ONTARIO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT

Prepared for:
City of Ontario

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Ontario International Airport
Historic Context Statement

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1. INTRODUCTION

“Aviation is more than airplanes. It is a technology which broadly defined, includes aircraft and wrecks of aircraft, production and testing facilities, air terminals, and other components that support civil, military, and commercial flying. The airplane gradually became the vehicle of transportation and military evolutions, and aviation has permeated twentieth-century life. Aviation's significance is reflected in many aspects of American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. Under the National Register’s areas of significance, aviation has played an important role in the history of agriculture, architecture, archeology, art, commerce, communications, education, engineering, entertainment/recreation, industry, invention, landscape architecture, military, science, social history, and transportation” (National Register Bulletin No. 43: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Historic Aviation Properties, p. 7).

In light of the broad range of components recognized by the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as contributing to the historic significance of aviation facilities, Ontario International Airport (ONT) represents a microcosm of the national story. The extant built environment at ONT reflects elements of aviation support services, commerce, technology, communications, engineering, architecture, commerce, technology, industry, local and regional economy, and transport of people and freight. The history of ONT tells a larger story of American life in the twentieth century, from early recreational pursuits and experiments with flying machines, to mammoth cargo and personnel carriers supporting World War II and military missions in Southeast Asia, to the changes brought by the advent of advanced jet aircraft. The history of ONT also tells the story of local and regional social, cultural, and economic processes and the evolution of the Southern California landscape from idyllic agricultural pursuits to the proliferation of suburban residential and industrial environments.

Historic context statements identify the broad patterns of historical development and link the history of an area with the built environment. A robust historic context is the foundation for making decisions about identification, evaluation, and treatment of historic properties. Historic contexts differ from other types of narrative histories in that they are meant to identify important themes in history and then relate those themes to existing historic resources or associated property types. Although a historic context statement contributes to an understanding of the story of a particular community, it is not intended to be a comprehensive history of that community; rather, the focus is on existing properties that reflect the community’s history.

This historic context statement is prepared in compliance with guidance from the NRHP and the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). The narrative is intended to identify historically significant themes unique to ONT, as well as themes in the wider geographic area that might be exemplified by the airport’s built environment. Themes relate to development patterns and processes, including early passenger travel, aviation support services, and the presence of the military at ONT, as well as architectural trends and cultural topics. Property types associated with each theme and sub-theme are included.

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND SCOPE

The transfer of ONT's ownership from Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) to the City of Ontario (City), managed by the Ontario International Airport Authority (OIAA), took place on November 1, 2016. The goals of the OIAA encourage planning for the highest and best use of all airport property and facilities, consistent with surrounding infrastructure and land uses, and the ability to respond to market opportunities. As the need and opportunity arise for redevelopment of the airport and surrounding areas, the City recognizes that potential historic resources may be threatened. For this reason, the City contracted with ASM Affiliates, Inc. (ASM) to develop a historic context statement to guide identification and evaluation.
1. Introduction

of historic resources and to support future planning, environmental analysis, and development of ONT. Some of the properties within the survey area had been evaluated prior to the development of this context statement, including the facilities for Air National Guard, Lockheed, Terminal One, and one residential property. ASM surveyed these, and all aviation-associated properties at ONT within the project boundary that are older than 45 years, for potential eligibility for the local, state, and national registers.

The Ontario International Airport Historic Context Statement provides a historical background for properties located within the airport and a framework for understanding and preserving the history of the area. This historic context was developed in conjunction with an intensive-level pedestrian survey of aviation properties on ONT property. It is intended to identify and characterize the potential historic resources within the ONT boundaries and to identify those areas, property types, and individual resources that should be considered for future land use planning. Architectural historians and historians who meet Secretary of the Interior’s (SOI) Professional Qualification Standards for those disciplines conducted the survey and prepared this historic context statement. ASM prepared this context statement in accordance with the OHP’s Writing Historic Contexts and Format for Historic Context Statements, as well as more general guidance found in National Register Bulletin No. 24: Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning; Bulletin No. 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form; and Bulletin No. 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.

PROJECT TEAM AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The ASM team for this project was composed of Shannon Davis (Senior Architectural Historian and Project Manager), Marilyn Novell (Architectural Historian), and Sarah Stringer-Bowsher (Historian). All meet the SOI Professional Qualification Standards for their respective disciplines.

City of Ontario staff who participated were Diane Ayala (Senior Planner), Elly Antuna (Assistant Planner), and Kelly Zackman (Local History Librarian, Ontario City Library, Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony History Room).

As part of this project, ASM conducted and documented oral histories through interviews with people associated with ONT, in collaboration with the local non-profit historic advocacy group, Ontario Heritage, and produced a short video documentary of the history of the airport. Interviews were conducted on May 15 and 23, and July 13, 2017, at the Ontario City Hall and at the airport.

Ron Smith, Don Davidson, Skip Bowling, Bill Wheeler, Richard Delman, Nancy DeDiemar, and ASM Architectural Historian Laura Voisin George participated in the oral history project. ASM Graphics Specialist Zee Malas provided photography, video-recording, and technical assistance.

Bruce Atlas, Les Normandy, and Clifford Lemons of the Ontario International Airport Authority provided access to airport properties and valuable institutional knowledge of the airport’s history.

PREVIOUS HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEYS AND CONTEXTS

In preparing this historic context statement, ASM reviewed several documents that contributed to understanding the built environment at the airport. Some, such as a historic resources inventory of the Lockheed area, are specific to ONT, whereas others are more general, including NRHP guidelines on how to evaluate historic aviation properties and historic context statements addressing aviation properties. A partial list of the documents consulted for the development of the ONT historic context statement is provided below.
1. Introduction


This inventory of buildings associated with Lockheed Aircraft Services (LAS) identifies 15 potentially eligible historic resources, including 11 buildings and four hangars. Because of the contributions Lockheed made to the nation during the Cold War era, the report considers the LAS area for significance under Criterion A, but found that these facilities were primarily used for maintenance and modifications to aircraft that were not significant in Cold War operations (Sable 1998). The assessment finds that the facility did not appear to have been used for research and development, or for maintenance activities dedicated to the Cold War effort. URS recommended that the properties at the LAS facility were not eligible under Criteria A, B, or C, either as individual resources or as contributors to a historic district (Douglas and Livingstone 2006:ES-1 through ES-2).


A 1996 review of architecturally significant property listings maintained by the OHP resulted in no findings for Ontario Air National Guard (ANG). In addition, no properties at Ontario ANG were previously listed in the NRHP. The facilities were evaluated for their eligibility to the NRHP in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Additionally, the facilities were evaluated under the guidelines provided in the U.S. Air Force (1993) document entitled *Interim Guidance: Treatment of Cold War Historic Properties for U.S. Air Force Installations.* This guidance establishes the criteria set by the Air Force for the evaluation of Cold War-era facilities.

The 1998 Environmental Assessment (EA; Department of the Air Force 1998) investigates the buildings and structures within the ANG area of the airport, in response to 1996 OHP comments on the earlier report. OHP recommended an expansion of the APE and consideration of the buildings as part of a potential historic district. Archaeological investigation and a records search were also recommended (Office of Historic Preservation 1996). It is unknown whether the Air Force followed through on these recommendations, but the EA lists no eligible properties on the site.


1. Introduction

DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEY AREA

The City of Ontario is located in San Bernardino County on the Cucamonga plains in the San Bernardino Valley. Lying on relatively flat alluvial soils between the highest part of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north and the Chino Hills to the south, the valley forms part of a natural route to the coastal lands from the east (Figures 1 and 2). The airport is within the City boundaries approximately one mile south of Interstate 10, at the south end of Vineyard Avenue, bounded by Cucamonga Avenue on the west, the Union Pacific Railroad on the south, the Southern Pacific Railroad on the north, and Haven and Archibald Avenues on the east. The survey area excluded the private NRHP property known as the Hofer Ranch to the southeast.

Figure 1. Regional location map.
Figure 2. Map showing location of airport and immediate vicinity.
2. METHODOLOGY

Evaluation of historic significance is based on a review of existing historic designations, research of the relevant existing historic contexts, and an analysis of the eligibility criteria and integrity thresholds for listing in the NRHP, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and as local historic resources. This historic context statement is based on the following research efforts by ASM:

- An intensive-level pedestrian survey of associated aviation properties 45 years or older within the Project boundaries;
- Development of a historic context outline, including themes, sub-themes, and property types associated with each;
- Archival and secondary source research, as outlined in the following section; and
- Oral histories conducted by ASM in collaboration with Ontario Heritage.

In addition to developing this historic context statement, ASM prepared Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Series 523 forms, including primary records (Form A) for each building surveyed and the evaluation form for each of four potential historic districts identified (Form D), as well as individual building evaluation forms (Building Structure Object form [BSO]) for individual buildings that may or may not be located within a potential historic district (Appendix 1).

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

This report was prepared using primary and secondary sources related to the development of the region, the City, and its immediate surrounding areas. ASM consulted the following documents:

- Historic photographs, aerial photos, and site plans
- Published local histories
- Local and regional newspaper archives
- Architectural and aviation journals
- Previous survey documentation for ONT
- LAWA and OIAA building records
- Corporate and agency records, including military records
- California State Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) for San Bernardino County
- Scholarly papers
- Previously recorded Department of Parks and Recreation Historic Resources Inventory Forms
- San Bernardino County Assessor¹
- South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC), California State University, Fullerton

ASM requested a records search limited to the survey area from the SCCIC on November 30, 2016, and received results on January 13, 2017. The records search found previous California DPR forms for Terminal One, a residential property within the survey area, a survey and evaluation of the LAS area, California HRI findings, a National Register form for a private ranch (Hofer Ranch) adjacent to the airport property, and several cultural resources reports that were limited to archaeological and paleontological resources, which are beyond the scope of this report. The pertinent data from the SCCIC findings are incorporated into this historic context statement.

¹ A search was conducted at the County, but no building records were available because government-owned buildings and exempt properties are not assessed. As a result, they were not measured, and building records were not prepared (per Glen Brinkerhoff, Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk, San Bernardino County, November 11, 2016).
2. Methodology

Table 1. Built Environmental Resources from SCCIC Records Search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource No.</th>
<th>Author/Recorder</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P-36-012630</td>
<td>Ben Taniguchi and Christeen Taniguchi; Galvin &amp; Associates</td>
<td>Ontario International Airport Terminal</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-36-013937</td>
<td>PHR Associates</td>
<td>House &amp; Tool &amp; Die Casting Co., 1218 Airport</td>
<td>1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB-02118</td>
<td>Winter, Leonard, and Mason; Chambers Group</td>
<td>Cultural Resources Survey: United Parcel Service Proposed Air Cargo Facility, Ontario, San Bernardino County, California</td>
<td>1989</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIELD METHODS

A reconnaissance survey is an essential preliminary step in the development of a historic context statement. This initial survey is an overview of the physical components of an area that informs the project team about general patterns of development and extant built resources. Guided by City planning staff and assisted by Ontario International Airport Authority employees, ASM Senior Architectural Historians Shannon Davis and Marilyn Novell conducted a reconnaissance survey of ONT on November 1, 2016. Intensive pedestrian surveys were conducted on December 1 and December 6, 2016, and January 5 and February 1, 2017. Throughout the surveys, extensive notes were taken in the field documenting the architectural features and condition of the buildings and structures, and multiple photographs were taken of each building and area of the airport meeting the age threshold for historic significance. When interiors were accessible, additional notes and photographs were taken. A list of all properties surveyed is included in Appendix 2 of this report.
3. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Historic resources fall within the jurisdiction of several levels of government. Federal laws provide the framework for the identification, and in certain instances, protection of historic resources. Additionally, states and local jurisdictions play active roles in the identification, documentation, and protection of such resources within their communities. The principal laws governing and influencing the preservation of historical resources of national, state, and local significance are the NHPA of 1966, as amended; California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); the CRHR; and the City of Ontario Development Code Section 4.02.040 (Municipal Code) and the Ontario Plan (Policy Plan). Descriptions of these relevant laws and regulations are presented below.

HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Groups of buildings constructed the same period of time, in the same geographical area, and serving the same mission or function may be eligible as historic districts. A group of buildings that would not be individually eligible might be eligible together as a group. It is possible that a historic district associated with a particular theme might be composed of a series of different types of significant buildings that were built at different times. The National Park Service Bulletin No. 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation provides the following guidelines for evaluating the integrity of a historic district.

When evaluating the impact of intrusions upon the district’s integrity, the relative number, size, scale, design, and location of the components that do not contribute to the significance of the district should be considered. A district is not eligible if it contains so many alterations or new intrusions that it no longer conveys the sense of a historic environment. However, some new buildings, the loss of original landscape features, or the construction of additions to original buildings may be acceptable. Most military and manufacturing or services facilities are evolving properties that must be updated and augmented to remain functional. Some level of alteration is acceptable, as long as the original form and layout of the district is mostly intact.

A component of a district cannot contribute to the significance if:
- it has been substantially altered since the period of the district's significance, or
- it does not share the historic associations of the district.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Authorized by the NHPA of 1966, the National Park Service’s NRHP is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America’s historic and archeological resources. The NRHP is the official list of the nation’s historic places worthy of preservation. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity and:

A. are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

B. are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

Ontario International Airport Historic Context Statement
3. Evaluation Framework

C. embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D. have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Integrity

In order to be eligible for listing in the NRHP and CRHR, a property must retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance. National Register Bulletin No. 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation establishes how to evaluate the integrity of a property, describing it as “the ability of a property to convey its significance” (National Park Service 1997a:44). The evaluation of integrity must be grounded in an understanding of a property’s physical features and how they relate to the concept of integrity. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a property requires knowing why, where, and when a property is significant. To retain historic integrity, a property must possess several, and usually most, aspects of integrity:

1. **Location** is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.

2. **Design** is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.

3. **Setting** is the physical environment of a historic property, and refers to the character of the site and the relationship to surrounding features and open space. Setting often refers to the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and the functions it was intended to serve. These features can be either natural or manmade, including vegetation, paths, fences, and relationships between other features or open space.

4. **Materials** are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period or time, and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.

5. **Workmanship** is the physical evidence of crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period of history or prehistory, and can be applied to the property as a whole, or to individual components.

6. **Feeling** is a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, when taken together, convey the property’s historic character.

7. **Association** is the direct link between the important historic event or person and a historic property.

CALIFORNIA REGISTER OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

The CRHR program encourages public recognition and protection of resources of architectural, historical, archaeological, and cultural significance; identifies historical resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under CEQA. The criteria established for eligibility for the CRHR are directly comparable to the national criteria established for the NRHP.

In order to be eligible for listing in the CRHR, a building, object, or structure must satisfy at least one of the following four criteria:
3. Evaluation Framework

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.

2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.

3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.

4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

Historical resources eligible for listing in the CRHR must also retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. For the purposes of eligibility for the CRHR, integrity is defined as “the authenticity of an historical resource’s physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource’s period of significance” (California Office of Historic Preservation 2001). This general definition is strengthened by the more specific definition offered by the NRHP—the criteria and guidelines on which the CRHR criteria and guidelines are based upon.

**CITY OF ONTARIO CRITERIA FOR HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND DISTRICTS**

A property that meets one or more of the following criteria is eligible to be placed on the City’s List of Historic Landmarks and Districts as a Landmark (per Municipal Code Section 4.02.040) if:

1. It meets the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; or
2. It meets the criteria for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources; or
3. It meets one or more of the following criteria:
   a. It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City’s history;
   b. It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history;
   c. It is representative of the work of a notable builder, designer, architect, or artist;
   d. It embodies distinguishing architectural characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction;
   e. It is a noteworthy example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship;
   f. It embodies elements that represent a significant structural, engineering, or architectural achievement or innovation;
   g. It has a unique location, a singular physical characteristic, or is an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the City;
   h. It is one of the few remaining examples in the City, region, state, or nation possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen; or
   i. It has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important to the city’s history or prehistory.

Any neighborhood or area that meets one or more of the following criteria is eligible to be placed on the City’s List of Historic Landmarks and Districts as a District (per Municipal Code Section 4.02.040):

1. Is a geographically definable area possessing a concentration of Historical Resources or thematically related grouping of structures which contribute to each other and are unified by plan, style, or physical development; and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period,
3. Evaluation Framework

region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values;

2. Reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of a park landscape, site design, or community planning;

3. Is associated with, or the contributing resources are unified by, events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States; or

4. Is or the contributing resources are associated with the lives of persons important to Ontario, California, or national history.

The project is supported by the following policies within the Community Design Element of The Ontario Plan (General Plan/Policy Plan); 1] CD4-1 Cultural Resource Management. The City updates and maintains an inventory of historic sites and buildings, professional collections, artifacts, manuscripts, photographs, documents, maps and other archives; 2] CD4-3 Collaboration with Outside Agencies. The City pursues opportunities to team with other agencies, local organizations and non-profits in order to preserve and promote Ontario’s heritage; and 3] CD4-6 Promotion of Public Involvement in Preservation. The City engages in programs to publicize and promote the City’s and the public’s involvement in preservation efforts. Additionally, the project supports the Statewide Historic Preservation Plan goal of redefining the public’s perception of preservation. The project documents and identifies potential historic resources, based on an aeronautical themed (military and commercial) historic context, which are predominately mid-century era and are a unique prototype.
4. Historic Context Summary Statement

Four geographically definable areas at ONT were surveyed as part of this assessment, per preliminary research and maps provided by the City (Figure 3). The survey areas were established according to their potential to contain historic resources (i.e., buildings and structures more than 45 years of age) and the potential to be eligible as historic districts. Each area investigated possesses a significant concentration, linkage, and continuity of buildings and structures that are united historically by plan, function, and physical development. Areas of the airport lacking potential historic resources because they do not contain buildings or structures that meet the age threshold for historic significance were not surveyed. In Appendix 1 to this report are (a) DPR Primary Record (A) forms documenting those buildings within the study area more than 45 years of age, (b) DPR District (D) forms evaluating four areas as potential historic districts following the evaluation criteria presented in this historic context statement, and (c) DPR Building Structure Object (BSO) evaluation forms for each of the four individual buildings and seven buildings that were also included in the potential historic districts within the study area and each of the properties determined individually eligible.

- **Lockheed Area**: Buildings and structures in the area occupied by Lockheed Aircraft Services
- **Terminal One Area**: The group of buildings in the area of the earliest extant passenger terminal and control tower
- **General Electric Aircraft Engines Area**: Buildings and structures in the area occupied by General Electric Aircraft Engines
- **Air National Guard Area**: Buildings and structures in the area occupied by the California Air National Guard
- Individual buildings more than 45 years of age
  - Aerojet-General Hangar
  - Police Dispatch/Fire Station No. 3
  - Residential property at 1218 East Airport Drive
  - Residential properties at 1221 East Airport Drive

**SUMMARY OF IDENTIFIED THEMES AND SUB-THEMES**

The overarching context under which themes and sub-themes have been identified is Aviation in Ontario. Informed by the field survey and archival research, the development of themes is a critical part of this project. The historic context framework used for evaluation of properties at ONT is summarized below and presented in more detail with periods of significance, associated property types, and other elements related to each sub-theme provided in Section 6. Appendix 3 is a timeline showing the period of significance of each theme and sub-theme.

**CONTEXT: AVIATION IN ONTARIO**

**Theme: Commercial Aviation, 1946–1967**
- Sub-Theme: Aviation Support Services, 1952–1967

**Theme: Civil Aviation, 1950–1967**
- Sub-Theme: Early Passenger Travel, 1950–1967

**Theme: Military Aviation, 1942–1991**

**Theme: Aviation and Architecture, 1952–1975**
- Sub-Theme: Developments in Construction Technology, 1952–1975
- Sub-Theme: Modernism and Aviation, 1955–1970
Figure 3. Map of Ontario International Airport showing areas investigated.
5. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This section provides a broad historical overview of the environmental, geographical, social, cultural, political, governmental, and technological processes that have shaped the land-use patterns and development of Ontario International Airport within the region and as it relates to the City of Ontario.

REGIONAL HISTORY

At the time of Spanish exploration, Tongva, or Gabrieleno, Indians occupied the land in the Ontario region, although apparently somewhat sparsely or seasonally (Dumke 1944:16). Mission San Gabriel Arcángel, founded in 1771, encompassed extensive lands toward the east, including San Bernardino Rancho, a mission outpost where livestock were grazed from 1819 to 1834 (Engelhardt 1927:143). In 1839, after secularization of the missions, Tiburcio Tapia, a Los Angeles merchant, was granted the Cucamonga Rancho, which included the present-day settlements of Cucamonga, Ontario, and Upland (Gentilcore 1960:79). Tapia arguably was the first to engage in agricultural pursuits such as growing grapes, corn, and grain (Cleland 1951:23). By the late 1850s, a decline in the economy and a series of natural disasters resulted in the decline of the rancho era (Gentilcore 1960:79). Eventually, the land was acquired by a group of Los Angeles investors who experimented with commercial crops, including barley, wheat, silk, cotton, and castor beans (Guinn 1911), finally settling on a venture ideally suited to small 10-acre plots that attracted settlers seeking sun and the idyllic California life (Webber and Batchelor 1948). From the 1870s to the end of World War II, land in the valleys east of Los Angeles was used predominantly for agriculture, ONT was carved out of well-established large wineries including the 5,000-acre Italian Vineyard Company (Guasti) and the Hofer/Ballou Ranch. Dairy farms occupied the land less suited to cultivating citrus and other crops, especially the area south of the airport (Ontario Planning Department 2004:11-13).

EARLY YEARS OF THE CITY OF ONTARIO

Developers began to establish agricultural colonies in the inland valleys to entice buyers by providing the necessary infrastructure such as irrigation systems, which often involved complex agreements with property owners near the rivers having riparian rights (Gentilcore 1960:80) (Figure 4). The Ontario Model Colony was founded in 1882 by Canadian engineer George Chaffey and his two brothers, William and Charles. The alluvial soil in the broad river valley and the sunny, dry climate were ideal for growing irrigated crops such as citrus and grapes (City of Ontario 2008:4.7-1). With water rights included in the purchase of the land, the Chaffey brothers set up an irrigation system that channeled water down from the canyons of Mount San Antonio (“Mount Baldy”) to flatter, tillable land. The Chaffeys set aside one square mile for the Ontario townsite and reserved half of the land for an agricultural college (Chaffey College). The Chaffeys sold off the land, parcel by parcel, to Easterners drawn by idyllic visions of orange groves thriving at the base of snow-capped mountain ranges in sunny California. Several major companies began in Ontario’s early years—Armstrong Nurseries, C.C. Graber Olive Company, and the Ontario appliance manufacturing plant known as Hotpoint, which later became General Electric (GE), were all established between 1882 and 1889. The population grew rapidly, and Ontario was incorporated as a city on December 10, 1891.

In the decades following incorporation, the Ontario Land and Improvement Company was active in providing infrastructure to attract more settlers to Ontario. By 1910, Ontario had become an established city with amenities including a post office, a library, and a bustling downtown.

The agriculture industry in the area continued to prosper, driven particularly by citrus farming. In the 1920s, the largest business was a forerunner of Sunkist Growers, Inc., a subsidiary of the California Fruit Growers

2 “Ontario California” brochure. n.d. In the Meewis files housed in the Ontario City Library Model Colony Room.
Exchange. Through the 1950s, Sunkist remained Ontario’s largest employer. Other important local industries in the 1950s, as touted in a promotional brochure under the heading “Southern California’s Newest Industrial Empire,” included Armstrong Nurseries, Fruehauf Trailer Company, General Electric (formerly Hotpoint) Iron Plant, Graber Olive Co., Kaiser Steel Corporation, and Lockheed. One-third of the local labor force in 1957 worked in manufacturing (including the massive Kaiser Steel plant), agriculture employed about 13 percent of workers, and service (including aircraft repair and schools) constituted about 23 percent.  

![Figure 4. Detail Irrigation Map, Ontario Sheet, 1888.](image)

*Source: Wm. Ham. Hall, State Engineer, California State Engineering Department. David Rumsey Map Collection.*

In parallel with the rest of California, Ontario’s population exploded in the 1950s after World War II. Propelled by a growing, relatively prosperous middle class, and with Federal Housing Authority (FHA) loans providing easy financing, development of tract housing quickly altered the landscape. In 1952 alone, four new subdivisions were added to the City. Soon, most of the citrus groves and vineyards had been replaced with subdivisions, schools, shopping centers, and other commercial establishments. In 1959, the City began to develop new areas to the east and south, including the 2,000-acre Ontario Industrial Park south of the airport. With a stock of reasonably priced houses and the increasing availability of manufacturing jobs, the population grew from 22,872 in 1951 to 46,627 in 1960 (City of Ontario 2014: IV.E-9).

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4 The brochure states that “Lockheed Aircraft Service, General Electric, Southern California Aircraft Corp. and others have invested more than $10 million in manufacturing facilities.” In “Ontario California,” Ontario Association of Commerce and Industry brochure, ca 1957. Source: Ontario City Library Robert E. Ellington Model Colony Room.
DEVELOPMENT OF THE ONTARIO AIRPORT

In 1923, a local flying club landed an airplane on a dirt field between South San Antonio and South Mountain avenues and the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific railroad tracks (Figure 5). The first flying enthusiasts were Archie Mitchell, Waldo Waterman, and several others, and the aircraft was a Curtis JN 4 “Jenny.” They called the landing area Latimer Field, taking the name from a nearby orange packing company. In 1929, development of a full-fledged airport began when the City purchased 30 acres three miles east of Latimer Field, at the southwest corner of the present airport. The new airfield became known as Ontario Municipal Airport (Watson 1983:2-3).

In 1935, Carl von Darnell established a flying field on agricultural land leased from the City and founded a flight school called Darnell’s Flying Service. The following year, Darnell and his partners borrowed $1,000 from a local lumber dealer and built the new airfield’s first hangar, a 50-by-75-foot wood-frame building, and created a 1,200-by-700-foot-long runway by dragging weights behind an automobile. By 1939, the three partners had sold their interest to Arthur C. Nelson, who continued flight school operations subsidized through a program offered by the Civil Aeronautic Authority, a Federal agency tasked with training a pool of potential military pilots in anticipation of war with Germany (USACE 1995:3-1 to 3-2).

In 1940, the Aviation Committee of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce submitted a proposal to the City Council to expand the flying field. In consultation with the Civil Aeronautics Authority and the Works Project Administration (WPA), the City Council approved the proposal to lease 405 acres of nearby Ballou Ranch. In March 1941, the City annexed the land, along with several neighboring parcels. President Franklin Roosevelt approved the plan under WPA Application No. 50223 (USACE 1995:3-1 to 3-2; WPA Application No. 50223).

In 1942, the WPA began extensive work on improving Ontario Municipal Airport, including the construction of two concrete runways, drainage structures, roadways, and lighting, as well as water supply and storage facilities (Figure 6). The original dirt runway was lengthened by 600 feet and narrowed from 700 to 500 feet, and a second runway was constructed measuring 4,200 feet (northeast by southwest) by 500 feet. By this time, the United States had entered World War II, and on May 30, 1942, the U.S. Army Air Corps (known by this name until 1941, when it became the Air Force) acquired much of the Ontario facility for wartime use. In full operation, the military facility consisted of 875.49 acres: 357.11 acres owned by the Army, 518.12 acres leased, and a 0.26-acre easement (USACE 1995:3-1 to 3-2). At the end of the
war, a California Air National Guard (ANG) took over 30.62 acres of the Ontario Army Airfield facilities to establish a training station. ANG was responsible for further expansion of runways through 1966.\(^5\)

![Figure 6. Schematic of runway expansion, 1936-1962 (Neward 1970: App II).](image)

In 1945, the City began the development of a master plan, which was to incorporate the airport as a major element. At the time, the mayor cited the airport as the City’s “number one asset” and claimed that it was to play “a major role in the progress of the West.”\(^6\) The local newspaper reported optimism for the expansion of the airport for shipping, military use, industrial facilities, and passengers.\(^7\) At the time, Ontario Municipal Airport was the only airfield in Southern California capable of accommodating large, heavy aircraft; in fact, Pacific Overseas Airlines (Industrial Air Transport) was already transporting cargo to Tokyo and other Asian ports from Ontario. Considering these conditions and the commitment of the City to development of the airport, the federal government declared Ontario Municipal Airport an official international port of entry in 1946, setting the stage for further growth.\(^8\)

By 1947, Nelson Flying Service was operating a fleet of 22 planes dedicated to flight instruction. In 1950, a modern two-story terminal was constructed, along with a control tower in 1953. Shortly thereafter, in the late 1950s, Terminal One replaced the 1950 terminal, which had already become outdated. Runways were expanded to accommodate the jet aircraft and anticipated military plans, and further expansion of runways occurred repeatedly as the airport grew (Figure 7). In the 1960s, ONT, uncommon for metropolitan airports, still had ample land to expand to the east and the south without the expense of demolishing existing buildings or extensive earth-moving. The airport had begun to formalize compatible land use in the vicinity of the airport when it zoned the area south of the airport as industrial in 1957. To minimize the likelihood of complaints about noise from the operation of jets, in 1962, the City denied a change in zoning that would

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\(^6\) “Airport to Play Major Role in West Progress.” Daily Report, November 7, 1945.

\(^7\) “Airport to Play Major Role in West Progress.” Daily Report, November 7, 1945.

\(^8\) “Ask International Port Status for Ontario’s Field.” Daily Report, April 1, 1946.
have allowed new residential construction near the airport. The airport’s location near the population centers of Los Angeles yet removed from densely developed areas was an additional factor in the growth of the airport (Douglas and Livingstone 2006).

![Image of construction workers](image)

Figure 7. “Working Together for Victory: Construction of the Ontario Airport runway extension in 1941 funded by Federal Works Progress Administration (WPA).”

*Source: Ontario City Library Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony Room. Accession No. 367*

The postwar years brought industry-leading aviation/aerospace companies such as Lockheed Aircraft Services and GE Aircraft Engines to ONT, and an expansion of the airport to accommodate increased passenger traffic. As the population and geographic reach of the greater Los Angeles area increased, ONT became a part of a regional airport system (Los Angeles World Airport) that included Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and smaller airports in Van Nuys and Palmdale.

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INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE AIRPORT

As early as 1947, the small, mainly agricultural cities east of Los Angeles were setting the groundwork to attract industry to the area. Already it had become apparent that Los Angeles could not absorb the influx of population and industry to Southern California. “It is obvious … that the valleys and plains east of Los Angeles must make plans to take care of industrial growth,” claimed a local newspaper.10 Modeling itself after Azusa, which before the war was a “nice little citrus community with a huge relief roll during the years of the depression,”11 Upland-Ontario saw the economic advantage of evolving from an agricultural community to an industrial area, with increased employment opportunities and rising property values. The vision was to create separate zones, with industry in the valley and residential areas in the hills.12

With the reconversion of the Ontario airport to civilian use in 1945, the City began to investigate opportunities for development on and around the airport. The federal government had purchased land adjacent to the airport, some of which became available for repurchase by owners of ranches and the remaining portion available to the City for its desired industrial purposes.13

A 1949 City of Ontario Chamber of Commerce brochure promoted the city as “an ideal spot for industrial development” citing the presence of a major airport, railroads, and highways, the airport’s designation as an international port, and the availability of 360 improved acres within the airport zoned for aviation industrial development on a lease basis. Also touted were the airport’s unusually long runways (City of Ontario Chamber of Commerce 1949).

The end of World War II was met with the advent of the Cold War Era and growing concerns about the atomic bomb. In this climate, the aeronautical industry began to flourish both at and adjacent to the Ontario airport. By the end of the decade, Ontario was served by three railroads, an airport, the San Bernardino Freeway (Interstate 10), California State Highway Routes 71 and 83 (Euclid Avenue), and U.S. highway 60. The launch of the aerospace industry and a new passenger terminal at Ontario International Airport signaled a bright future for the City.

A 1962 Ontario Association of Commerce and Industry brochure, in a bid to draw business, featured Ontario’s location near Los Angeles and the harbor, three major railroad lines, and freight truck lines. The availability of undeveloped land within the city limits zoned for industry, “excellent uniform terrain with little slope,” good drainage and subsoil (piling not required), water mains, sewer lines, gas, electric lines, and, of course, the fine weather. A large pool of unemployed female workers (presumably young housewives) and few labor disputes in the area suggested the availability of cheap labor. The Kaiser Steel plant and other industries to the east, with housing built for workers, was another attraction to business and population, indicating the suitability of Ontario for manufacturing (Ontario Association of Commerce and Industry 1962a).

In 1957, the City had the foresight to set aside 2,000 acres of land adjacent to the airport for the Ontario Planned Industrial Park. Located south of East Mission Boulevard, major selling points to potential occupants were the area’s proximity to the airport and the ability to expand.14 By 1960, the City had in place 640 acres of improved land including amenities such as paved streets, curbs, sewers, and water, and was in the process of creating a master plan for the industrial park. By the 1960s, the Chamber of Commerce was claiming that ONT had the second largest air facility in Southern California, “as modern as tomorrow,”

with jet-age facilities. The airport’s “new million-dollar terminal faces an 11,000-foot runway that can accommodate the largest commercial jets,” a promotional brochure reads. The airport also included a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) flight service facility and a control tower with up-to-the-minute air navigation aids (Ontario Association of Commerce & Industry 1962b).
6. THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

This section provides a focused, analytical discussion of the historical patterns, significant events and activities, environmental, social, political, technological and cultural influences relevant to each theme within the context of Aviation in Ontario. It is intended to establish through analysis the historical significance of the properties associated with each theme. A detailed analysis of each theme, including period of significance, criteria for evaluation, and associated property types, is included.

Properties may be significant for their association with the history and development of Aviation in Ontario under one or more of the identified historic contexts. The selection of property types and associated character-defining features associated with each theme is intended to be inclusive, yet not definitive, in the identification of individual properties that may possess significance.

The threshold of integrity is defined as the ability of the property to convey its historic appearance and/or its historical association. The property should retain a significant number of character-defining features, such that visual, spatial, and contextual relationships may be understood. For example, the property’s materials may be replaced, modified, added to, or have new uses yet still retain integrity if its overall appearance continues to convey its original design intent.

Alterations completed within the period of significance will not diminish the historic integrity of the property. Significant alterations occurring outside the period of significance may remove a property for consideration from NRHP listing unless they demonstrate the evolution of the property. Examples of significant alterations include relocation of the building or structure, the introduction of new circulation patterns, and removal of previously documented details and/or ornament. The rarity of a property type should be considered in assessing its degree of alteration. A rare or unique property type permits a greater degree of alterations if its character and association is preserved.

THEME: COMMERCIAL AVIATION, 1946–1967

Major aviation companies, including Lockheed Aircraft Services and GE Aircraft Engines, operated international aircraft support services out of ONT beginning in 1946. ONT’s location near the population center of Los Angeles and ground transportation, yet sufficiently removed from developed areas, meant available acreage for multiple hangars and unobstructed runways. The lower costs for property and labor further enticed commercial aviation-related companies to locate divisions at ONT. ONT’s capacity to receive and ship heavy cargo was essential to the operations of aviation support services at the airport.

Sub-Theme: Aviation Support Services, 1952–1967

Several international aircraft companies established divisions at ONT that focused on aviation-related support services, including maintenance, modification, and testing of aircraft engines, rather than manufacturing. Support services also included the development of instruments and flight data recorders for both commercial and military clients. In addition to major aviation-related corporations such as Lockheed and GE were numerous smaller companies that provided various services to airline companies, as well as to the military at ONT.

Lockheed Aircraft Services

From 1952 to 1998, LAS, a division of Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, operated at ONT, primarily within a 70-acre parcel in the northwest area of the airport. During its 46 years of operation at Ontario, Lockheed built more than 25 structures, including hangars, office buildings, machine shops, and auxiliary buildings (Douglas and Livingstone 2006) (Figures 8-11).
Figure 8. Aerial view of LAS area (the hangar in the fore right has been demolished), post-1953. Photographer: Gordon Ayers. Source: Ontario City Library Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony Room. Accession No. 3677.
Figure 9. Historic view of entrance to Lockheed executive office building, designed by architect George Vernon Russell. Undated. 
Source: Colin Russell.

Figure 10. Lockheed brochure showing Mid-Century Modern construction of the executive office building and cafeteria, designed by architect George Vernon Russell. Undated. 
Source: Colin Russell.
Primary LAS activities at Ontario consisted of modifying and refurbishing commercial and military aircraft. The Ontario facilities served as headquarters for LAS’s domestic and international operations (LADOA 1983). LAS also produced a complete line of flight data recording devices, data playback stations, and training and simulation devices (LADOA 1983). Lockheed’s manufacture of flight recorders began in 1958 with the introduction of the Model 109 (LADOA 1983:5).

After World War II, with its expertise in maintenance, modification, and overhaul of aircraft, LAS saw an opportunity to expand its support services. In the U.S., the division constructed facilities in California, New York, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Hawaii. In the 1960s, LAS in Ontario became the maintenance and modification center for the highly classified U.S. Air Force fleet of four-engine turbo-prop C-130 aircraft under the program known as “Big Safari” (Lockheed 2017). Big Safari was an Air Force program responsible for maintenance and modification of specialized mission aircraft. It was not a technology development project, but a management program to support multiple projects simultaneously. Big Safari Detachment 4 was located at LAS in 1964 specifically to oversee modification of aircraft for special missions to Southeast Asia. LAS ONT also modified six C-123Bs, which were first-generation deep-penetration jamming aircraft fitted with special receivers and transmitters, Doppler navigation systems, and camouflage paint (Jenkins 2001:121). In 1998, LAS ended 46 years at ONT and permanently closed the facility (Sable 1998).
6. Themes and Sub-Themes

General Electric Aircraft Engines
GE Aircraft Engines operated an Aircraft Engine Maintenance Center facility at ONT from 1956 to 2010, when it closed ostensibly because of diminishing cargo traffic at the airport. The site was formerly occupied by an aircraft engine maintenance facility operated by Northrop and Double Aircraft. The 22 acres had been leased from LADOA and included administrative offices, an executive office building, a cafeteria building, a shipping building, a machine shop, engine overhaul hangar, a parts repair and assembly hangar, final assembly hangar, warehouses, and other offices and ancillary buildings (Dames & Moore 1992) (Figures 12-16). Two of the GE area hangars appear to be World War II hangars first built and used by the Army Air Corps.

Figure 12. Aerial view of GE Engine area, post-1953.
Source: Ontario City Library Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony Room. Accession No. 6018.

16 Interview with Don Davidson, former Head of Quality for GE Aviation, May 15, 2017.

Figure 14. Interior of GE Engine Hangar 3. December 6, 2016. Source: ASM.
Figure 15. GE storage hangars, looking west at northeast façade, December 6, 2016. *Source: ASM.*

Figure 16. GE storage hangars, looking north at south façade, December 6, 2016. *Source: ASM.*
The GE Jet Engine Test Cell Area is located to the southeast of the main GE operations on East Mission Boulevard (Figure 17). The initial components of the testing area were constructed in 1956, and the facility was used to test military and commercial aircraft jet engines after they were overhauled. The site consists of two thick-walled concrete test cells, storage structures, a preparation-for-testing building, offices, and a guard house.17

Figure 17. GE Jet Engine Test Cell 1, looking southwest. December 6, 2016. 
Source: ASM.

Other Commercial Enterprises

Otto Instrument Service

Otto Instrument Service has been in continuous operation since 1946, maintaining aircraft instruments for private aircraft, commercial aircraft, and the U.S. government. The company began in a 120-square-foot leased office at Rubidoux Airport in Riverside. A year later, the company relocated to a quonset hut at San Bernardino Airport and then to Ontario Airport in 1950. In 1952 at Ontario, Otto Instrument began construction on its first permanent building, a 6,400-square-foot building. In 1970, the building was moved down the runway from the south side of the airport, where new terminals were being built, to the north side, where customers were able to fly right up to the hangar for service.18

In February of 1993, Otto Instrument Service moved from its original facility to a new, larger, more modern facility in Ontario. In 2008, Otto Instrument Service purchased a second building in Ontario, more than doubling the size of its Ontario repair station.

**Aerojet-General Corporation**

Aerojet-General Corporation completed construction on a 19,000-square foot facility at ONT in 1958 to the west of Cucamonga Creek Channel at ONT. The facility included hangar space, as well as offices, a lobby, engine store, and a repair shop in an attached concrete block structure (Figure 18).¹⁹ Aerojet-General Corporation maintained an overhaul base at the airport to service its fleet of seven transport aircraft used on company business.²⁰

![Aerojet-General Hangar, looking east at the west façade. December 6, 2016. Source: ASM.](image)

**Summary Statement of Significance:** Commercial aviation support services for both general and military aircraft played an important role in the growth and development of ONT. A resource evaluated under this sub-theme is significant under Criteria A/1/I 3 a and b/D 1-3 for its association with aviation support services at ONT during the period of significance.

**Period of Significance:** 1952–1967

**Justification of the Period of Significance:** The period of significance begins with the establishment of the earliest commercial aviation support facility at ONT in 1952. The end of the period of significance is 1967, following NRHP guidelines for using 50 years ago when activities continue to have importance and no more specific date can be defined (National Register Bulletin No. 16A: How to Complete the National Register Nomination Form, p. 42).

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¹⁹ “$95,000 Facility Rising at Airport.” Los Angeles Times, September 21, 1958.
6. Themes and Sub-Themes

Criteria:
- NRHP A
- CRHR 1
- Local: Individual, 3 a, b
- Local: District 1-3

Associated Property Types: Eligible properties under this sub-theme include historic districts that retain the buildings and structures associated with an aircraft service facility that performed aircraft modifications, repair, and/or testing. Buildings and structures that could be contributing to an eligible historic district might include office buildings, fire stations, aircraft testing facilities, aircraft maintenance facilities, warehouses, laboratories, machine shops, aircraft hangars, storage, and maintenance hangars.

Representative organizations are Lockheed and General Electric, both of which established large complexes of properties with various functions related to the operations of the business. Individual property types with the ability to represent this sub-theme are limited to office/administration buildings and hangars, as these property types represent the strongest association with the sub-theme.

Registration Requirements
To be eligible under this sub-theme, an individual property should:
- Represent an important association with commercial aviation support services
- Be present during the period of significance
- Retain most of its character-defining features
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity

To be eligible under this sub-theme, a historic district should:
- Represent important patterns and trends in commercial aviation development from this period
- Contain a grouping of buildings and structures typical of a commercial aviation support facility
- Retain a majority of the buildings/structures present during the period of significance
- Retain most of its character-defining features
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity

Character-Defining Features

Hangars
- Multi-leaved, telescoping hangar doors
- Multi-light steel windows inset into hangar doors
- Either bow-trussed roof or front-gabled roof
- Usually with both hangar doors and personnel doors
- Adjacent to paved aircraft aprons, runways, and taxiways

Office/Administrative Buildings
- One or two stories in height
- Designed to reflect styles popular at the time of construction
- Multi-light steel-frame windows with some operable sections
- Associated landscaping and parking

Historic District
- Utilitarian or industrial buildings and structures with minimal or no ornamentation
- Industrial materials such as poured concrete, concrete block, and steel
- Laboratories and offices one or two stories in height
6. Themes and Sub-Themes

- Hangars, warehouses, and maintenance facilities with large open interior spaces to accommodate aircraft and mechanical equipment. Engine testing structures constructed of concrete and lacking windows
- Paved surfaces surrounding buildings and structures
- Landscaping associated with administrative and offices buildings

Integrity Thresholds: A property important for association with an event/historical patterns ideally should retain some features of all seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. However, some loss of design and workmanship is acceptable relevant to the other aspects of integrity. Additionally, there are some specific factors pertaining to integrity that should be taken into consideration when determining if sufficient integrity is retained:

Individual Properties
- Original hangar doors should be retained
- Exterior surfaces have may been painted
- Original massing of building should be retained

Historic Districts
- Retain original spatial relationships among buildings
- Majority of the contributors must possess integrity
- Alterations or new intrusions should not be so significant that the district can no longer convey a sense of its historical associations


“Ontario is destined to become the air cargo terminal of the west” with City Council approval of a proposal to establish the Industrial Air Transport Corp. at Municipal Airport, according to a 1945 news report.21 Leasing hangars vacated by the Army, the Ontario Industrial Air Transport Corp. was formed by a group of former employees of the Consolidated Aircraft Corp. to carry freight only.22 At the same time, Fletcher Aviation Corporation was in the process of building a $250,000 freight terminal with the aim of focusing on the transportation of cut flowers and perishable citrus and deciduous produce.23 At a meeting of the City Council, company officials urged the importance of developing a zoning plan for the airport, designating sections for private aviation and other specific activities.24

Military operations at the airport required the airport’s long runways and unobstructed approach from the east for activities requiring transport of freight and personnel. Commercial aviation facilities at ONT such as GE Aircraft Engines and LAS relied on the airport’s capacity to handle cargo, as the companies’ operations depended on shipping and receiving aircraft engines and parts (Figure 19).

Summary Statement of Significance: Once Ontario Municipal Airport was designated an international port of entry in 1946, the airport’s capacity for shipping and receiving freight opened the door to further rapid development. Aviation support services on airport property as well as in the adjacent industrial park needed such services to conduct their businesses and thrive. A resource evaluated under this sub-theme is significant under Criteria A/1/I 3 a and b/D 1-3 for its association with international cargo and freight at ONT during the period of significance.

22 “Aerial Freight Lines Organized.” San Bernardino County Sun, January 2, 1946.
Figure 19. Lockheed Hangar 19, looking south at the north façade. December 6, 2016. Source: ASM.

**Period of Significance:** 1946–1967

**Justification of the Period of Significance:** The period of significance begins with the establishment of the earliest air cargo operations at ONT in 1946. The end of the period of significance is 1967, following NRHP guidelines for using 50 years ago when activities continue to have importance and no more specific date can be defined (*National Register Bulletin No. 16A: How to Complete the National Register Nomination Form*, p. 42).

**Criteria**
- NRHP A
- CRHR 1
- Local: Individual, 3 a, b
- Local: District 1-3

**Associated Property Types:** Eligible properties under this sub-theme include historic districts that retain the buildings and structures associated with an aviation-related freight and cargo facility. Buildings and structures that could be contributing to an eligible historic district might include warehouses, office buildings, fire stations, aircraft hangars, and storage hangars.

Individual property types with the ability to represent this sub-theme are limited to aircraft hangars and storage hangars, as these property types represent the strongest association with the sub-theme.
Registration Requirements

To be eligible under this sub-theme, an individual property should:
- Represent an important association with air cargo and freight operations
- Be present during the period of significance
- Retain most of the character-defining features
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity

To be eligible under this sub-theme, a historic district should:
- Represent important patterns and trends in air cargo and freight development from the period of significance
- Retain a grouping of buildings and structures typical of an air cargo and freight facility
- Retain a majority of the buildings/structures dating from the period of significance
- Retain most of its character-defining features
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity

Character-Defining Features

*Hangars*
- Multi-leaved, telescoping hangar doors
- Multi-light steel windows inset into hangar doors
- Either bow-trussed roof or front-gabled roof
- Usually with both hangar doors and personnel doors
- Adjacent to paved aircraft aprons, runways, and taxiways

*Historic Districts*
- One- or two-story utilitarian or industrial buildings and structures with minimal or no ornamentation
- Industrial materials such as poured concrete, concrete block, and steel
- Hangars and warehouses, and maintenance facilities with large open interior spaces to accommodate aircraft and cargo
- Paved surfaces surrounding buildings and structures

Integrity Thresholds: A property important for association with an event/historical patterns ideally should retain some features of all seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. However, some loss of design and workmanship is acceptable relevant to the other aspects of integrity. Additionally, there are some specific factors pertaining to integrity that should be taken into consideration when determining if sufficient integrity is retained:

*Individual Properties*
- Original hangar doors should be retained
- Exterior surfaces have may been painted
- Original massing of building should be retained

*Historic Districts*
- Should retain original spatial relationships among buildings
- Majority of the contributors must possess integrity
- Alterations or new intrusions should not be so significant that the district can no longer convey a sense of its historical associations
Passenger travel has played an important role in the development of ONT since 1929, when the City established Ontario Municipal Airport. Later, ONT’s strategic location inland, away from coastal fog and with unobstructed runway approaches, made it a natural candidate for inclusion in a regional airport system based at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

**Sub-Theme: Early Passenger Travel, 1950–1967**

In 1949, Western Airlines began scheduled flights at Ontario, even before the first modern terminal dedicated to passenger travel was built in 1950. The terminal building contained a full complement of passenger services, including a lobby, a baggage room, a ticketing office, shops, and a restaurant. Ancillary facilities housed in separate buildings were offices for the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) and a communication service and weather bureau. A control tower added soon after, in 1953, was built adjacent to the two-story terminal (Figures 20 and 21).

![Control tower with first modern terminal to the east (right) circa 1953. Source: Ontario City Library Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colon Room. Accession No. 4216.](image)

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By 1959-1960, the terminal was replaced by the current Terminal One complex (Figures 22-25). Designed for expansion, the Terminal One building was enlarged extensively in two phases in the 1960s, and again in the 1970s. In 1983 and 1993, the terminal received two more additions (Figure 26). In 1965, a freestanding single-story Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) office building was added to the complex. Terminal One was vacated in 1998, when the current terminals two and four were opened.

In 1955, Bonanza Air Lines began services out of the airport. At the time, nonstop flights by Western and Bonanza airlines did not travel farther than Las Vegas. In 1962, Western began nonstop flights to San Francisco, and Bonanza began nonstop F27 flights to Phoenix in 1967 (USACE 1998:3-4). By 1967, Bonanza and Western were joined by Los Angeles Airways (a helicopter airmail service to downtown Los Angeles and LAX) (City of Ontario Chamber of Commerce 1967).

On October 18, 1967, a contract was signed by the City of Los Angeles and the City of Ontario agreeing to jointly contribute to the further expansion and development of ONT. The City of Ontario would benefit economically from a larger airport but lacked the necessary funds to expand, which the City of Los Angeles was able to provide. Los Angeles also agreed to promote and manage the airport (Agreement 1967).
Figure 22. “Logan Locke, the Federal Aviation Agency's chief controller at Ontario International Airport, looks over the airport from control tower.” April 1, 1967. Herald-Examiner Collection, Los Angeles Public Library. Accession No. LAPL00054959.

Figure 23. Primary façade of Terminal One. Circa 1960. Source: Ontario City Library Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony Room.
6. Themes and Sub-Themes

Figure 24. Terminal One, looking east. Circa 1960. HCM brochure. 
Source: Ontario City Library Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony Room.

Figure 25. Interior of Terminal One. Circa 1960. HCM brochure. 
Source: Ontario City Library Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony Room.
On November 1, 1967, ONT was officially added to the Los Angeles Department of Airports (LADOA) regional network of satellite airports, which included Van Nuys and Palmdale as well (Figure 27). At that time, development at ONT was already fully under way, with the 1960 terminal already being doubled to accommodate increased traffic, 350 acres acquired at the east end for runway expansion, and plans for additional extensions of runways. As the only airport in the eastern Los Angeles metro area capable of serving large commercial jetliners, and with existing facilities including a fully equipped passenger terminal and six airlines with daily scheduled service, ONT was ideally situated for inclusion in a regional airport system based at LAX. The Civil Aeronautics Board approved service that would allow all domestic airlines serving LAX to provide similar service out of ONT (LADOA 1967).

Since being vacated in 1998 when new terminals were opened east of Terminal One, the complex has been a popular location for filming. Classic Mid-Century-Modern in style, Terminal One has stood in for a number of airports, both fictional and real, in movies and television shows. ONT represented Miami International Airport, Tehran Airport, Las Vegas Airport, and LAX in the 1960s, among other airports.

**Summary Statement of Significance:** Early passenger travel contributed to the development of ONT, partially in parallel with the explosion of suburban expansion toward the east of Los Angeles. A resource evaluated under this sub-theme is significant under Criteria A/1/I 3 a and b/D 1-3 for its association with early passenger travel at ONT during the period of significance.
Period of Significance: 1950–1967

Period of Significance Justification: The period of significance begins with the establishment of the earliest extant passenger flight facility at ONT in 1952. The end of the period of significance is 1967, following NRHP guidelines for using 50 years ago when activities continue to have importance and no more specific date can be defined (National Register Bulletin No. 16A: How to Complete the National Register Nomination Form, p. 42). This date also coincides with a new period of development for ONT once it became part of the LADA network of regional airports.

Criteria
- NRHP A
- CRHR 1
- Local: Individual, 3 a, b
- Local: District 1-3
6. Themes and Sub-Themes

Associated Property Types: Eligible properties under this sub-theme include historic districts that retain the buildings and structures associated with early passenger travel. Buildings and structures that could be contributing to an eligible historic district might include passenger terminals, baggage claim buildings and conveyance systems, control towers, and office and support buildings.

Individual property types with the ability to represent this sub-theme are limited to terminal buildings and control towers, as these property types represent the strongest association with the sub-theme.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible under this sub-theme, an individual property should:
- Represent an important association with early passenger travel
- Be present during the period of significance
- Retain most of the character-defining features
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity

To be eligible under this sub-theme, a historic district should:
- Represent important patterns and trends in air passenger travel from the period of significance
- Retain a grouping of buildings and structures of facilities associated with early passenger travel
- Retain a majority of the buildings/structures dating from the period of significance
- Retain most of its character-defining features
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity

Character-Defining Features

Individual Properties

Passenger Terminals
- One or two stories in height
- Horizontal massing
- Passenger lobby often two or more stories in height
- Terminal includes services such as ticketing, restaurants, and baggage areas
- Baggage area can be a separate related building
- Often designed to reflect styles popular at the time of construction
- Adjacent to passenger loading zones, runways, and taxiways

Control Towers
- Height exceeds all other nearby buildings and structures
- Vertical massing
- Near terminals, hangars, runways, and taxiways

Historic Districts
- Prominent terminal with vehicle access for picking up and dropping off passengers
- Associated baggage claim and handling facilities including physical association with passenger, ticketing, and aircraft loading
- Buildings and structures located adjacent to aircraft aprons and runways
- Control tower overlooks facilities and runways
- Paved surfaces surrounding buildings and structures; parking closely associated with terminals
- Landscaping associated with terminals and administrative and office buildings
**Integrity Thresholds:** A property important for association with an event/historical patterns ideally should retain some features of all seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. However, some loss of design and workmanship is acceptable relevant to the other aspects of integrity. Additionally, there are some specific factors pertaining to integrity that should be taken into consideration when determining if sufficient integrity is retained:

**Individual Properties**
- Original exterior surfaces retain original materials
- Exterior surfaces have may been painted
- Original massing of buildings should be retained, although later additions are acceptable if configuration of original building is apparent

**Historic Districts**
- Retain original spatial relationships among buildings
- Majority of the contributors must possess integrity
- Alterations or new intrusions should not be so significant that the district can no longer convey a sense of its historical associations

**THEME: MILITARY AVIATION, 1942–1991**

Typical of many small municipal airfields, Ontario Municipal Airport was controlled by the military throughout World War II. During the years of military occupancy of the airfield, it was transformed from the dirt field of the 1920s and 1930s to a modern field with long runways, an air traffic control tower, hundreds of buildings, and advanced instrument systems. The improvements set the stage for a long-term occupation by the California Air National Guard from 1942 to 1997.

**Ontario Army Air Field**

During World War II, from 1942 until 1946, the military owned, leased, and controlled Ontario Municipal Airport, along with many small airports that were taken over to accommodate the war effort. During this period, the U.S. Army built 215 buildings containing a total of approximately 300,000 square feet at what was known as Ontario Army Air Field (OAAF) (Douglas and Livingstone 2006:4-5, 4-6). The OAAF began by leasing 466.2 acres from Ontario Municipal Airport, and then expanded.

After the war, in 1952, the Army Air National Guard proposed basing jet fighter aircraft of the 196th Tactical Air Support Group at the airport. As a result of this proposal, the City initiated the first of three runway extensions and other improvement to airport facilities. The first modern control tower was completed, and after two additional runway extensions, the airport had a 10,000-foot runway to service both commercial and military air traffic.

Many of the World War II military buildings were constructed in the current Lockheed area at the north side of the airport along East Airport Drive. Few of the World War II buildings remain; only two barrel-roofed hangars remain that were constructed circa 1940 in what is now the General Electric area of the airport. Portions of the World War II era sites might lie below ground in the form of utility and sewer systems, foundations, and roads (Douglas and Livingstone 2006:4-5, 4-6).

When the Army acquired the airport, the 311th Airbase Squadron was assigned to Ontario under the jurisdiction of the 4th Army Air Corps Force, headquartered at Hamilton Army Air Field. The airport became known as the Ontario Observation Aerodrome when the 69th Observation Group arrived on June 1, 1942. The group flew specialized observation aircraft with a mission to patrol the coastal areas around Los Angeles for submarines and to photograph the local harbor defenses and war industries. The 69th
Observation Group continued operating out of Ontario until October 1943, when the 384th Fighter Squadron arrived at the Aerodrome to begin combat training. Equipped with the P-38 “Lightning,” a twin-engine propeller-driven fighter plane designed by Lockheed in 1937, the 384th trained in air-to-air and air-to-ground gunnery (Davies 1942:3-5). The P38 was the first military aircraft to operate regularly at ONT. Built by Lockheed in Burbank, the P38s were flown at Ontario by pilot trainees in the Army Air Corps. With the arrival of these activities, the airfield became a full-fledged facility known as the OAAF. During this period, the Air Force stationed several anti-aircraft artillery battalions at Ontario because of its resemblance to terrain in southern Europe (Croas 1944).

Chemical warfare training was conducted at OAAF, as on many other World War II airbases, but associated buildings and structures appear to have been removed. Records show a base Chemical Defense Plan had been established by February 1943, and a chemical warehouse and office were constructed by May 10, 1943, on Victory Boulevard (on the southeast side of the airfield). The gas chamber was utilized for exercises that included the use of tear gas and chlorine. Later in 1943, the Chemical Warehouse and Pyrotechnics Magazine were relocated to near the Bomb Storage Area in the northeast sector of the airfield. None of these buildings appear to remain (USACE 1998:3-4). In 1944, the Fourth Platoon of the 813th Chemical Company was stationed at OAAF to facilitate the training of pilots in the use of “smoke missions” (maneuvers wherein chemical canisters were dropped from aircraft onto ground targets to create artificial smoke screens used as camouflage for military forces operating nearby) (Croas 1944). Training at ONT ceased with the end of World War II. On November 15, 1945, the Army declared the airfield surplus and converted it to inactive status.26

**California Air National Guard**

In 1949, the military’s use of the airport recommenced when a California Air National Guard (CA ANG) training station was established at the airport under a lease from the City of Ontario. An armory for the 149th Control and Warning Squadron was constructed, and in the following years, ANG activities contributed significantly to further construction at the airport (USACE 1995:6-1 to 6-2) (Figure 28).

Bids for construction of an armory for the 149th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron of the CA ANG were opened in April 1949. The main armory was to be one of three buildings comprising the installation on 9.5 acres adjacent to the airport east of Cucamonga Creek Channel and north of the Union Pacific railroad tracks paralleling Mission Boulevard on the south. A subsequent construction phase was to involve a motor service shop and warehouse buildings.27

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The CA ANG Training Station underwent expansion until 1966. Additional air rights over the approach zone to the east and acquisition of a 12-acre strip of land by the City were planned to accommodate the fighter aircrafts used by ANG and to improve air safety. The ANG was to contribute a $1,500,000 building program and funds to extend the runway to 7,000 feet. Included in the initial phase of the building program was a hangar with lean-to, a gasoline storage facility, and a large paved area (Figure 29). The City wanted to bring the fighter squadron program to Ontario because it would contribute a $400,000 annual payroll and employ 40 permanent workers, in addition to 500 personnel participating in squadron activities.28 The Ontario ANG station was closed in 1995 by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, at which time operations were relocated to March Air Reserve Base in Riverside County, California.29

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Figure 29. Air National Guard hangar, looking southwest at east and north facades.
December 6, 2016. Source: ASM.

Summary Statement of Significance: Ontario Army Air Field was typical of small municipal airports during World War II that were utilized by the military for the war effort. The presence of the military forces during that time contributed to the growth of the airport by spurring development of larger runways and flight guidance systems. Later, these facilities would be returned to the City and eventually used by the CA ANG. A resource evaluated under this theme is significant under Criteria A/1/I 3 a and b/D 1-3 for its association with important military operations and activities, which could include World War II, Korean or Cold War operations in Ontario, during the period of significance. A property that was present during the period of significance and associated with the military is not sufficient justification for eligibility under this theme; such properties must also demonstrate that they were associated with important patterns and trends in military operations.

Period of Significance: 1942–1991

Justification of the Period of Significance: The period of significance begins with the construction of the first existing military-related building at ONT in 1942. The end of the period of significance is 1991, the generally accepted year for the end of the Cold War (Salmon 2011, 4). Although this period of significance extends beyond 50 years ago, the historical significance of the Cold War has been demonstrated to be exceptionally important, and therefore Criterion Consideration G is applicable (National Register Bulletin No. 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria, p. 41).

Criteria

- NRHP A
- CRHR 1
- Local: Individual, 3 a, b
- Local: District 1-3
**Associated Property Types:** Eligible properties under this sub-theme include historic districts that retain the buildings and structures associated with a military facility. Buildings and structures that could be contributing to an eligible historic district might include aircraft hangars, maintenance and modification facilities, supply buildings, motor pool buildings, munitions storage buildings, fire stations, personnel support services buildings, and administration buildings.

Individual property types with the ability to represent this sub-theme are limited to hangars, as these property types represent the strongest association with the sub-theme for extant buildings.

**Registration Requirements**

To be eligible under this sub-theme, an individual property should:

- Represent an important association with military aviation
- Be present during the period of significance
- Retain most of the character-defining features
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity

To be eligible under this sub-theme, a historic district should:

- Represent important patterns and trends in military operations from the period of significance
- Retain a grouping of buildings and structures of associated with a military facility
- Retain a majority of the buildings/structures dating from the period of significance
- Retain most of its character-defining features
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity

**Character-Defining Features**

**Individual Properties: Hangars**

- Military hangars might have two-story “lean-to” offices and workshops around the perimeter of the aircraft space
- Hangars often have clerestory windows and windows in hangar doors
- Multi-leaved hangar doors

**Historic District**

- Utilitarian or industrial buildings and structures
- Industrial materials such as poured concrete, concrete block, and steel
- Hangars and warehouses, and maintenance facilities with large open interior spaces to accommodate aircraft and cargo
- Personnel support buildings and offices often display a common architectural style
- Buildings and structures clustered together
- Located adjacent to or near runways

**Integrity Thresholds:** A property important for association with an event/historical patterns ideally should retain some features of all seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. However, some loss of design and workmanship is acceptable relevant to the other aspects of integrity. Additionally, there are some specific factors pertaining to integrity that should be taken into consideration when determining if sufficient integrity is retained:
6. Themes and Sub-Themes

**Individual Properties**
- Exterior surfaces have may been painted or resurfaced
- Original massing of building should be retained
- Should retain both original aircraft doors and tail cuts

**Historic Districts**
- Retain original spatial relationships among buildings
- Majority of the contributors must possess integrity
- Alterations or new intrusions should not be so significant that the district can no longer convey a sense of its historical associations

**THEME: AVIATION AND ARCHITECTURE, 1942–1975**

With an eye toward the future, aviation activities at ONT spurred the need for new building types, accompanied by new, jet-age designs. Advances in construction technology are represented by the airport’s variety of aircraft hangars serving commercial, industrial, and military purposes, and outstanding examples of Modernist architecture reflect postwar optimism and prosperity in the postwar years at ONT.

**Sub-Theme: Developments in Construction Technology, 1942–1975**

The advent of aviation and related activities in the twentieth century necessitated a new type of building to house the flying machine, both for storage and as enclosed workspaces for aircraft modification and repair. The founders of Latimer Field, Ontario’s first airfield, designed and constructed a hangar that improved on the hangars of the day, which had large, single-piece doors that ran on tracks out from the sides. The new hangar had doors that were segmented and hinged, so that the tracks could run along the sides of the building and thus be protected from the wind (Neward 1970:7-8). As the size and mechanical complexity of airplanes increased, the size and construction technology of hangars increased as well (Aaron 2011:5-2).

The physical form of a hangar is its primary characteristic and is defined by its structural material. Hangars are generally constructed with wood, steel, or concrete, lending structural integrity to the large buildings that required unimpaired open spaces. Steel has always been the most common material, with the first examples constructed as early as 1916 and prefabricated steel hangars constructed since the late 1940s. The strength of the material allows trusses and beams to span the long distances needed to accommodate aircraft, and the ability to prefabricate and easily transport steel components adds to the material’s popularity (Aaron 2011:5-2) (Figure 30-32).

The aircraft doors are the second most prominent feature of the hangar. The doors, which are heavy because of their size, are required to extend to the maximum width of the large opening, presenting a design challenge that has evolved over time. The first hangars had fairly simple doors or were left open or covered with canvas. As early as 1917, the commonly telescoping door with multiple leaves hung on barn door rollers and running on tracks was developed and remains in use. To allow the doors to retract the full width of the hangar space, external tracks extended beyond the mass of the hangar (Aaron 2011:5-7). Another type of hangar door, known as a canopy door, was first used in military hangars during World War II. Many hangar doors have inset smaller personnel doors. Windows are often absent, but many have multi-light glazing of various configurations (Aaron 2011:5-7).

**Summary Statement of Significance:** Hangars of several types more than 45 years of age are located on ONT property. Hangars, many of which were built using standard plans, evaluated under this sub-theme might meet Criteria C/3/I-3 as embodying distinctive characteristics of construction type, period, or method. In most cases, hangars will not represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value. In order to determine if a hangar is eligible under Criteria C/3/I-3, it must be a significant example of a hangar design type or construction method (Aaron 2011:605, 6-06)
Figure 30. Interior of Lockheed Hangar 2. December 6, 2016.
Source: ASM.

Figure 31. Interior of ANG Hangar. December 6, 2016.
Source: ASM.
6. Themes and Sub-Themes

Figure 32. Multi-leaved doors on ANG Hangar. December 6, 2016.  
*Source: ASM.*

Period of Significance: 1942–1975


Criteria

- NRHP C
- CRHR 3
- Local: Individual, 3 c-h

Associated Property Types: Eligible individual property types under this sub-theme that have the ability to represent this sub-theme are limited to hangars, as these property types represent the strongest association with the sub-theme for extant buildings. No extant groups of hangars at ONT were found that could be evaluated as historic districts.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible under this sub-theme, an individual property should:

- Represent an important association with developments in construction technology
- Be constructed during the period of significance
- Retain most of the character-defining features of the property type or style
• Retain the essential aspects of integrity

Character-Defining Features

*Individual Properties: Hangars*

• Hangars have large open space to accommodate aircraft
• Hangars are either front-gabled or barrel-roofed
• Hangars generally have multi-leaved telescoping doors
• Spanning systems of hangars are generally steel truss
• Building material steel, wood, and/or concrete
• Tail cuts

*Integrity Thresholds:* Eligible properties will retain a high degree of integrity of design, materials, and craftsmanship. Properties should also retain good integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association, but some loss of these aspects of integrity is acceptable (NRHP 2002). If multiple properties are extant that represent the same property type, a comparison of similar resources is critical to determining local-level eligibility.

• Hangars should retain original doors and tail cuts
• Exterior cladding may be replaced
• Hangars should retain original massing
• Newer auxiliary buildings might be attached

**Sub-Theme: Modernism and Aviation, 1955–1970**

The postwar period in the U.S. witnessed the construction of several widely acclaimed terminals designed to reflect the coming of the jet age. In the early 1950s, architects had a number of issues to address in their designs. First, a new terminal had to be a visually significant place of arrival and departure, easily seen from approaching automobiles and airplanes, and with a futuristic look that spoke of the jet age. Second, cities often wanted their terminals to include interior space that provided views of the activities of a bustling airfield that passengers could observe from a waiting area that itself was significant. Finally, the design had to allow for expansion. Like other terminals of the era, the 1959 design for the new terminal at ONT included an impressive two-story waiting room with walls of windows through which passengers could observe arriving and departing planes (Figure 33). The core of the terminal building served as only the beginning of a greatly expanded terminal. The ONT terminal building was included in a 1962 *Architectural Forum* article on modern designs for international terminals and was described as a fairly modest contribution to the genre:

> Ontario, Calif., Airport, by architects Harnish, Morgan & Causey, is a small, efficient flying facility which also pays some attention to architecture. The tall, two-story waiting room with ticket offices has the usual glass fronts facing the field and the approach road, but in this case they were handsome, glare-shielding grilles. California’s climate permits open-air walkways to the loading stations. Pleasant planting has been started around them. General contractor for the terminal is Service Construction Co.\(^\text{30}\)

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Harnish, Morgan & Causey (HMC) is a local architectural firm specializing in Mid-Century-Modern design that was founded in Ontario in 1940, with Jay Dewey Harnish initially working as an individual. In addition to Terminal One at the airport, the firm designed an office building in the Lockheed area and the control tower in the Terminal area. The firm was also responsible for several Modernist buildings throughout the City, including Ontario High School (1967), the Ontario City Library (remodeled), and corporate buildings at 500 East E Street (1965), 735 North Euclid Avenue (1963), and 240 North Euclid Avenue (1964). Other known practitioners of the Modernist aesthetic in Ontario were Donald Warren Co. (architects) and Albert C. Martin and Associates.

The executive office building and adjacent cafeteria at Lockheed Aircraft Services are an outstanding example of Mid-Century-Modern architecture at ONT (Figure 34). Notable award-winning architect George Vernon Russell was an employee of Lockheed and served as part of the World War II effort (Figure 31). One unusual project he worked on at Lockheed Ontario was his design for General Dwight D. Eisenhower’s posh two-unit rolling headquarters.31 Russell’s numerous projects included the Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas, the 1937 Regency Modern Hollywood Reporter building, and Sunset Plaza in West Hollywood.32 The Lockheed building was said to have embodied “[n]ew concepts of structural design, sun protection devices, and use of colors not common in the industrial field.”33 Exterior enameled metal panels were colored in “the vivid red, white, and blue of the corporation’s trademark, with contrasts of textured gray walls and the bluish-green tint of glare-reducing glass,” according to the Los Angeles Times.34

Figure 34. Lockheed executive office building, designed by architect George Vernon Russell. Circa 1956. Source: Colin Russell.

Summary Statement of Significance: Mid-Century Modernism was widely used in aviation-related facilities both in the U.S. and internationally, expressive of a new perspective that turned away from the past and looked toward the future. A resource evaluated under this sub-theme might be significant under Criteria C/3/I-3 for displaying distinctive characteristics of the architectural style or for association with a master architect.

Period of Significance: 1955–1970

Justification for the Period of Significance: The period of significance begins with the construction of the earliest extant Mid-Century-Modern building at ONT in 1955 and ends in 1970, which commonly marks the end of the influence of the style.  

Criteria

- NRHP C
- CRHR 3
- Local: Individual, 3 c-h

Property Type Description: Associated properties that express Mid-Century Modernism are often prominent commercial and civic buildings such as airport terminals, and corporate offices and headquarters. At ONT, the eligible properties are primarily those that are visible to and used by the public.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible under this sub-theme, an individual property should:
- Be a good representation of the Mid-Century-Modern style on the local level or

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35 This cut-off point is consistent with the historic context statement for SurveyLA, as well as other sources of evaluation criteria.
6. Themes and Sub-Themes

- Be designed by a master architect and be a good representation of his/her work and
- Be constructed during the period of significance
- Retain most of the character-defining features of the style
- Retain the essential aspects of integrity

Character-Defining Features

*Individual Properties*

- Horizontal orientation
- Direct expression of structural system and function
- Minimal ornamentation
- Flat roof, often with wide overhanging eaves
- Wide expanses of glazing, often floor-to-ceiling
- Connection between the interior and exterior, often landscaped
- Simple, geometric forms

*Integrity Thresholds:* Eligible properties will retain a high degree of integrity of design, materials, and craftsmanship. Properties should also retain good integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association, but some loss of these aspects of integrity is acceptable (NRHP 2002). If multiple properties are extant that represent the same architectural style, a comparison of similar resources is critical to determining local-level eligibility.

- In a large building, some windows and doors might have been changed
- Exterior surface have may been painted
- Original use may have changed
7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the development of this historic context statement, and an intensive-level survey of 55 buildings and structures that are more than 45 years of age, ASM has identified three historic districts and nine individually eligible buildings that are recommended eligible for the NRHP, CRHR, and City of Ontario List of Historic Landmarks and Districts at the local level of significance (Figure 35 and Table 2). The remaining resources are recommended ineligible under the themes associated with Aviation identified within this historic context statement. Most of the contributing resources to the three historic districts are not individually eligible, as they do not sufficiently represent the themes that they are associated with as individual resources. The potential historic resources evaluated are primarily industrial/commercial, but also include some military buildings, two residential single-family dwellings, one with several newer apartment complexes on the same parcel.

The eligible historic resources reflect the important themes and sub-themes identified in this historic context statement. Specifically, three districts at ONT (LAS, GE Aviation Engines, and the Terminal One Complex), are recommended eligible as good representations of the themes/sub-themes of:


Individual buildings—specifically, Lockheed Executive Office Building and Cafeteria (Bldgs. 10 and 11) and Hangers 2, 4, and 6; Terminal One Building; Control Tower; Air National Guard Hangar; and Aerojet-General Hangar—are recommended eligible as good representations of the themes/sub-themes of:


Table 2 identifies those eligible resources, the themes they represent, and the criteria under which they are eligible. As a result of the intensive evaluations, ASM assigned an OHP status code to all properties surveyed, including eligible and ineligible properties (Appendix 2). Status codes utilized in this survey project are:

- 3B: Appears eligible for NR both individually and as a contributor to a NR eligible district through survey evaluation
- 3D: Appears eligible for NR as a contributor to a NR eligible district through survey evaluation
- 6Z: Found ineligible for National Register, California Register, or local designation through survey evaluation
- 3S: Appears eligible for NR as an individual property through survey evaluation

Those resources that are recommended herein as eligible and worthy of preservation should be considered historical resources when compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is required. For listing on the local List of Historic Landmarks and Districts, CRHR, or NRHP, the proper nomination process will need to be undertaken.
7. Summary and Conclusions

Figure 35. Map showing eligible districts and properties identified.

- Lockheed Aircraft Services Historic District
- Terminal One Historic District
- Aerojet-General Hangar
- GE Aircraft Engines Historic District
- Air National Guard Hangar
## Table 2. List of Eligible Historical Resources Surveyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Property</th>
<th>Theme/Sub-theme</th>
<th>NRHP Criteria</th>
<th>CRHR Criteria</th>
<th>Local Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lockheed Aircraft Services Historic District</td>
<td>Commercial Aviation, 1946-1967/Aviation Support Services, 1952-1967</td>
<td>A,C</td>
<td>1,3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lockheed Cafeteria (Bldg. 11)</td>
<td>Aviation and Architecture, 1942-1975/Modernism and Aviation, 1955-1970</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Individual 3 c-d, f-h</td>
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<td>Control Tower</td>
<td>Civil Aviation, 1950-1967/Early Passenger Travel, 1950-1967</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Individual 3 a-b, g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. REFERENCES


“Agreement Between the City of Los Angeles and the City of Ontario for the Joint Exercise of Powers in Connection to Ontario International Airport.” October 18, 1967. In Ontario City Library Robert E. Ellingwood Model Colony Room.


References


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