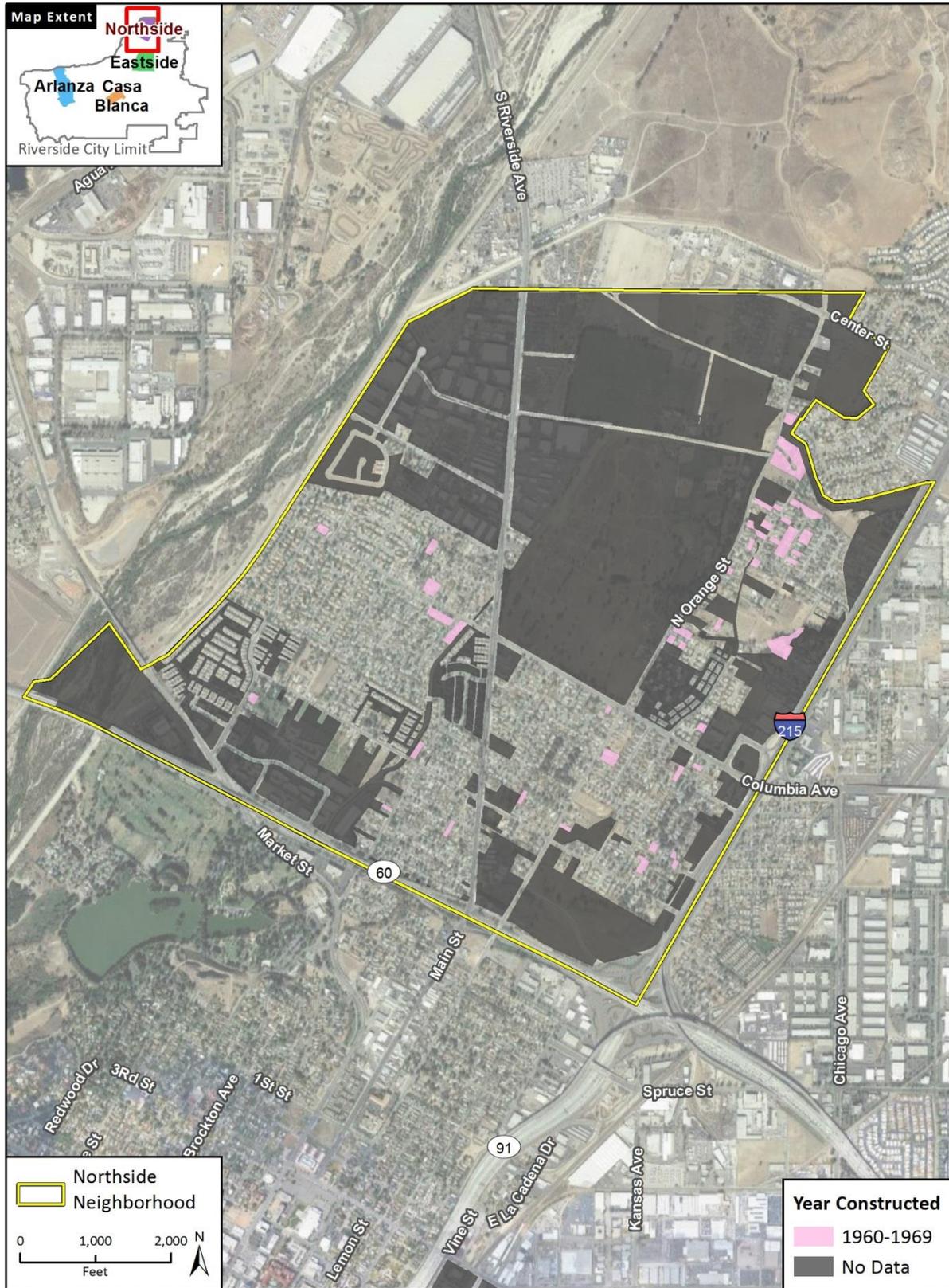
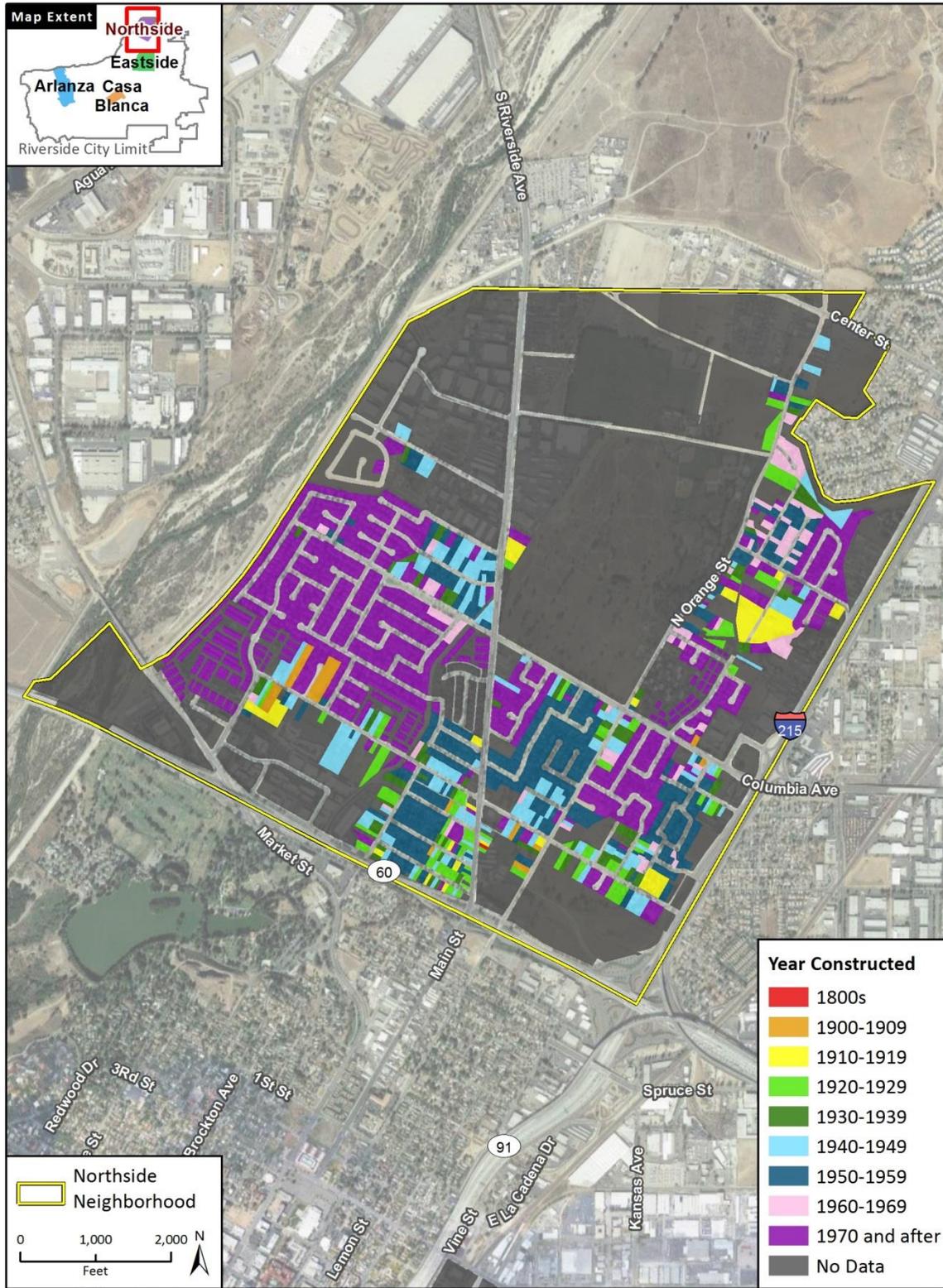


Figure 20 Construction Dates, 1960-1969, Northside Neighborhood



City of Riverside  
 Latino Historic Context Statement

Figure 21 Compiled Construction Dates, 1880-2000, Northside Neighborhood



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Figure 22 Construction Dates, 1910-1919, Arlanza neighborhood



Figure 23 Construction Dates, 1920-1929, Arlanza neighborhood



Figure 24 Construction Dates, 1930-1939, Arlanza Neighborhood



Figure 25 Construction Dates, 1940-1949, Arlanza Neighborhood

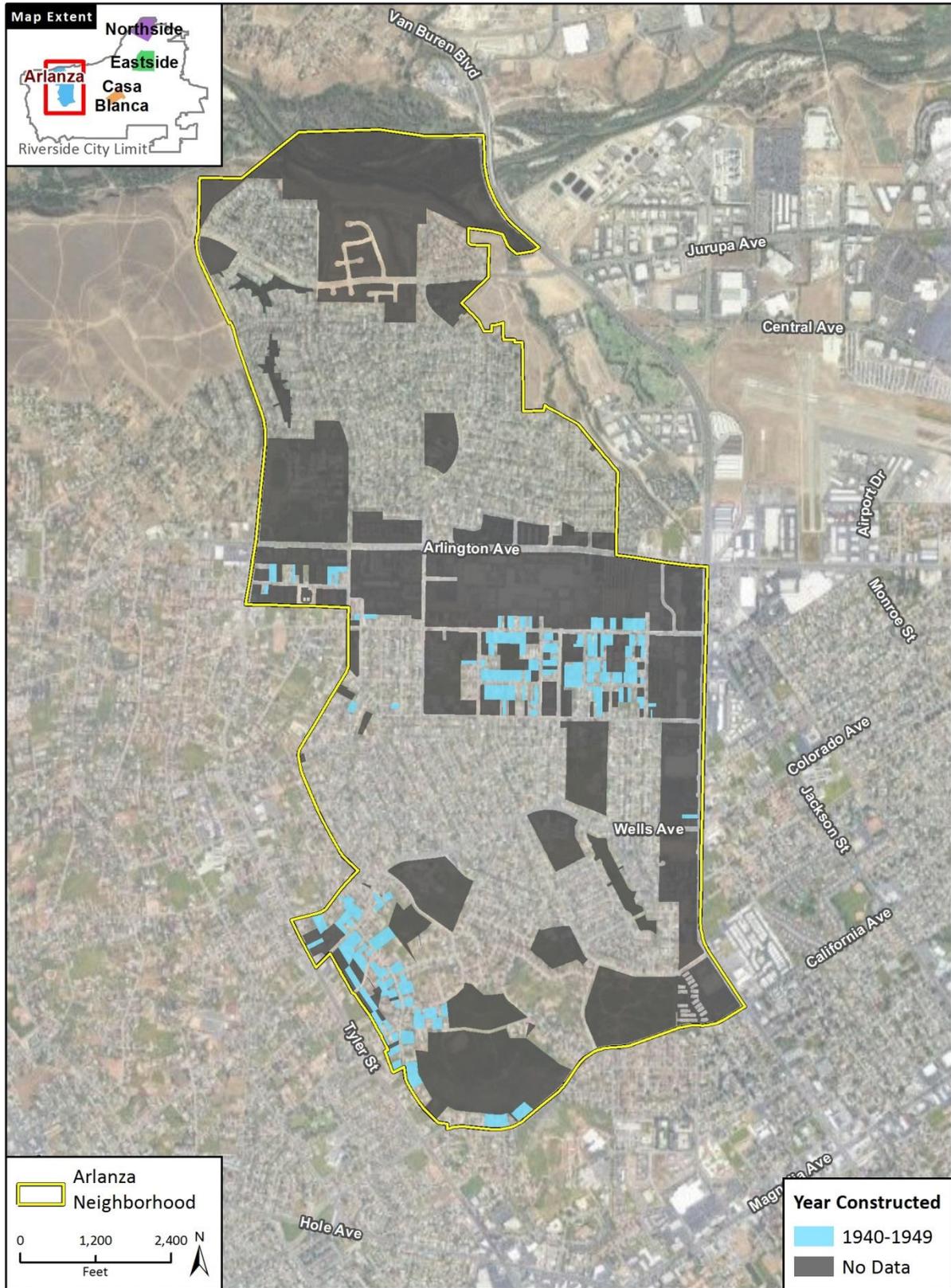
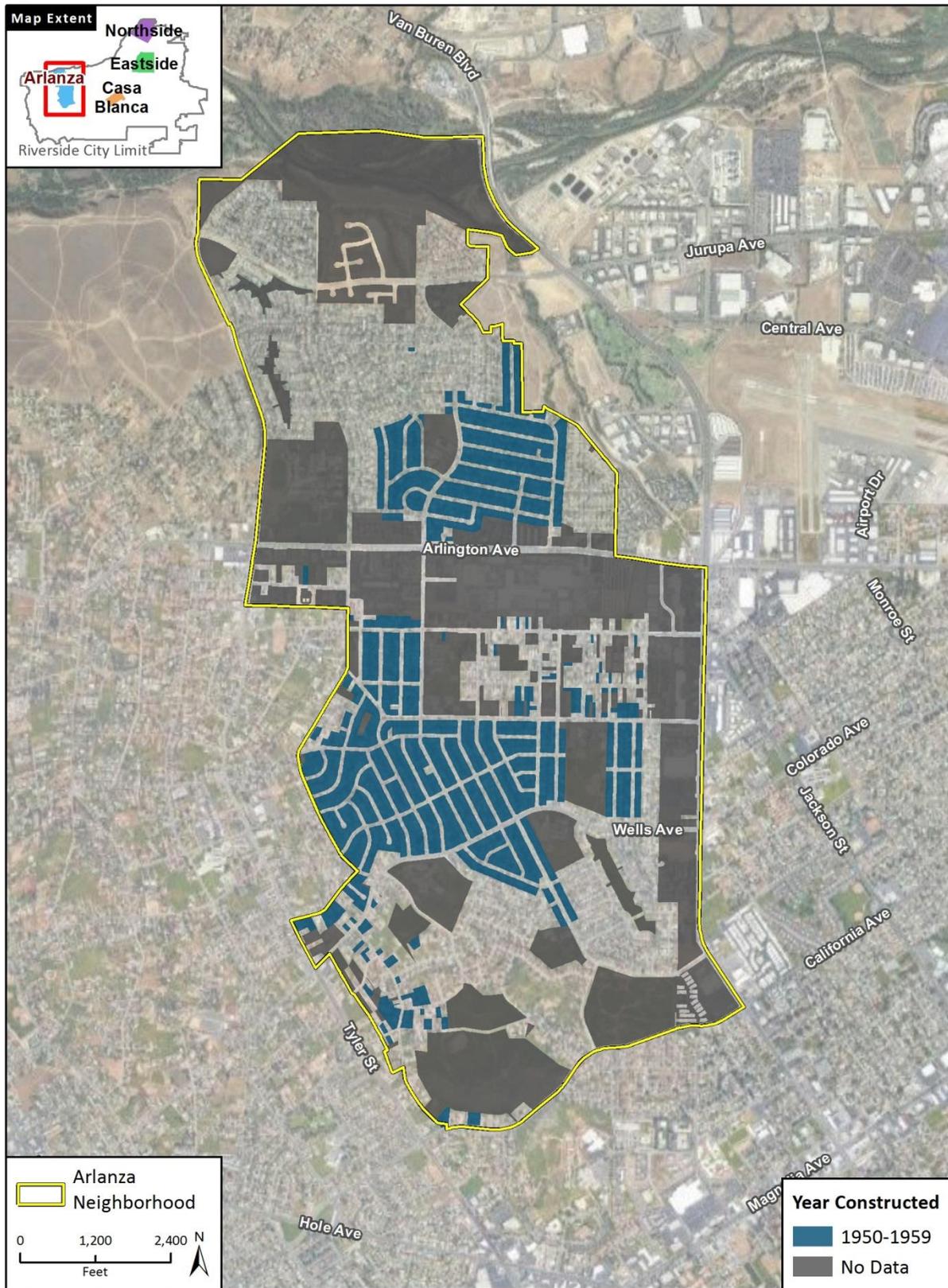
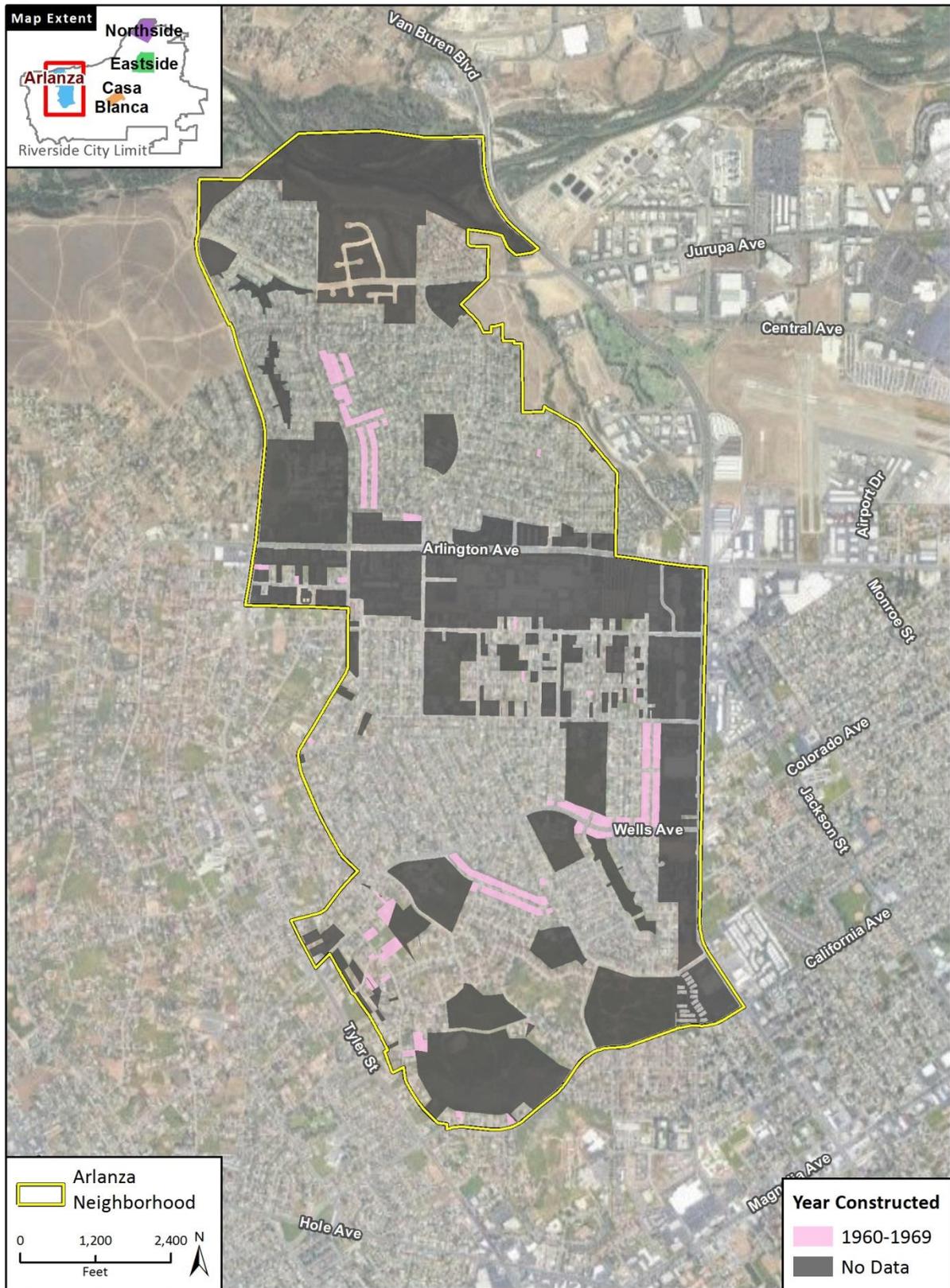


Figure 26 Construction Dates, 1950-1959, Arlanza Neighborhood



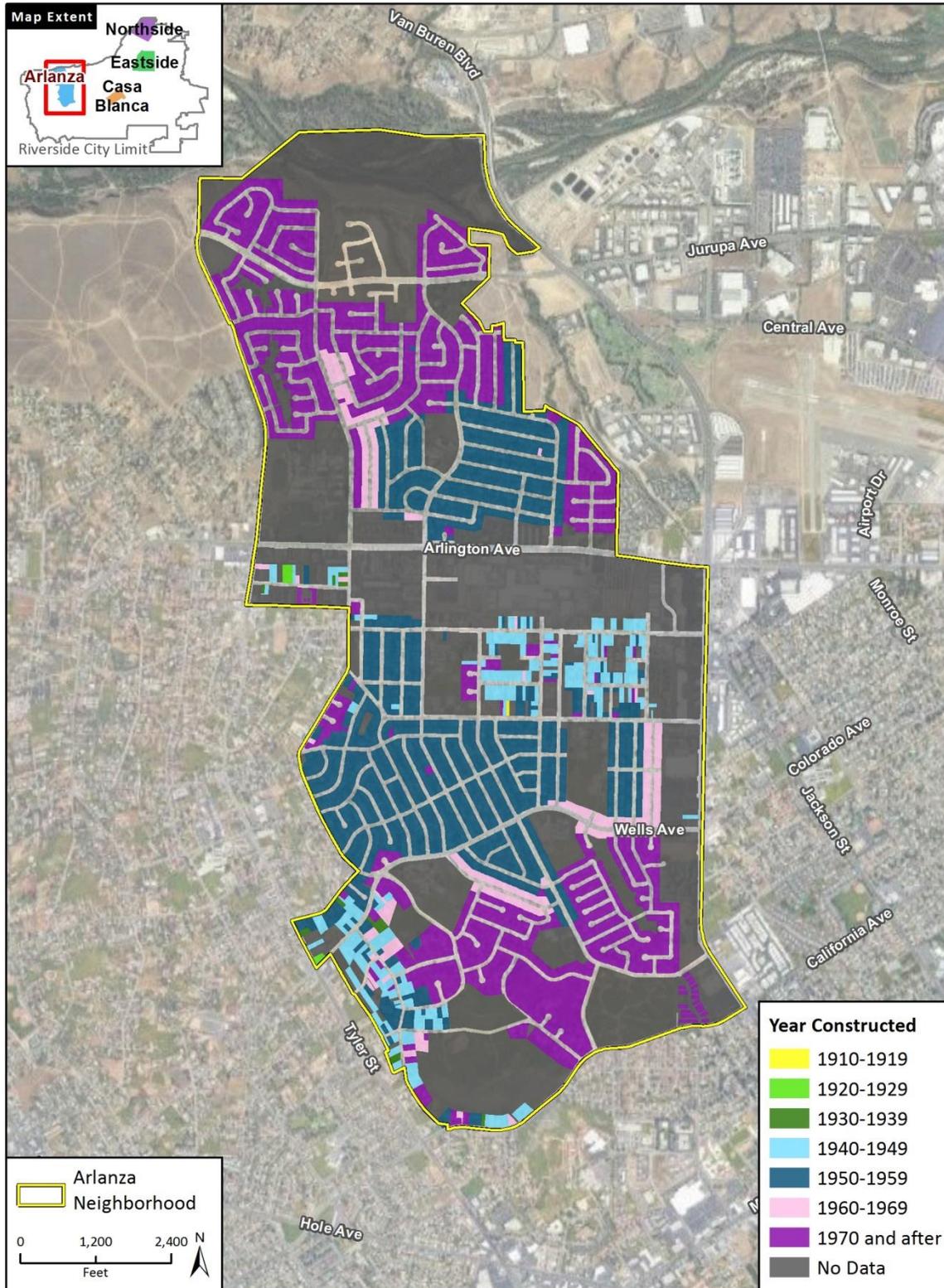
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Figure 27 Construction Dates, 1960-1969, Arlanza Neighborhood



City of Riverside  
 Latino Historic Context Statement

Figure 28 Compiled Construction Dates, 1880-2000, Arlanza Neighborhood



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## Appendix C

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“Guide to Using the Multiple Property Document Form,”  
Excerpt, *Latinos in Twentieth Century California*, OHP, 2015

## **Appendix C – Guide to Using the Multiple Property Document Form**

Completing National Register of Historic Places forms can be technically challenging and the writing requirements are stringent. This brief guide is intended to facilitate the preparation of nominations for any person who is interested.

Buildings are the most popular type of historic resource nominated. Nominations can also be submitted for sites, structures, objects, and districts. The National Register requires that a nominated property be discussed within a historic context. The applicant, or writer, must discuss the broader history associated with the property as well as the history of the nominated property itself.

For example, if an applicant wishes to nominate the home of a significant labor leader, a brief history of labor in the region, state, and perhaps the nation must be discussed, to provide the context for the history of the house and the life story of the labor leader. Historic context facilitates a greater understanding of how the individual property fits in the big picture. In this way, the individual property nominated is connected with broader historic events that have influenced our locality, our state, and nation. These connections lend historical significance to the nominated property.

### **About Multiple Property Submissions**

The research and documentation necessary to describe history, context, and significance can be challenging and time consuming. To make it easier for applicants to complete nominations, the National Register created the Multiple Property Submission (MPS). The MPS contains much of the background and contextual history for the broad trends and themes associated with a specific subject in history. By associating a new nomination with an existing MPS, it is no longer necessary for the applicant to research and write about broader context.

In the example you are holding, the subject of the MPS is Latinos in Twentieth Century California. The subject is further divided into four associated historic contexts, each with one or more sub-contexts: Making a Nation: Latino Immigration and Settlement, Latinos in the Media; Making a Life: Religion and Spirituality in Latino Culture, Latinos in Sports, Latinos in the Arts; Making a Living: Latinos in Labor History, Business and Commerce in Latino Communities, Latinos in the Military; and Making a Democracy: Latino Struggles for Inclusion.

### **Beginning the Process**

If you know of a property that you believe is associated with one of these historic contexts and you would like to nominate the property to the National Register, please contact the Office of Historic Preservation's (OHP) Registration Unit. This will give you the opportunity to tell us about the property you are nominating. We will be able to tell you if the property has already been nominated or listed, and whether the property appears to be eligible for the National Register.

The property must retain enough of its historic appearance and original material to convey its historic character and significance. This is defined as integrity, and is different from condition. Evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment. It must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. Historic properties either retain integrity or they do not. These seven aspects, or qualities, in various combinations, express integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects. The retention of specific aspects of integrity is vital for a property to convey its significance. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a particular property requires knowing why, where, and when the property is significant.

Significance + Integrity = Eligibility for the National Register

Note that nominations must be completed according to two bulletins published by the National Park Service. "National Register Bulletin 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation" (Bulletin 15) explains the criteria for listing properties and provides more information about integrity. "National Register Bulletin 16A, How to Complete the National Register Form" (Bulletin 16A) provides detailed instructions section by section. The bulletins are available online at

<http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/>

<http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16A/>

You may also access them via the OHP website at <http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/nationalregister>.

### **Completing the National Register Nomination Form**

Follow the instructions and guidelines provided in the Bulletins, including Bulletin 16A, Section IV. Documenting Properties Within Multiple Property Submissions. You may also find it helpful to review other nominations considered by the State Historical Resources Commission, as posted on either the Actions or Pending Nominations pages of the OHP website (<http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/shrc>).

Download a copy of the National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form 10-900 from <http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/nationalregister>. This is the form used to nominate individual properties which will be associated with the *Latinos in Twentieth Century California* MPS. In Section 1 of the nomination form, enter "Latinos in Twentieth Century California" under "Name of related multiple property listing." Do not submit a copy of the MPS document.

Clearly distinguish between the physical description of the property requested in the Section 7 Description, and the property's history and importance in the Section 8 Statement of Significance. Section 8 is also where you will indicate the area of significance, the period of significance, and how the property is associated with the MPS, including how it meets the registration requirements identified in the MPS. For example:

The Lydia D. Killefer School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Social History for its association with school desegregation in Southern California. The period of significance is 1942 to 1944, reflecting the school's process of voluntary desegregation. The desegregation is particularly significant as it took place prior to the 1947 *Méndez v. Westminster* ruling that legally required schools in Southern California to desegregate. For its association with the historic context *Making a Democracy: Latino Struggles for Inclusion*, the property meets the registration requirements of the *Latinos in Twentieth Century California* Multiple Property Submission.

After an applicant submits a nomination to this office, we carefully review it. The nomination process is a collaborative effort between the applicant and the OHP Registration Unit staff. We often make requests for additional information or clarification, in order to work with nomination preparers to make a nomination as strong as possible.

When the nomination is ready for public review, the State Historic Preservation Officer will schedule it for hearing by the State Historical Resources Commission at one of its quarterly meetings. After the Commission approves the nomination, the State Historic Preservation Officer will send it to the Keeper of the National Register in Washington, D.C. for final approval.

Note that Commission agendas are set approximately three months in advance of meetings, so six to nine months is the usual timeframe to get a property listed in the National Register. Although the consent of property owner(s) is not required, properties cannot be listed over the objection of private owner(s). In such cases, a property may be determined eligible for the National Register. Property owner contact information must be submitted with a National Register nomination as part of the cover letter.

Contact the OHP Registration Unit if you have questions. Thank you for your interest in historic designation and the National Register of Historic Places.