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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items

Yes New Submission _____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic Resources Associated with African Americans in Los Angeles

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronoligical period for each.)
Settlement Patterns, 1890s – 1958
Labor and Employment, 1900 – 1958
Community Development, 1872-1958
Civic Engagement, 1870 – 1958
Entertainment and Culture, 1915-1958

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D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.
(_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature and title of certifying official | Date

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
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E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Introduction

Since the earliest days of the Los Angeles pueblo, African Americans have been a vital presence in the city. By the early twentieth century when their population began to grow in earnest, they had come to form a vibrant community south of downtown, clustered around Central Avenue. They bought homes, raised families, ran businesses, labored diligently, established community institutions, cultivated a cultural life, and asserted their civil rights. Blacks not only shaped their own community, but they were central shapers of Los Angeles history itself. They impacted multiple aspects of metropolitan life, from the region's social geography to its political, economic, religious, and cultural life. This overview surveys African American history in Los Angeles from the late nineteenth century, when their population began a steady rise, to the late 1950s. This history is a complex mix of gains and setbacks, opportunities and obstructions. The African American experience in Los Angeles – as in all American cities – was shaded by race and racism, and the agonizing challenges these forces could present. Theirs was not a story of linear progress and advancement, but rather one of ebbs and flows. As historian Douglas Flamming makes clear in his important study, *Bound for Freedom*, "Racial conditions in Los Angeles were complicated… The paradox was that things got better and worse at the same time, and for the same reasons."[1] As such, this is also a history deeply defined by a striving for rights, respect, and equality.

Over this period, the black community in Los Angeles was shaped and reshaped by successive streams of migration. The varied backgrounds and motivations of these migrants lent different qualities to the evolving community. From 1890 to 1915, L.A. was destination for a "quiet" migration of southern blacks with middle-class outlooks and ambitions, the so-called "talented tenth" as W.E.B. Du Bois dubbed them. The largest group came from cities in Texas – San Antonio, Austin, Galveston, Beaumont and Dallas – as well as New Orleans, Atlanta, and Shreveport. As city people with some cash reserves, these early newcomers quickly founded the institutions of the community – newspapers, businesses, clubs, churches, and the like. They were familiar with the rhythms of urban life, so did not experience the rough adjustment endured by many rural migrants to cities like Chicago. In this period, black newcomers laid claim to Central Avenue as the center of their community.[2] The overall black population was relatively small by this point, reaching only 15,579 by 1920 in the city of Los Angeles. (See table) Some historians claim that their small relative numbers, combined with L.A.'s open spaces, low density, and opportunities for home ownership, "minimized white hostility to black dispersion."[3] Others carry this claim further by characterizing this as a "golden era" for black in Los Angeles, a time when white hostility was at a low point thanks to the relative "invisibility" of blacks on the metropolitan landscape.[4]

While WWI was the era of the "Great Migration" in the Eastern United States, the West was largely passed over by this great exodus of rural southern blacks. In Los Angeles during these years, the black population simply continued its modest rate of increase.[5] During the 1920s however growth picked up, keeping pace with the overall population boom in Los Angeles. As a result, African Americans remained a relatively small demographic presence in Los Angeles, never exceeding 3.14 percent of the total up to 1930.[6]

During the 1930s, black migration changed in character. Nearly 25,000 blacks arrived in Los Angeles, many from poorer backgrounds. Hailing mostly from Dallas, Houston, and New Orleans, they came with the economic problems, cultural orientations, and outlooks of the poor and working class. Predictably, they clashed with the entrenched middle class of the community, but soon found common cause with fellow newcomers. They established their own churches and social networks. At the same time, the black middle class was experiencing its own divisions between an older, established leadership and a new generation of activists. By this point, the size of L.A.'s black community eclipsed all other cities in the West – L.A.'s black population reached 63,744 in 1940, compared to barely 5,000 in San Francisco, 8,500 in Oakland, about 8,000 in Denver, and 4,000 in Seattle. Los Angeles had emerged as the most important center of African American settlement in the West.[7]

For Los Angeles, the true "Great Migration" decade was the 1940s. Initially spurred by World War II and the burgeoning defense industry, African American migration reached unprecedented levels. Over 140,000 blacks arrived in L.A. County in the 1940s alone. The rate of black population growth in L.A. outpaced that of all major northern and western cities from 1940 to 1970, jumping from 63,700 to 763,000.[8] Blacks were now a much more visible presence in the city, and constituted a diverse group in terms of class, culture, politics, religion, and the like. With its growing magnitude and complexity, the black community would ultimately redirect the course of Los Angeles history.

The influence of L.A.'s black community reached beyond the city itself, to the state and nation at large. As early at 1910, "Los Angeles became the center of black population, politics and business in California, eclipsing San Francisco and Oakland."[9] Los Angeles elected the first black state assemblyman, its "race" businesses were regional leaders, it became a center of jazz, and it emerged as a key player in the national civil rights movement. Black history in Los Angeles, thus, holds both local and national significance.

A. Settlement Patterns

Between the 1890s and 1958, black settlement patterns in Los Angeles underwent several distinct phases. Central Avenue was the hub for much of this period. In Los Angeles as in many American cities, the early black community existed as a spatial reality, where the streets and neighborhoods played a critical role in the everyday rhythms of life. These were not simply bedroom suburbs. They were centers of economic, social, political and spiritual life, where people focused multiple aspects of their existence and found a sense of social cohesion. Unlike other neighborhoods of the city, drained by commuting patterns that scattered residents in many directions, the black community of Los Angeles was defined by a distinctive sense of place. Some of this was due to the mechanisms of segregation that hemmed blacks in; but it was also an outcome of a conscious attempt by African American civic and business leaders to claim a piece of Los Angeles space as their own.

For much of this period, the African American community existed within racially and ethnically mixed areas. Blacks co-mingled with whites, Latinos, Asians, and other ethnic groups, as neighbors, consumers, classmates, and fellow business owners. It was not until the 1960s and 1970s that the Central Avenue area transitioned from

multiracial to nearly all black. Ironically, the highest segregation levels occurred after federal civil rights measures and court decisions had outlawed housing discrimination.

African American Population of Los Angeles County and City, 1900 to 1950

	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950
Los Angeles County						
Total population	170,298	504,131	936,455	2,208,492	2,785,643	4,151,687
African Americans	2,841	9,424	18,738	46,425	75,209	217,881
Los Angeles City						
Total population	102,479	319,198	576,673	1,238,048	1,504,277	1,907,358
African Americans	2,131	7,599	15,579	38,894	63,774	171,209

Sources: U.S. Census Office, *Twelfth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1900. Census Report Vol. 1. Population. Part 1* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Office, 1901), 531; Lawrence B. de Graaf, "Negro Migration to Los Angeles, 1930 to 1950" (Ph.D. dissertation, UCLA, 1962), p. 227.

1. Downtown Settlement, 1890s to 1900

In this first phase of settlement from roughly 1890 to 1900, blacks clustered in the downtown area around what became known as the "Brick Block." Located on San Pedro Street between 1st and 2nd Streets, this block was an early center of black-owned enterprises and residences (mostly rooming houses). It was located near property owned by the important black pioneer Biddy Mason. A former slave, Mason had arrived in Los Angeles along with the families of Robert and Winnie Owen in the 1860s. After accumulating some modest savings, she purchased several cheap parcels on Spring Street, which appreciated enormously in value. A testament to Mason's leadership role in the community, she hosted the first meetings of the First AME Church at her home. Black-owned businesses soon anchored themselves in and around the "Brick Block." As early as 1888, Frank Blackburn's "coffee and chop house" was operating at 1st and Los Angeles Streets. Other businesses followed – G.W. Hawkins' furniture store, Reeves and McLaughlin's furniture store, Clisby and Henderson's grocery, J.R. Walker's restaurant, Ramsey's barbershop, and a two-story hotel-restaurant owned by A.J. Jones. The proliferation of these establishments was part of a broader national trend of black entrepreneurship that flowered between 1890 and 1920. As an outgrowth of the first wave of black migration to northern and western cities, race enterprises represented a way of strengthening the economy and pride of the black community.[10]

Before long, this nascent black community pushed southward a few blocks down San Pedro Street, and hit Skid Row at 5th Street – anathema to middle-class minded black business owners. Seeking to grow their community away from this "drunks paradise,"[11] they leapfrogged south over 5th Street and east onto Central Avenue. This marked the beginning of Central Avenue's ascendance as the center of African American life in Los Angeles.

Figure 1: In 1940, African Americans were still concentrated in the Central Avenue corridor.

2. Central Avenue, 1900-1928

The second phase of settlement, then, converged on Central Avenue between 8th and 20th Streets. Beginning around 1900 and lasting to the late 1920s, this phase saw the full flowering of black community life in Los Angeles, firmly anchored to this vibrant, growing part of the city. By 1915, the *California Eagle* was referring to Central Avenue as the "Black belt of the city." Central Avenue and all that it signified was part of a broader sorting process that was already creating a stark racialized social geography in Los Angeles. The city was divided into two broad sections: the Westside and Eastside. As historian Doug Flamming describes it, "'Westside' meant wealthier and whiter; 'Eastside' meant poorer and ethnically diverse."[12] Central Avenue fell squarely within the Eastside, not only lending its own shade of diversity to the area, but existing within its rich multiethnic mix.

The Eastside was a relatively broad area of Los Angeles, denoting everything east of Main Street. Although whites were a majority there, it was strikingly varied by race and ethnicity. Racial restrictions on housing were less prevalent on the Eastside, giving the area its reputation of being racially open. This fact probably contributed to the perception among early blacks and other observers that Los Angeles was a wide-open city for blacks in these early years. Partially for this reason, some historians have characterized this as a "golden age" for African Americans in Los Angeles.[13] This is probably an overstatement, however; blacks had some latitude to choose their neighborhoods, yet that choice was largely confined to the circumscribed boundaries of the Eastside.[14] Outside of this area, they met staunch white resistance. Yet even with their Eastside mobility, blacks soon began to settle around Central Avenue, drawn by the black businesses and social institutions proliferating along the Avenue. As the black community gradually expanded southward down Central, it was bound by San Pedro Street (which turned into Avalon Avenue) to the west and Alameda Street to the east, which constituted solid racial boundary lines.[15]

Before blacks arrived, the Central Avenue area was an established neighborhood of homes and small business that had been around since 1900, populated mainly by Europeans, Asians, ethnic Mexicans, and Anglos. It was a middling area of cottages and corner stores, with good streetcar service running right down the Avenue. The multiethnic diversity was striking: as late as 1920, less than 20 percent of the Central Avenue area was African American. They coexisted with Mexicans, Japanese, Jews, Italians, Anglos, and small numbers of Chinese and Koreans. This was not the typical ultra-segregated black ghetto that characterized many eastern cities by this point and would characterize Los Angeles in the 1960s and 1970s; rather, the black community co-existed with others.[16] According to many black contemporaries this diversity mitigated the sense of social isolation that typically accompanied racial segregation. It also meant that blacks would have to consciously claim Central Avenue as their own distinct community space.

They accomplished this fairly quickly. The effort was spearheaded by the numerous black-owned businesses, churches, and other race enterprises that opened along the Avenue. They acted as powerful magnets for settlement, enticing black home seekers to put down roots near these vital community institutions. One pivotal business leader in this phase was Sidney P. Dones. In 1914, he opened the Sidney P. Dones Company at 8th Street and Central, which offered real estate, insurance and legal services. Its mission – as a race enterprise – was

enthusiastically touted by its next door neighbor, the black-owned *California Eagle*, another key institution of the community. A few blocks down stood the Murray Pocket Billiard Emporium and Cigar Stand, Robinson's Empress Ice Cream Parlor, Rose's Variety Store, a dry goods store, and Dreamland Rink, a roller skating rink – all black-owned enterprises clustered along Central Avenue between 8th and 12th Streets. In early 1916, Dones opened the Booker T. Washington Building at 10th Street and Central, which became the black community's architectural landmark. The same year, the Southern Hotel and the Angelus Theater opened close by. The Angelus Theater, "a moving picture and vaudeville house," had been under white ownership but was taken over by a group of black investors. By 1919, 185 black-owned businesses existed in Los Angeles; one quarter of them were located on Central Avenue. The majority of remaining businesses were within blocks of it. Clearly, this segment of Central Avenue had become the nexus of black business life in Los Angeles.[17]

The arrival of other institutions continued the momentum. They included the black-owned newspapers, the *California Eagle* and *New Age*, the Colored YMCA, and Dunbar Hospital. Black churches also located nearby, although typically not directly on Central Avenue. They clustered two blocks to the west on Paloma Street, and along several blocks of 8th Street running west toward Main Street. In the 1920s, the southward settlement pattern continued. More key black institutions opened south of 20th Street, including the Lincoln Theater at 23rd Street, a grand movie palace with a large stage and orchestra pit, and three structures designed by Paul Williams – the Second Baptist Church at 24th Street, the Colored YMCA at 28th Street, and the Elks Hall at 33rd Street – all important civic and social centers. All together, a remarkable number of black institutions had established themselves within 1.5-square miles, a relatively compact physical area by Los Angeles standards.

Black residential settlement soon followed. By 1910, most black homes were located on the blocks surrounding Central Avenue, between 4th Street and Washington Boulevard.[18] Over the next decade, black home seekers pushed twenty blocks south all the way to Jefferson Boulevard, overcoming white resistance along the way. Flamming characterizes the movement not as a coherent mass moving south, but rather as a more "scattershot, happenstance" process. "Negro movement down Central Avenue was less like a wave than an erratic advance that just kept going."[19] The value of these properties ranged between $900 to $3,000 for a four- or five-bedroom "California cottage" along Central Avenue. Around 1915, a six-room home on an ample lot sold for under $2,000, with monthly payments at $10 or less.[20] Central Avenue actually housed an eclectic mix of structures – handsome homes of the black elite, rentals and apartments of the new, poorer southern arrivals, and stores and offices of the black middle class. With its preponderance of single-family homes, open spaces, greenery, streetcar, and roadways, it was typical of modest, blue-collar suburbs in this period.[21]

For blacks, home ownership held deep significance, rooted in both cultural and economic imperatives. As historian Andrew Wiese has shown, one can trace a black predilection for property ownership back to the era of Reconstruction, when "property ownership was indissolubly linked with freedom in the aspiration of former slaves."[22] It later came to symbolize hard work and ambition, a basis for upward mobility and community stability. Perhaps most importantly, property ownership represented a means toward economic independence, a hedge against unreliable job prospects in a discriminatory economic climate. For blacks, suburban living also harkened back to positive memories of life in the South – the fresh air, thick gardens, open spaces, and quiet of the countryside.[23] All of these factors made blacks enthusiastic home seekers in Los Angeles. They also believed

Los Angeles offered them better chances for home ownership than other cities. Indeed, this was a powerful element of L.A.'s image as a promised land for African Americans. In 1910, black home ownership was 40 percent, considerably higher than in other cities across the nation. By 1940, they were in the 30 to 48 percent range, fairly typical of black suburban areas nationally by this point. What impressed many blacks in and outside of Los Angeles was not only that blacks could own homes, but they could own *nice* homes. Tidy cottages with well-tended gardens left a positive impression on many. In 1913, W.E.B. Du Bois described black Angelenos as "the most beautifully housed group of colored people in the United States."[24]

Up to 1920, Central Avenue cannot be properly classified as a "ghetto."[25] Although blacks dominated the area in terms of community institutions and businesses, they coexisted with other racial and ethnic groups and they had some freedom of movement within the broad swath of Eastside neighborhoods. The wide-open spaces of Los Angeles helped enable this mobility since it rendered blacks less visible on this vast, sweeping metropolitan backdrop.[26] By contrast, in cities like Cleveland, Chicago, and New York, blacks were much more tightly packed and uniformly segregated by this point. In Los Angeles, black pride and boosting of race enterprises played perhaps a more important role in cohering a spatially distinct black community, than it did in other cities where the external forces of discrimination were paramount. Those external forces may have played a comparatively weaker role in L.A., judging by the mobility blacks had within the Eastside. This would change shortly.

The 1920s represents a turning point in the history of black settlement patterns. Racial segregation practices intensified, hemming in the community as its population rose.[27] Residential settlement continued south around Central Avenue during the decade, but now stopped abruptly at Slauson Avenue. Black families who tried to venture south of this line met violent resistance during the 1920s and 1930s.[28] As well, the east and west borders of Alameda and San Pedro Streets continued to hold firm, buttressed by race restrictive covenants, which spread widely in surrounding white suburbs, tightening the racial boundaries around Central Avenue.

3. Central Avenue, 1928-1950

In 1928, the center of gravity rapidly relocated further south down Central Avenue. The opening of the Somerville Hotel was arguably the most important catalyst for this shift, bound as it was to a momentous moment in the history of black Los Angeles. By the late 1920s, Central Avenue and 41st Street was the new heart of black L.A. At this electrifying intersection, three architecturally significant structures stood proudly, signs of the growth, maturation, and growing sophistication of the black community. They included the Somerville Hotel, the Hudson-Liddell Building, and the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Building. These enterprises drew black settlement down and around the Avenue. This southward shift was the fastest, most dramatic relocation of the community's center in its history. Significantly, it occurred in a period when strong middle-class leadership, vibrant cultural life, and black enterprise symbiotically coexisted in a common physical area. The forces of physical dispersal had not yet set in. This synergy bestowed even greater significance to Central Avenue as *place* – a site of meaning, identity, and rootedness for black Angelenos.

The southward shift was not only pulled by these dynamic enterprises, but it was likely pushed by changes occurring in the northern sections of Central Avenue. In 1922, this area was rezoned for manufacturing, and by

1939 over 100 industries had located there. This precipitated a decline in housing quality, with some residential structures falling into disrepair. Some single-family homes were transformed into boarding houses, shared by four families. A number of these were owned by whites. As early as the mid-1920s, the area around northern Central Avenue already showed some signs of decline.[29]

During the 1930s, the black population in Los Angeles continued to climb, with most newcomers settling in the Central Avenue vicinity. In 1930, approximately 17,500 blacks lived in the area; over the next decade, nearly 25,000 blacks would join them.[30] Despite these growing numbers, the newcomers fit comfortably into the area, without undue overcrowding. This was largely due to an exodus of non-blacks from the vicinity: repatriation depleted the Mexican and Filipino population, white working-class residents were drawn to new suburban developments with Federal Housing Administration assistance (these areas and programs were largely closed off to people of color), and some ethnic Japanese returned to Japan. Other areas of Los Angeles were growing in population during the 1930s; the multiethnic Eastside was not. This exodus resulted in a demographic change around Central Avenue: blacks went from being 35 percent to 60 percent of the population between 1930 and 1940. The community was also more mixed in terms of class, as many black newcomers came from poor or working-class backgrounds. In the 1930s, black home seekers continued to buy properties around Central Avenue, forming a residential "strip" bounded by 4th Street to the north and Slauson Avenue to the south, and San Pedro and Alameda Streets to the west and east.[31]

The 1940s was a watershed decade for Central Avenue. The tremendous influx of black migrants during and after World War II put major strain on the community, changing its qualitative character. During the war years, 50,000 newcomers settled in and around the Avenue, with more arriving after the war. Despite this jump in population, the racial boundaries held firm around the community: Alameda to the east and now Broadway to the west (a block west of Main Street), Slauson to the south. With each new wave of migrants, the area grew increasingly crowded and over burdened.[32] The housing shortage that plagued all of Los Angeles hit the black community particularly hard, hemmed in as it was by race restrictions, even as the black population skyrocketed. The black influx had a compounding effect. Not only did it strain the community, but it reinforced the boundaries around it. As more blacks arrived, they became a more visible presence in the city, provoking greater white fears, animosity, and ultimately hostile efforts to defend their communities from black incursions. Those efforts largely succeeded through the 1940s.

Housing around Central Avenue felt the strain. Rooms were rented out and families doubled up, overtaxing many dwellings. Yet by the late 1940s, the area still had its good blocks. In 1948, *Negro Digest* ranked L.A. – still anchored by Central Avenue – as one of "America's Ten Best Cities for Negroes," with its decent homes, quiet streets, and good schools.[33]

In the face of massive housing shortages during the war, many black newcomers also settled in Little Tokyo, in housing once occupied by Japanese residents who were removed to internment camps in 1942. The area became known as Bronzeville, centered on First Street between San Pedro Street and Central Avenue. As migrants poured in, they packed into apartments rented out to multiple tenants, resulting in severe overcrowding. The quality of housing and local infrastructure deteriorated rapidly. Ultimately 70,000 blacks lived in Little Tokyo

during the war, though the area was meant to accommodate only 30,000. They patronized jazz clubs in the area, like Shepp's Playhouse and Club Finale, which drew mixed race audiences. Blacks rapidly vacated the area when the Japanese returned after the war, moving into existing black settlements already strained beyond capacity.[34]

4. Other Early Settlement Areas, to 1940

Beyond Central Avenue, blacks settled in several other pockets of the city, suggesting modest residential mobility for blacks in the early years. Some of these settlements were determined by the location of jobs, others by race-inspired real estate development, and others by personal choice. Many of these neighborhoods began as sub-standard areas, with cheap, swampy, muddy land. Some eventually transformed into desirable neighborhoods.

Four notable black settlements were located on the Eastside. The Furlong Tract was a small black neighborhood between 50th and 55th Streets, Alameda and Long Beach Avenue. Around 1903, Irish farmer James Furlong developed this area expressly for African Americans to aid in their advancement. He sold lots to black families, who settled the area. In 1936, sociologist Max Bond described the original settlers as the "elite of the Negro race." However, historians Leonard and Dale Pitt more recently characterized the area as a tidy, cohesive working-class neighborhood with decent transportation and "small, neat homes, served by small businesses, three churches, and a school."[35] The Furlong Tract's 51st Street School, built in 1910, was the first all-black school in Los Angeles. It was destroyed by fire in 1922, and rebuilt as the Holmes Avenue Elementary School. The Long Beach earthquake of 1933 destroyed many structures in the area, precipitating an exodus. In the 1940s, the neighborhood was razed to make way for the Pueblo del Rio public housing project.

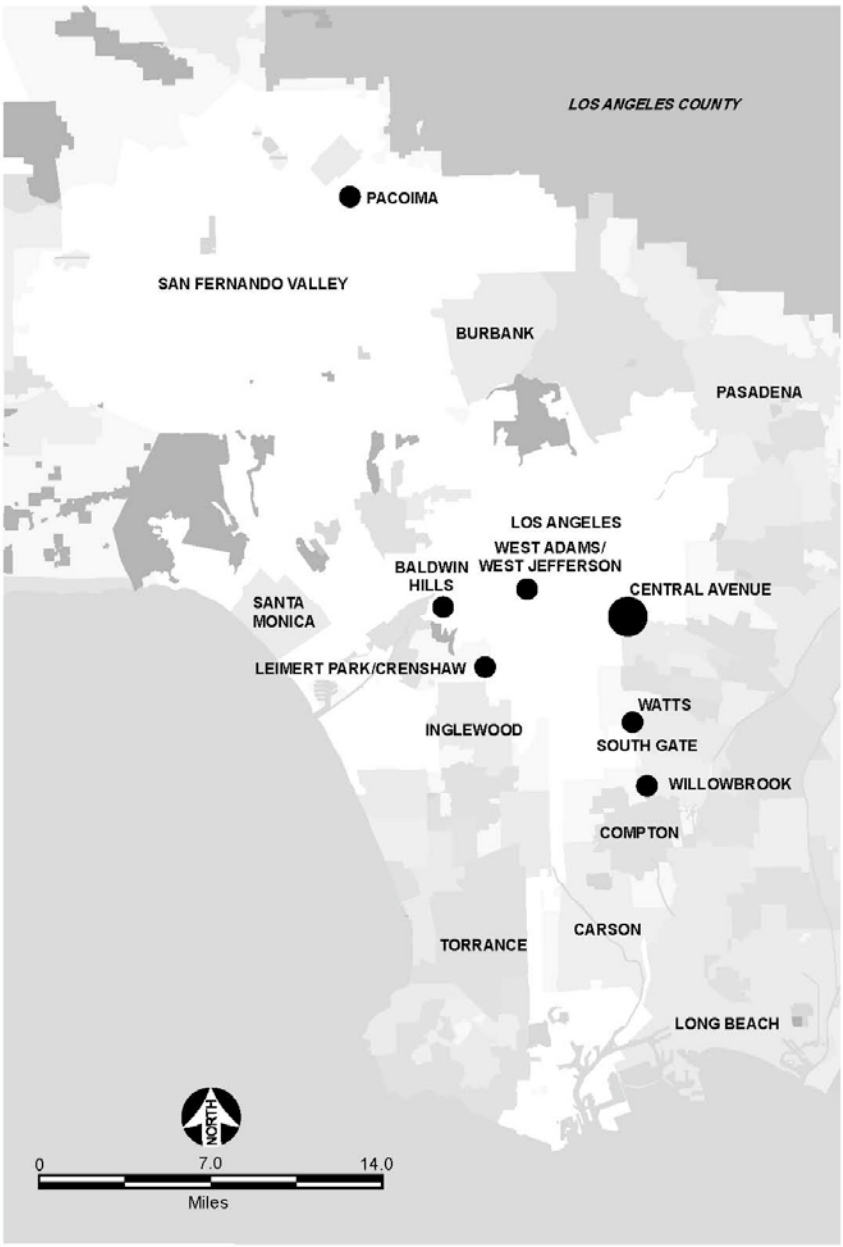
Watts was another important area. Located seven miles south of downtown, Watts had its origins as a labor camp of the Pacific Electric Railway. It soon emerged as a permanent settlement of working-class blacks, Mexicans, Germans, Italians, Greeks, Jews, and Japanese. By 1920, blacks comprised 14 percent of the local population. Watts was aimed squarely at working class home seekers, offering land for as little as one dollar down and one dollar a week,[36]and allowing residents to raise truck gardens in their front and back yards. The section of Watts known as "Mudtown" attracted a poorer class of southern black migrants, many who settled there upon arriving in Los Angeles. Some went to work as Pullman porters and waiters. Several notable African Americans lived in Watts in their youth, including Arna Bontemps, Tom Bradley, Charles Mingus, Buddy Collette, and Chico Hamilton. Watts was incorporated in 1907 and annexed by the City of Los Angeles in 1926, some historians argue, to undercut black voting power.[37] By 1940, Watts was 35 percent black. While it represented something of an outlyer community in these early years, by the 1950s it began to coalesce with the larger black community spreading south from Central Avenue. It transitioned to all-black by the 1950s, as did much of this area.[38]

Closer to downtown, Boyle Heights and the West Temple section were also areas of African American settlement. Boyle Heights, developed in the 1880s as a streetcar suburb across the river, became a diverse working-class neighborhood by the early 20th century. From 1900 to the 1950s, its population included Jews (a majority in the early decades), along with Mexicans, Japanese, and smaller numbers of Russian Molokans,

Italians, Armenians, and African Americans. As George Sanchez notes, these groups "had substantial interaction with each other in neighborhood institutions, businesses, schools, and playgrounds."[39] The black and Japanese American populations held steady at less than 5 percent through the 1950s, while the remaining population shifted.[40] The West Temple area, bound by Beverly, Hyans, Rampart, and Reno, drew some black home seekers in the early 1900s. Land was cheap and muddy, and oilrigs operated in the vicinity. When wealthy whites began to settle nearby, they bought out most of the blacks, "offering good prices for our land," as one resident recalled. By the mid-1930s, only a few original black settlers lived in the area.[41]

A few notable early black settlements also took root in the Westside, defying the racial border. The West Jefferson/West Adams section was most important among these. Originally a "swampy and fever-ridden area," it first extended along Jefferson Boulevard between Normandie and Western Avenues and south to 35th Street. In 1923 and 1924, black settlement expanded north to West Adams, when a batch of race restrictive covenants on white-owned homes expired. This influx of black buyers raised fears among white homeowners, who reacted by tightening race restrictions in the area. While these efforts were not completely effective, they did result in driving the prices up on black housing in the area, thus limiting access only to wealthier blacks. The most exclusive area within West Adams was "Sugar Hill," at the northeast corner. A wealthy neighborhood of spacious Craftsmen, a few Mission Revivals and Italian Renaissance Revivals from the turn of the century, this section was originally a haven of affluent whites. In 1938, blacks finally broke the color line there when businessman Norman Houston purchased a home in Sugar Hill. He waited three years to move in, fearing a backlash from his white neighbors. Once he did, other members of the black elite soon followed including film stars Louise Beavers and Hattie McDaniels, J.A. Somerville, businessman Horace Clark, and activist Betty Hill.[42]

Figure 2: Beyond Central Avenue, African Americans settled in several other pockets of the city including the West Adams/West Jefferson area and Watts.



5. Westward & Southward Movement, 1950-1958

In the 1950s, the identity of the area south of downtown transitioned from multiethnic/multiracial Eastside to nearly all-black South Central. Black settlement at this point experienced a third major shift. Middle-class blacks began moving out of the Central Avenue vicinity into contiguous neighborhoods to the west and south, expanding the boundaries of black settlement. This movement was precipitated by increasing density in the Eastside in the wake of massive in-migration, key court decisions striking down race restrictive covenants, which opened up new areas, and the advancement of some blacks into white-collar work. Blacks now had the economic means and legal right to move to neighborhoods of better housing and amenities. This geographic shifting had its pros and cons. While it represented the fruits of hard-won civil rights struggles and the improving prospects of some blacks, it also had a depleting effect on the Central Avenue community. As such, it set off yet another transformation of Central Avenue, ending its reign as a center of black life in L.A., which was now relocating westward.

This movement expanded the boundaries of black settlement in Los Angeles to what became commonly known as "South Central." Josh Sides describes this as "a broad area of Los Angeles that became increasingly black between the 1940s and the 1970s. The approximate boundaries of this area were Exposition and Jefferson on the north, Alameda on the east, Rosecrans on the south, and Crenshaw on the west. Within this large area were the black neighborhoods of Avalon, South Vermont, and Watts, and the unincorporated black communities of Florence, Westmont, and Willowbrook."[43] It is important to emphasize that at every step of the way in this expansion, black home-seekers often met fierce resistance from white neighbors. It was not an easy, smooth process despite its legal legitimacy, but rather was fraught with tension, conflict, and even violence. It required fortitude and determination on the part of incoming black settlers.

One of the streams was westward into the expanding West Jefferson/West Adams district. In the 1950s, the blacks who settled here included both professionals and blue-collar workers. For the latter, the income of working wives – many employed in clerical jobs – allowed them to afford the neighborhood. By 1960, this area was majority African American. It was a neighborhood of good homes, low crime, and decent schools, compared to the Central Avenue area. While West Adams had no clear center – as Central Avenue had through much of its history – a number of notable businesses and community institutions did move to the area, some of them migrating away from Central Avenue. These included a new Golden State Mutual Life Insurance building and the new First AME Church. The migration of these important institutions drew more black home seekers, including Charlotta Bass in the early 1950s. By the late 1950s, blacks pushed further west to Leimert Park, Inglewood, and Baldwin Hills, which also attracted professionals and working wives. Crenshaw became an important commercial center, particularly the Crenshaw Shopping Center, which opened in 1947 as a planned suburban shopping mall. In the Crenshaw/Leimert Park area, residents banded together to form an organization called Crenshaw Neighbors, dedicated to promoting the stable integration of the area.[44]

To the south, Compton was another important settlement area. This suburb began as a community for blue-collar families, with tidy housing, decent amenities, and ironclad race restrictions, which kept it nearly all white for decades. In the 1950s, blacks broke the color barrier and moved into the western area of Compton, where new

tract housing was being built. The influx set off violent white resistance and ultimately white flight. By 1960, Compton was 40 percent black. For many blacks, Compton in these transitional years represented the realization of the postwar suburban dream, with its spacious homes, meticulous gardens, and integrated schools. This would change in the coming decades as the community's resources declined, white flight continued, deindustrialization intensified, and a Latino influx introduced increasing competition over scarce resources.[45]

Pacoima was another site of black settlement, far removed from south L.A. This small community in the San Fernando Valley, 17 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles, had its origins as a suburb for workers on the Southern Pacific railroad. Consequently, it drew a diverse population early on, including blacks, ethnic Mexicans, and Japanese. During World War II, 2,000 blacks settled in the area, many of them defense workers; another 6,000 came in the 1950s. By this point Pacoima was marketed to black home seekers as a typical postwar suburb, complete with "exquisitely modern" ranch homes, proximity to recreation areas, and a short commute to downtown.[46]

A small number of blacks settled in other suburbs of Los Angeles by 1960, including Pasadena, Monrovia, Altadena, Santa Monica, and Pomona. The level of black dispersal was much less than for ethnic Mexicans and Asians, who had gained greater social acceptance after the war. Indeed, blacks in Los Angeles suffered the highest levels of segregation in the state.[47]

By 1960, Central Avenue had transformed in several important ways. First, the area became all black for the first time in its history. As suburban housing opened up to Latinos, Asians, and ethnic Europeans thanks to FHA assistance and easing white prejudice, many residents of the Central Avenue corridor moved out of the area and into neighborhoods all over Los Angeles. By 1960, the area had become 95 percent black. Second, the exodus of the black middle class "unintentionally created a leadership vacuum that was not easily filled." As black professionals and entrepreneurs sought homes elsewhere, they drew with them businesses, churches, clubs, and other important community institutions. The area left behind became poorer and less well served by black-owned enterprises. Central Avenue ceased to represent the center of black Los Angeles.[48]

6. Mechanisms of Residential Segregation

Throughout this history, black settlement was restricted by a variety of tactics designed to keep blacks out of all-white neighborhoods. Some were informal actions of individuals, others were legal measures implemented by individuals, groups, or the government. Though the courts eventually struck down some practices, the persistent, informal actions of hostile whites sustained the racial barriers around the black community. By the postwar years, blacks had become the most intensely segregated of all nonwhite groups in Los Angeles, ironically after the courts had declared certain race restrictions unconstitutional.

An extremely important tool of segregation was the restrictive covenant, used widely in Los Angeles and cities nationally from 1900 to 1948. This was a legal clause written into a property deed, which dictated that the owner could only sell or rent the house to "Caucasians," otherwise the owner would lose the property. In some covenants, the excluded groups were mentioned by name, and invariably included blacks, ethnic Mexicans,

Asians, and occasionally Jews. A typical covenant lasted for 20 to 50 years. In 1917, one L.A. resident described covenants as "invisible walls of steel. The whites surrounded us and made it impossible for us to go beyond these walls."[49] Restrictive covenants were upheld by the California and U.S. Supreme Courts in 1919 and 1926, which unleashed their widespread use in Los Angeles. One 1927 covenant blanketed the area between USC and Inglewood, prohibiting black settlement there for 99 years. The use of covenants diminished after 1948, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Shelley v. Kraemer* that it was unconstitutional for courts to enforce the agreements, although it never declared the agreements themselves unlawful. In 1953, the *Barrows v. Jackson* decision strengthened enforcement against their use.[50] It was not until the 1968 Fair Housing Act that they were deemed illegal.[51]

Homeowners "protective associations" promoted segregation as well. These groups were sometimes instigated by developers, other times by white homeowners in a given neighborhood, and often formed to defend the racial purity of the community. They conducted covenant-writing campaigns, held meetings when the threat of black "invasion" was imminent, and they were often the party filing suit in cases where individual covenants were broken. Protective associations grew in popularity after 1910. As Lawrence de Graaf put it, by 1920 "the use of block protective association restrictions as well as individual deed covenants heralded a more rigid and efficient era of residential segregation" in Los Angeles. Protective associations essentially brought group pressure upon white residents to abide by the practices of racial exclusion.[52]

The real estate industry also reinforced the color line. In 1924, the National Association of Real Estate Boards established a "code of ethics" which prohibited realtors from introducing "members of any race or nationality" to a neighborhood that would threaten property values. If a real estate agent violated this code, he would lose his license. As a result, many realtors practiced "steering" – they would not show properties in white neighborhoods to "unwanted groups." Invariably, blacks would be steered away from white neighborhoods. This code stayed in effect until the late 1950s. The Los Angeles Real Estate Board also refused to admit black members. Realtors in L.A. were open about their support for race restrictions and segregation, evident in a 1927 survey whose results were published in the journal *California Real Estate*. By thus racializing the process of real estate marketing, realtors played a significant role in promoting residential segregation.[53]

Private developers were complicit in the process as well. In the 1920s and 1930s, they often attached restrictive covenants to new property they were selling, even highlighting these restrictions in their sales pitches. In the postwar years, after the *Shelley v. Kraemer* decision, many large-scale developers of suburban tract housing simply refused to sell homes to blacks. They included some of the largest developers in Los Angeles, such as Milton Brock Builders, Lakewood Village Builders, and Julian Weinstock Builders. With new suburban tracts proliferating after the war, this practice closed off a huge segment of the booming housing market to blacks.[54]

While local practices were critical in setting the groundwork for racial exclusion, the federal government reinforced these policies beginning in the 1930s, thus putting the weight of federal authority behind segregation. Two New Deal housing programs established during the Depression to bolster the housing industry were central in this: the Home Owners Loan Corporation (1933) and the Federal Housing Administration (1934). The HOLC was formed to protect homeowners on the verge of foreclosure by refinancing mortgages and granting low-

interest loans to those who had lost their homes. Significantly, it established an appraisal system for rating neighborhoods as "security risks" for these loans. It was this appraisal system that established a racially-determined[55] ranking of neighborhoods, which advantaged white neighborhoods and relegated black, Mexican, and Asian neighborhoods to the lowest rungs. Purely because of the race of residents, these neighborhoods routinely received the lowest (or red) rating, originating the term "redlining." These areas were usually barred from receiving federal assistance. The worksheets and maps produced by the HOLC in the late 1930s show a strong correlation between race and poor ratings. Both the Central Avenue and West Jefferson/West Adams sections received red ratings, despite the general desirability of the housing stock there.

The appraisal system of the HOLC was subsequently adopted by the FHA, which became the most important program for home ownership in the nation. The FHA, which insured mortgages granted by private lenders, was instrumental in spurring the postwar suburban boom and made home ownership possible for millions of white Americans for the first time. Blacks, however, were largely cut off from these programs. Up to 1948, the FHA supported the use of restrictive covenants, and was reluctant to guarantee home construction loans in areas without them. Nor would it guarantee loans for home renovations in areas like Central Avenue, thus contributing to the deterioration of the area. Significantly, these programs – with their appraisal standards – heavily influenced the lending practices of private banks, which were reluctant to lend in redlined areas. These federal programs not only excluded blacks from mortgage insurance, but tacitly discouraged them from moving into white areas (with their better ratings), since their mere presence would downgrade a neighborhood. With their expansive reach and influence, these programs helped harden the lines of segregation and ensure their longevity.[56]

The final and most long-lasting mechanism of residential segregation was white violence and intimidation. As Doug Flamming put it, "incidents of white resistance to black neighbors actually occurred fairly regularly from the turn of the century onward."[57] The actions ranged from polite requests to leave, to bombs, vandalism, and death threats. Such incidents rose in the 1950s and 1960s, particularly after the courts struck down covenants. While they were especially prevalent in the blue-collar communities adjacent to black settlements, they actually occurred all over Los Angeles when the black "threat" presented itself. In the 1950s, the Los Angeles Urban League identified 26 techniques that white homeowners used to turn back African American home seekers, including paying off neighbors to not sell to blacks, vandalism, cross burnings, bombings, and death threats. These practices represented the most consistent, long-lived technique that restricted the ability of blacks to live where they pleased.[58]

B. Labor and Employment

1. Labor Markets and Discrimination

In Los Angeles, as in most major cities of the era, blacks faced widespread discrimination in hiring. Such practices were legal in these years, in the absence of state or federal statutes to demand otherwise. In L.A., black males were relegated to service and general labor jobs in the early years; by the 1940s, some began breaking into industrial work with the help of federal anti-discrimination laws. Black women worked mostly in domestic

service early on, and made gradual progress in other job sectors over time. Overall, blacks were usually relegated to the lowest job rung, with poor pay, dismal prospects for advancement, and little support from organized labor. This represented a significant barrier to economic opportunity for the black community. It clearly made life hard for many, but it also stimulated protest, activism, and "race enterprise" efforts, even as it shaped the social and economic landscape of black L.A.

The Los Angeles economy began as heavily service and commercial oriented, but by the 1920s had developed a significant industrial base, ranking as the eighth largest manufacturing center. Despite the presence of decent paying industrial jobs, blacks were largely excluded from this sector up to the 1940s. Most factories refused to hire blacks out of racial prejudice and because they had an ample labor supply, including the growing Mexican population. By contrast, in northern cities blacks found factory jobs during and after WWI due to persistent labor shortages. From 1900 to 1940, blacks worked mostly as service workers and general laborers. One third of black males worked as janitors, porters, waiters, or house servants. Others worked as chauffeurs, draymen, garbage collectors and street sweepers. Blacks who were skilled and well educated often could not find jobs to match; it was not uncommon to find a college graduate or professional working as a janitor. Black women were employed predominantly as domestic workers, though up to 1920 fewer black women *had* to work in L.A. compared to other cities, thanks to higher wages earned by husbands and their middle-class outlooks. There were some exceptions to these broad trends: a small number of black professionals and businessmen found a foothold in Los Angeles, becoming a visible and important leadership presence in the black community. A few also worked in the music and film industries, representing a numerically minor but culturally significant group.[59]

Poor employment conditions were exacerbated during the Depression, when black unemployment surged upward, reaching 50 percent in 1934 (higher than the white rate). Black joblessness was particularly high since blacks were disproportionately employed in service jobs, often the first to be eliminated.[60] World War II transformed the economic landscape for L.A. in general and blacks in particular. The region's industrial sector grew spectacularly, anchored by large federal defense contracts. Indeed, the defense industry lay at the heart of an immense industrial expansion in Los Angeles during and after the war. Shipbuilding and aircraft were dominant during the war. After 1945, the major industries were aircraft/aerospace, motion pictures, automobile, rubber, petroleum, furniture and food processing. By the 1960s, L.A. had emerged as the second largest center of industry in the country, after Chicago. Thus, in a period when blue-collar jobs were contracting in cities like Detroit, they were expanding in L.A., indicative of a shifting balance of power between "rustbelt" and "sunbelt."[61]

Within this expansive economy, blacks made mixed progress. Though certain doors opened, many black workers contended with persistent discrimination by employers and unions, as well as the changing geography of industry. During the war blacks finally entered industrial jobs in significant numbers, thanks to manpower shortages and Executive Order 8802 (1941), which prohibited discrimination in wartime defense industries and established the Fair Employment Practices Committee to enforce the measure. They worked in the shipbuilding, steel, meatpacking, automobile, rubber, chemical, and oil refining industries. In some cases, these gains were temporary, such as in shipbuilding, which ceased operations at war's end, or on the docks where the longshoremen's union demanded that black workers quit when the war ended. But in other sectors, blacks found

a permanent foothold in industry, especially in the steel, rubber, and food industries along the Alameda Corridor (adjacent to Central Avenue). From 1940-1960, the proportion of blacks working in manufacturing increased from 22 to 38 percent. Despite these gains, blacks often occupied the hardest, lowest paying positions, and contended with resistance from some unions. As well, they were increasingly passed over for jobs in the metal and food industries, which preferred Mexican to black workers as the years passed. Worst of all, the factories where blacks made the most gains would begin to abandon the area by the late 1970s, with the massive deindustrialization of southern Los Angeles. By this time, the best industrial jobs in Los Angeles – with better pay and working conditions – were in aircraft/aerospace, which had located in outlying suburban areas. While blacks had made some inroads in aircraft during the war, they were the first to be laid off at war's end. Black males found it hard to re-enter the industry in the postwar years because they lacked the necessary skills and training, the factories moved out into suburbs hostile to blacks, and commuting distances were prohibitive.[62] Black women experienced some employment gains during and after the war. Many worked in defense plants during the war, and stayed in manufacturing jobs after, mostly in the apparel industry. They also had better success securing jobs in the aerospace/electronics industry, where employers were more inclined to hire black women. They also made significant gains as public sector clerical workers. These breakthroughs were reflected in the dramatic drop in domestic service jobs, which fell from 68 to 24 percent of jobs held by black women from 1940 to 1960.[63]

Over the years, the challenging economic climate for blacks had several important repercussions for the black community. First, poor job prospects made other avenues of economic opportunity especially important, such as real estate and entrepreneurialism. As Doug Flamming writes, "For a people who were shut out of the best jobs, real estate offered an alternative means of getting ahead."[64] It came to represent a source of economic security and upward mobility for many blacks who were unable achieve this through employment. Similarly, entrepreneurial ventures were an important outlet for ambitious blacks, otherwise shut out of jobs with good pay and prospects for advancement. The people who ran these enterprises often emerged as community leaders, with a conscious sense of race pride and community stewardship. Second, occupations were usually not a measure of status or ability in the black community. There was often a jarring disjuncture between a person's job and their skills, education, and even leadership role in the community. So not only might a college-educated woman be employed as a domestic servant, but some community leaders held jobs as janitors or common laborers. For example, the Afro-American Council, the first major civil rights organization in Los Angeles, had janitors, laborers, porters, and a junk dealer among its early leaders.[65] Third, job discrimination became an important target of civil rights activism over these years, galvanizing concerted, persistent protest over much of this period. And finally, the deindustrialization of southern Los Angeles had a devastating impact on the conditions and prospects of the well-entrenched black community.

2. Organized Labor

For much of this history, organized labor acted as a hindrance to black employment prospects in Los Angeles because of persistent prejudice. Their practices evolved from total exclusion of blacks in the early years, to begrudging acceptance in some sectors by the postwar era. From 1900-1930, unions in general struggled to survive in "open shop" Los Angeles. By the late 1930s, thanks to new federal law, they gained in strength and

membership. But there was great ambivalence and resistance to integration in many union halls, breeding distrust of organized labor among blacks and limiting the impact of unions on improving job conditions for blacks.

Up through the 1920s, the dominant labor organization nationally was the American Federation of Labor, an association of craft unions that was openly prejudiced against people of color. In L.A., nearly all AFL unions either excluded blacks completely or relegated them to separate auxiliaries, ensuring their second-class status in hiring and working conditions. As a result, few blacks belonged to unions (700 blacks out of 40,000 total union members in L.A., in 1926)[66]. A few all-black unions were historically notable, as agents of pride and power among certain groups of workers. One of the most famous was Musicians Local 767, which represented nearly all black musicians in Los Angeles. It had 150 members in 1926. This local had a union hall on Central Avenue, which became a social center in the community. Waiters Union Local 17 was the largest black union, with 250 members in 1926. Finally, Car Cooks and Waiters Union Local 582 became an important race organization in Los Angeles. Organized in 1926, it represented the chefs, waiters, and porters who worked in the Pullman dining cars; its membership reached 150 by the late 1920s. This union had its headquarters at 12th Street and Central, which also became a social center with its family-friendly clubhouse, credit union, and women's auxiliary. These all-black unions represented only a small fraction of black wage earners, however. The majority of blacks thus expressed deep skepticism, if not downright hostility, to organized labor because of the overt racial prejudice it routinely expressed and practiced.[67]

In the 1930s, the prospects for black unionism improved, although in Los Angeles progress was mixed. This was a watershed decade for organized labor in general, with the passage of the Wagner Act in 1935 and the rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations. It also marked the end of the open shop in L.A. The CIO seemed especially promising for blacks, with its commitment to liberalism, racial equality, and improving conditions for all industrial workers. At the outset, the CIO proved minimally beneficial since it made the most inroads in industries – like auto, steel, and rubber – that refused to hire black workers in L.A., in contrast to cities like Detroit and Chicago. When L.A. blacks finally did enter these sectors during and after World War II, CIO unions still had a mixed record. Although CIO leaders took explicit stands for racial equality, this sentiment often did not trickle down to the local union hall. One vivid example was the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union Local 13, under the national leadership of labor radical Harry Bridges. Bridges pushed strongly for racial tolerance in the union, yet his call was not heeded at Local 13 in San Pedro, where open racial hostility prevailed. Blacks could join the union, but they were harassed, relegated to the hardest jobs, excluded from union leadership, and forced to sign agreements that they would leave their job after the war. In the Alameda Corridor, the United Steelworkers of America welcomed black workers, but failed to agitate for their claims to plant-wide seniority. The United Rubber Workers Union proved more amenable, negotiating for plant-wide seniority, which was a boon to black and Mexican workers. Overall, however, labor unions posted a mixed record on race. While workplace gains came slowly and in limited job sectors thanks to union advocacy, widespread rank and file resistance compounded the challenges faced by black workers.[68]

C. Community Development

The heyday of Central Avenue from the 1910s through the 1940s was sparked by the strong physical presence of key institutions of the black community. As Doug Flamming writes, "The three most potent of these institutions were race papers, black churches, and black businesses."[69] When these establishments opened their doors on Central Avenue and its surrounding blocks, they gave physical cohesion to black community life. These enterprises attracted customers and congregants, stimulating the kind of vibrant street life that supports successful neighborhood-based community. People came to shop, worship, debate, prognosticate, organize, politick, socialize, and support each other. Significantly, these institutions played a key role in fostering a sense of racial pride and identity, even if they did not always promote unity. They also demonstrated the importance of the black middle class, who ran these establishments, in both defining the issues of importance to blacks and in serving as community leaders. In many respects, these manifestations of black community life reflected the outlooks and accomplishments of the black middle class.

1. Race Newspapers

Black newspapers were instrumental in fostering "community consciousness," in the words of Charlotta Bass, editor of the *California Eagle*. They accomplished this by publicizing issues and social events of interest to the community, the opening of new black businesses, and most importantly civil rights news. They were invariably race conscious in their coverage and editorials, openly advocating for the rights of African Americans in the city and nation and often spearheading local civil rights campaigns. Indeed, race papers became civil rights players in their own right. As Josh Sides notes, "the black press of Los Angeles played a crucial role in politicizing its readers [and]… prodded their readerships to challenge racial discrimination."[70] Ultimately, the two most significant black newspapers were the *California Eagle* and the *Los Angeles Sentinel,* which had the longest runs and deepest impact in Los Angeles. It took time for black journalism in Los Angeles to settle into this role after a brief, contentious beginning.

The early years of L.A.'s black press were marked by bitter, partisan sniping among rival editors, as well as the rise of John J. Neimore, arguably the founder of black journalism in Los Angeles. The earliest black newspapers appeared in the late 1870s and 1880s and were all short-lived. The first black newspaper in Los Angeles was the *Owl*, established in 1879 by Neimore, a former slave who had migrated from Texas. Although it folded in short order, he regrouped with partners to form the city's second black newspaper, the *Weekly Observer*, which appeared in March 1888 in the midst of the region's land boom. Headed by Neimore, Thomas Pearson, and William Sampson, this paper's masthead read "Our Liberty We Prize, Our Rights We Will Maintain."[71] It lasted less than a year, quite likely because of political differences among its three founders. They soon parted ways. Neimore began a third newspaper, the *Advocate* in late 1888, while Sampson took full control over the *Weekly Observer*, renaming it the *Western News* by 1889. These early papers did little to advance unity in the fledgling black community as they waged ruthless mudslinging campaigns against each other, goaded on by the local political parties. By 1890, all of these newspapers had folded.[72]

By 1900, the black press in Los Angeles had taken a more respectable turn. John Neimore persisted in the field and eventually became a major voice among local race papers as well as the growing black community. In 1892, he formed the *Southern California Guide* which had a three years run, and soon thereafter launched the *Eagle*, a weekly newspaper that would have a long, influential life in Los Angeles. Neimore served as editor and general manager of the *Eagle* for nearly 17 years until his death in 1912. Neimore was a regular Republican, who advocated passionately for the rights and interests of African Americans. He also reflected middle-class, Baptist sensibilities, evident for example in his 1903 campaign against vice among the black-owned clubs along the Brick Block and his call for more respectable black businesses. In this orientation, Neimore was an exemplar of the black middle class in L.A. in both his outlook and leadership in the community. Neimore was elected to the Afro-American Council, the first notable civil rights group in Los Angeles, and was an early, active member of the Second Baptist Church.[73]

By 1911, Neimore's health was in decline. That year he hired Charlotta Spear, a recent arrival from Rhode Island, to work part-time soliciting subscriptions and doing odd jobs. Neimore mentored her in the workings of a race newspaper, emphasizing the importance of political activism, racial advocacy, and the urgent need to defend and expand the rights of blacks. In 1912, on his deathbed, Neimore turned control of the *Eagle* over to Spear, who would run the newspaper for the next 40 years. Joe Bass, a mid-westerner with years of experience in race papers and Republican Party politics, joined the *Eagle* in 1913 as a reporter soon after arriving in Los Angeles. He became editor in 1914 when he married Charlotta, working in partnership with her for the next 20 years. They renamed the newspaper the *California Eagle*. Joe Bass died in 1934, leaving Charlotta to run the paper solo until the early 1950s. She sold the paper in 1952 to Loren Miller who ran it until 1964, when it folded.[74]

Through its run, the *Eagle* was a quintessential race paper, covering news of interest to African Americans from the local to the national, advocating strongly for civil rights and speaking out against racial injustice. While the *Eagle* reported on local community news, such as business openings, church activities, clubs, and social events, it gave prominence to coverage of politics, economics and civil rights. It essentially followed the conventions of race papers across the country. The *Eagle* reflected the outlooks of its editors over time, shifting its political leanings somewhat as control of the paper changed hands. Neimore articulated the paper's mission when he described it – and all race papers in the West – as the new Underground Railroad, leading blacks to freedom. The Basses shared the sentiment, fully embracing the paper's role as an agent of black rights and unity. While Joe Bass was a loyal Republican for most of his life, Charlotta Bass began as Republican but shifted leftward over the years. The *Eagle* was a tireless advocate of black civil rights, railing against restrictive covenants, job discrimination, and police harassment, while reporting regularly on stories of discrimination and injustice perpetrated against blacks. It also celebrated the accomplishments of the black community by boosting local businesses, institutions, and activist groups. Under Loren Miller's leadership, the *Eagle* especially targeted job discrimination in the police and fire departments, police brutality, and persistent housing discrimination.[75]

At the same time the *Eagle* emerged in Los Angeles, another notable race paper appeared – the *Liberator*, which ran from 1900 to 1914. It was established by Jefferson Lewis Edmonds, a former slave from Mississippi who had migrated to the Los Angeles in the 1880s. Edmonds had been educated in Freedmen's Bureau schools in Mississippi and came to embrace progressive Republican ideology. About a decade after arriving in Los Angeles

with his family, he formed the *Liberator* as a monthly magazine that trumpeted the cause of black civil rights and "good government." He was an outspoken editor, criticizing both the black and white powers of Los Angeles when he saw the need, while still maintaining their respect. The *Liberator* transitioned to a weekly by 1911, and ceased operations in 1914 when Edmonds died.[76]

Another significant race paper in this period was the *New Age*, whose run in Los Angeles lasted from 1912 to the late 1940s.[77] It was established by Oscar Hudson who ran a publication of the same name in Albuquerque. When he migrated to Los Angeles in 1907, he brought the paper with him. Hudson went on to become a lawyer – the first black elected to a California bar association – and U.S. consul to Liberia from 1917 to 1923. Hudson sold the *New Age* to Frederick Roberts in 1912, whose editorial leadership soon made this paper a solid fixture in the community. He described the *New Age* as a "Journal for Community Interests and Race Welfare" and introduced a new masthead with an African American Lady Liberty presiding over a panoramic Los Angeles. Under his editorship, the *New Age* vigorously advocated for black rights and denounced racism, taking aim at such targets as the *Los Angeles Times* and Anheuser Busch for their racist portraits of blacks. Roberts was elected to the state legislature in 1918, which had a tempering effect on his editorials, but the paper remained a voice for racial justice throughout the years of Central Avenue's ascendance.

More influential still was the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, the brainchild of Leon Washington, Jr. This race paper was established in 1933 and has continued operating since. Hailing from Kansas, Leon Washington arrived in Los Angeles in 1930 at age 23, and worked at a few minor papers before joining the *Eagle* as an advertising salesman. He struck out on his own to form the *Los Angeles Sentinel* in 1933, with financial backing from his cousin Loren Miller. Washington was an astute businessman, which helped assure the paper's financial success and longevity. Doug Flamming calls the *Sentinel* "easily the most sophisticated race paper ever offered to the community."[78] Fay Jackson and Loren Miller joined the staff in the 1930s, lending the energy of a newer generation of black leadership.

The *Sentinel* was an energetic force in the community, offering extensive coverage of local news, railing against racism and discrimination, and spearheading activism in its own right. Washington established the paper's reputation when it vigorously promoted the "Don't Spend Where You Can't Work" campaign during the Depression, part of a national protest movement that boycotted businesses which refused to hire blacks. As Josh Sides notes, "Washington personally investigated, photographed, and then published serialized reports on the effects of discrimination along Central Avenue."[79] His first target was the white-owned Zerg's Furniture Store at 43rd Street and Central, where he organized protest marches and picket lines. He was arrested and jailed for the effort, but soon gained the respect of the black community as a leading voice and activist. Washington was a staunch Democrat, and vigorously supported both black and white candidates of the Party. The *Sentinel* grew to become the largest black-owned newspaper in the West.[80]

2. Black Churches

Black churches were crucial anchors of the black community. They represented spaces of racial autonomy and freedom, where blacks came together by choice and strengthened ties of mutuality. They were sanctuaries of

spiritual freedom, places where people could freely express themselves unfettered by the expectations or pressures of white society. For African Americans in Los Angeles, Doug Flamming writes, "Black churches were their pride and joy, their haven in a racist America."[81] They also represented springboards for community leadership, as well as centers of social life, business networks, and civil rights activism. Churches, too, reflected the diversity of the black community by class, background, and cultural proclivities. They played a vital role in allowing blacks congregants to express their individuality, while tying them to the broader community.

African American churches in Los Angeles evolved in both national and metropolitan contexts. The black church has deep roots in African American history as an institution with far-ranging meaning and significance. Since the times of slavery, blacks embraced the Christian faith, particularly its message of liberation and deliverance. Blacks were quick to form their own churches after emancipation, independent of white intervention. In the South, their churches were predominantly Methodist or Baptist; in the North and Midwest, the leading denomination was the African Methodist Episcopal Church, founded in the 1790s. For African Americans, the church represented a space of black autonomy – spiritual, social, political – and as such it became a powerful race institution. In Los Angeles, black churches grew in a metropolitan context of extraordinary religious diversity. As Michael Engh notes, Los Angeles was unusual for its extensive multiplicity of faiths, reflecting the region's early racial and ethnic diversity, which coexisted with firmly established mainline churches – especially Protestant. This coexistence led generations of observers to characterize religion in Los Angeles with a mixture of alarm and reassurance – alarm over the dizzying array of sects and creeds, reassurance that the mainline churches had established a firm, stabilizing presence in the city.[82] In some ways, black religious life reflected this metropolitan pattern.

In the black community, a handful of powerful mainline churches were the dominant institutions, coexisting with a copious assortment of smaller churches. Black churches in Los Angeles appeared early and proliferated quickly, following the broader geographic patterns of black settlement. By 1926, according to the federal religious census, Los Angeles had 33 black churches with over 10,000 members; by 1936, there were 54 churches with 17,296 members.[83] The actual numbers were probably higher, since census enumerators usually overlooked smaller storefront churches.[84] A number of these churches moved often, sometimes occupying structures once owned by other (white) congregations.

By 1900, the two leading churches in the black community were the First African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Second Baptist Church. They attracted elite and middle-class segments of the community, and remained influential for decades. The First AME Church was the first black church to form in Los Angeles. It began in 1872 in the home of Biddy Mason, who sustained the church financially in its early years. In 1903, the church moved to a structure at 8th and Towne, six blocks west of Central Avenue. The building was a "magnificent architectural landmark," with a sanctuary four stories high, topped by a bell tower with four spires.[85] Before long, several other black churches built structures nearby. First AME was well known for its 50-voice choir, as well as its leadership role in the community. In 1903 it launched the Los Angeles Sunday Forum, which became a key civic hub. It continued strong over the years, organizing and mobilizing the black community.[86]

Second Baptist was founded in 1885 by a small group of blacks who attended the white First Baptist Church. After meeting in small, temporary structures, in 1892 they moved into a two-story brick church at 740 Maple Avenue, near 8th and Main Streets, but the congregation soon outgrew it. Second Baptist was well connected to the black church nationally, taking a leadership role in the Western Baptist Association and evincing an ability to recruit nationally known ministers. A good example was T.L. Griffith, who became pastor in 1921. A dynamic preacher and former Army chaplain, Griffith immediately spearheaded an effort to build a new edifice for Second Baptist. They raised $175,000 and enlisted architects Paul Williams and Norman Marsh to design the structure, which opened in 1926 at 24th Street and Griffith Avenue. At the dedication, Reverend Adam Clayton Powell, Sr., the well-known pastor of the Abyssian Baptist Church in New York City, gave the sermon, which lauded the new building as the "most elaborate" Baptist church on the West coast.[87] Prominent community members belonged to the congregation, including John Neimore and Charlotta and John Bass.[88]

While First AME and Second Baptist drew the refined, middle-class segment of black Los Angeles, other churches drew in working-class congregants, some of whom rejected the perceived conservatism of these two mainline congregations. In some cases, the rejection was literal, as discontented congregants left these churches to form their own. Indeed, both First AME and Second Baptist spawned a number of splinter churches, particularly after periods of internal wrangling over religious, class, and cultural differences. One of the most important "spin-offs" was the People's Independent Church of Christ, which formed in 1915 when members of First AME bolted to form a more progressive, "democratic" church. By the 1930s, this church "had become the most prominent and popular church in the city," drawing a broad cross section of the black community.[89] Under the leadership of its charismatic minister Clayton D. Russell, it fully embraced a mission of social outreach to the black community, with social services, cooperative markets, an employment bureau, extensive programs for children, and a civil rights division. During World War II, Russell organized the Negro Victory Committee, which challenged job and housing discrimination. People's Independent Church developed a reputation as a church that helped the "common" people.[90] Churches that splintered off from Second Baptist included, by 1920, New Hope Baptist, Mount Zion Baptist, St. Paul Institutional Baptist, and Tabernacle Baptist.[91]

Another denomination that attracted working-class – and significantly multiracial – congregants was the Pentecostal church, with national roots in the Azusa Street Revival of 1906, which was based in Los Angeles. African American minister William Seymour spearheaded the church when he began holding Bible studies in a home in the West Temple section of the city. The church soon grew crowds and public attention, and moved into an abandoned warehouse on Azusa Street in downtown. This sect embraced an expressive, emotional form of worship that included speaking in tongues. A number of denominations formed from these roots, including the Church of Christ (Holiness), an all-black Pentecostal denomination with a minor presence in the black community of Los Angeles.[92]

This religious diversification continued into the 1930s, particularly as more poor black migrants entered the city. Uncomfortable in the middle-class mainline churches, newcomers gravitated to the many storefront churches proliferating around Central Avenue. Along with other denominations, small Baptist congregations multiplied – by 1936 there were 31 black Baptist churches alone – finding sanctuaries in tents, rented homes, and vacant

buildings. Their services were emotional and spontaneous, at cultural odds with the established mainline churches. [93]

Black churches not only provided important spiritual sustenance, but also played an array of social, economic, and political functions. They provided aid to newly arrived migrants to the city, publicized job information, spawned several key social organizations (like the Forum), and provided both meeting space and leadership for the NAACP and Urban League – indeed, ministers often served as regional directors of these organizations. Charlotta Bass recalled, "church was not only a place of worship; it was likewise the social, civic, and political headquarters where people assembled for spiritual guidance, *and* civic analysis, political discussions, and social welfare talks and lectures."[94] Churches played an important social function as well, a place "to see and to be seen… a great clearinghouse for social gossip," as one congregant put it.[95]

3. Black Businesses

Black business enterprises represented another important force in the community that helped forge a sense of racial unity and independence. The notion of race enterprises emerged nationally between 1890 and 1920, during the era of the first Great Migration when blacks encountered growing white racism in urban public life. Out of this context, a "new sort of African American entrepreneur emerged – one who catered to the needs and desires of black customers. The idea behind race enterprises was simple: take care of your own."[96] Like ethnic businesses that catered to new immigrants, black businesses took on the conscious role of strengthening the black community by meeting its retail needs, employing its own, and spawning economic leaders in the process. The notion of a "black economy" would not only promote the autonomy of the community, but would insulate blacks from exploitation. This idea had been articulated earlier by Booker T. Washington, whose self-help ideology culminated in the formation of the National Negro Business League. By the 1920s, the idea of black capitalism had gained wide currency and was generally accepted by a broad cross section of black America.[97] The black press and churches promoted the idea of race businesses vigorously. "Black consumers were told that when they patronized these businesses, they bought black jobs, black entrepreneurship, and black independence along with goods and services and bid farewell to white employment prejudice, insults, and overcharging."[98] Particularly in the larger context of urban public life, where blacks were often barred from freely patronizing commercial and public establishments, race businesses promised respect to black customers. Nationally, the black businesses that did best were those catering to personal needs – such as undertakers, barbers and beauticians. Insurance companies achieved the greatest success, as they assured their customers fair treatment (unlike white-owned companies) and essentially sold security to clients contending with chronic job discrimination and instability.[99] Although they constituted only a small segment of the black workforce, black business owners came to assume a high profile in the community. Their enterprises also had a profound role in shaping black settlement patterns, anchoring and drawing settlers at various stages of history.

Race businesses had early roots in Los Angeles, dating back to the late 1880s when several black-owned operations opened in the Brick Block area. Some of the earliest operations included Frank Blackburn's "coffee and chop house," two furniture stores, and a grocery. By the 1890s, they were joined by a barbershop, printing shop, and tent and awning shop. In 1903, A.J. Jones opened a two-story hotel and restaurant. These enterprises

soon attracted several black-owned "private clubs," which became magnets for gambling, drinking, and prostitution. Black business owners chafed at these "dives," fearing the deleterious effects they would have on their more respectable, middle-class operations. When calls to shut down the clubs failed, black businesses fled the area and set up shop on Central Avenue.[100]

Because black businesses had to compete with white businesses along the Avenue, the public discourse around race enterprises intensified in the early 1900s. The black press vigorously encouraged readers to patronize black-owned stores, while celebrating business owners in glowing profiles. As the *New Age* intoned in 1915, "Even in the West, the Race is learning that the need of Race enterprise and the patronage of those established are becoming the rule for preservation."[101] Frederick Roberts, the Basses, and other community leaders also established a local branch of the National Negro Business League, a chamber of commerce-like organization devoted to promoting black businesses. The community responded and black businesses multiplied.

Sidney P. Dones was a pivotal figure, stimulating black business development in the 1910s and staking out turf on Central Avenue. In 1914, he opened the Sidney P. Dones Company at 8th Street and Central, a real estate, insurance, and legal enterprise, and two years later opened the Booker T. Washington Building at 10th Street and Central, which became the heart of the Central Avenue business district. This three-story structure, with shops at street level and apartments and office above, was dubbed the "Largest and Best Appointed Edifice on Central Avenue" by Joe Bass in the *Eagle*. Other operations proliferated nearby – a dry good store, confectionaries, an ice cream parlor, billiard hall, auto repair shops, barber shops, jewelers, a watchmaker, drug stores, furniture dealers, funeral homes, hair stylists, real estate offices, restaurants, the Southern Hotel, and the Angelus Theater. In 1919, the Progressive Business League (which had replaced the Negro Business League) reported 185 black-owned businesses in Los Angeles, one quarter of them on Central Avenue and many more within blocks of it.[102]

Black entrepreneurialism continued to flourish into the 1920s. More stores and businesses opened, about 60 of them chronicled photographically in the booklet *Western Progress* (1928). This publication showcased real estate companies, drug stores, pharmacies, barbershops, beauty parlors, the Blodgett Motor Company, Angelus Funeral Home, Burdette Pie Shoppe, and flower shops, among others. Photographs of the La Republica Tea Room shows palm trees flanking a welcoming bungalow, the interior a refined space of elegant tables draped in white tablecloths. The accompanying text read, "It is here much of the social activity of Los Angeles can be found."[103] Race enterprises offered an array of services and amenities by this point, many of them catering to middle-class tastes. More businesses opened up further south on Central Avenue, including real estate offices, dry goods stores, a dressmaking shop and beauty parlor. Two organizations formed in the 1920s worked to advance black entrepreneurialism, the Pacific Coast Industrial Federation, which helped newcomers start businesses, and the Commercial Council of Los Angeles, whose mission was to promote "business, manufacturing, and immigration."[104] Newspapers also continued to emphasize the importance of patronizing black businesses, while advertisements often included a photograph of the owner to indicate the proprietor's race.[105]

By the late 1920s, the most significant black businesses in Los Angeles appeared, foremost among them the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company. This enterprise began in the early 1920s, when William

Nickerson, Norman Houston, and George Beavers, Jr., partnered to operate a California branch of the American Mutual Benefit Association, a black fraternal group based in Texas that sold insurance policies. Seeking to grow the company and turn it into a full-line black owned insurance company, which would both hire blacks and grant home and business loans, they struck out on their own. With the enthusiastic support of the community – people gave deposits and signed on as customers, even before the company was official – Golden State received its state license in 1925. At this point, it was operating in a one-room office at 1435 Central Avenue. The business flourished quickly. In 1928, it built its stately headquarters at 4111 Central Avenue, in a structure designed and built by African Americans. By 1930, just five years after its founding, the company was making $240,000 annually, employing 130 blacks in white-collar positions, and granting mortgage loans to blacks for homes and businesses. In every respect, this company epitomized the meaning of race enterprise – by investing in the community, employing blacks, and offering fair prices for their services. It continued to grow during the Depression to become the largest black-owned company in the West.[106]

Other significant black financial institutions appeared on Central Avenue during the 1920s, most notably Liberty Savings and Loan and the Hudson-Liddell building. Liberty Savings and Loan was founded by a group of black businessmen in 1924. Located at 25th Street and Central Avenue, the company encouraged thrift and homeownership among the race. As stated earlier, homeownership was symbolically linked to freedom from both cultural and economic discrimination. The success of Liberty Savings and Loan was hailed as "one of the outstanding marks of the race's business enterprises of this city…"[107] The Hudson-Liddell Building, located at 41st Street and Central Avenue, was also a significant black institution. The building was completed in 1929 by Claude Hudson and was occupied by Hudson's dental practice and a medical doctor. Designed by preeminent black architect Paul Williams, the structure was called "one of the most up-to-date and exquisitely furnished office buildings of the race."[108] In the late 1940s Claude Hudson also founded the Broadway Federal Savings and Loan to enable African Americans to obtain real estate loans. Both institutions are significant as they represented the possibilities of entrepreneurial success to black Angelenos during a time of economic discrimination.

Black-owned hotels were another notable business institution along Central Avenue. Due to discriminatory practices, most hotels that catered to African Americans were black-owned and located within the community. As such, the hotels represented a source of financial independence and racial unity. The first buildings that provided accommodations to black patrons were more houses with rooms for rent rather than traditional hotels. These early hotels appeared in the 1880s around Alameda Street and surrounding rail yards. One of the first was Austin House, located at 3rd and Hewitt Streets and owned by Charles Oliver. As the African American community shifted south in the early 20th century, Charles Oliver opened Oliver's Palace at Ninth Street and Central Avenue. Oliver's Palace was the first black-owned hotel in the traditional sense. In the following years several other hotels catering to African American clientele opened, including the Lyons Hotel located at 11th Street and Central Avenue as well as the Clark Hotel at Washington Boulevard and Central Avenue.

The most important enterprise, notable for its symbolic meaning more than its profitability, was the Hotel Sommerville. This five-story structure, with its Spanish-style patio, tall archways, and 100-plus rooms, was an elegant establishment that drew high praise from many quarters. W.E.B. DuBois called it "a jewel done with loving hands… a beautiful inn with soul." It was especially appreciated for its newness, a structure built

expressly for blacks, not a hand-me-down white hotel typical of eastern cities. The Somerville was built as an incentive for the NAACP to hold its national convention of 1928 in Los Angeles, a promise that sealed the organization's decision to come to LA. This annual convention, considered the most important civil rights event in America at the time, signified that the movement's eastern leadership finally recognized Los Angeles as an important player nationally, and not merely a remote western outpost.[109] The owners of the hotel, John and Vada Sommerville, lost it during the Depression. The subsequent owner changed the name to the Dunbar Hotel, in honor of the black poet, Paul L. Dunbar.

Funeral homes also played a significant role in the African American community in Los Angeles. The first black-owned funeral home was established in 1899 as the Porter-Roberts Company. Created in response to the discriminatory practices of white funeral homes, A.J. Roberts sold his Los Angeles Van, Truck, and Storage Co. to open the A.J. Roberts Funeral Home at 14th Street and Central Avenue. Roberts also ran an apprenticeship program for morticians in addition to its other services. A.J.'s son, Frederick Roberts, took over the company and eventually became active as a newspaper editor, community leader, and state assemblyman.. Another notable business venture was Angelus Funeral Home. Founded in 1922 without much initial success due to competition, the Angelus Funeral Home was eventually sold to new owners who built up the business. While A.J. Roberts Funeral Home represented the first black-owned business of its type, Angelus Funeral Home symbolized the steady proliferation and commercial growth of blacks in the Central Avenue corridor.

D. Civic Engagement

The history of African-American civic engagement in Los Angeles reflects the common outlets for American civil society; individuals voted in elections, organized civic groups to represent their interests, and exercised their rights through the court system. However, for black Angelenos, these institutions operated through the lens of discrimination and the quest for civil rights. African American leaders recognized that the freedom to earn a living and live as you pleased without fear of racial violence depended on vigilant organization within the community, and engagement with the broader society.[110] This section is an overview of the ways that African Americans went about this task. In a direct way, blacks used their votes to support candidates who represented their racial interests. Blacks also directly interacted with the government by challenging discriminatory or racist practices in court, laying the groundwork for the broader civil rights battles of the 1960s. The entire time, African-Americans were organizing and strengthening the electoral and litigious engagement through a host a civic organizations. The sum of these factors made up the development of black civil society.

1. Politics

While blacks were among the founding settlers of Los Angeles in the 18th century, they were not formally part of the electoral process until the 1870 election.[111] Louis Green challenged the City to recognize their right to vote under the Fifteenth Amendment, and the 25 black Angelenos eligible to vote registered. Since that election, African Americans steadily retained voting rights, unlike the southern states that instituted black disenfranchisement after the Reconstruction era.

In this era before the Depression, the black community in Los Angeles was a solid Republican voting bloc, showing its deep-seeded loyalty to the party of Lincoln. However, black political power at this time usually meant rallying behind or against white candidates based on how well they would represent black interests. An example of this electoral power was the removal of City Attorney John Shenk from office, who supported discriminatory practices against blacks in Los Angeles with his "Shenk Rule." The black community organized and supported Shenk's opponent, who narrowly defeated Shenk. The black community could lobby white politicians with the threat or promise of black voter support, but this did not equate to blacks holding office. While a few blacks ran for office unsuccessfully early on, it was not until the progressive reforms of the 1910s that they began to win elections,

The turning point came in 1918, when the first African American was elected to the California state assembly. This marked the beginning of black political leadership in state politics, which would continue unabated throughout this entire period. The man who broke the political color barrier was Frederick Roberts, the editor of the *New Age* and one of the co-founders of the L.A. Forum. He initiated a serious campaign for the 74th California Assembly District, which included Central Avenue, although African Americans represented only 20 percent of the district electorate.[112] Running as a Republican, Roberts faced four white challengers, and won the Republican nomination by 173 votes. At the time, Los Angeles was staunchly Republican, so winning the nomination from the party was the equivalent of securing the seat. However, the Democratic challenger made Robert's race the sole campaign issue, as his campaign materials pronounced, "My opponent is a nigger".[113] Roberts prevailed and won by approximately 500 votes. In both the primary and general election, Roberts dominated the black vote, but clinched the victory by also winning white precincts apart from Central Avenue. Roberts' first issue of business in Sacramento was to usher through a bill to increase the punishment for businesses that instituted discriminatory practices. Roberts remained a popular politician in both the white and black community; he handily won the next election, and went on to represent the district for almost fifteen years.

Roberts eventually lost his seat in 1934 to Augustus Hawkins, a black Democrat. The race was a microcosm of the changing tide of black political allegiances in America.[114] Roberts represented the old guard, "Lincoln" Republicans who viewed Democrats as synonymous with racism and the South. However, Robert's party affiliation was out of date by 1934, when most blacks in the nation had swung to the Democratic Party in support of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal, Hawkins was a college-educated New Deal Democrat, who represented a new generation of black political leadership. His election signified the realignment of black Los Angeles from the Republican to Democratic column, even as it hinged on the support of a biracial, pro-labor coalition. Hawkins held the assembly seat for the next 28 years, during which time he advocated tirelessly for fair housing legislation. In 1962, Hawkins was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he continued to fight for civil rights.[115]

In any case, the African American 74th Assembly seat remained the only elected office on any level representing Central Avenue for decades. [116] On a local level, the presence of black elected representation was hampered by the racial and political geography of Los Angeles; the council districts were too big to make black constituents a critical force.[117] Moreover, the reapportionment of districts every four years diluted the black vote among different districts. However, the black community exerted political influence through their white representatives.

The influential white representatives in the 1940s included City Councilmember and later County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, and City Councilmember John Roybal. John Anson Ford, another Supervisor, was on the L.A. County Commission on Human Relations, which promoted civil rights.

While these officials prioritized the interests of the black community, they were considered an inadequate substitute for black elected leaders by many in the African American community.[118] The Democratic Minority Conference (DMC) was formed in the early 1950s to promote black political candidates. One of the founding members was LAPD Sergeant Tom Bradley, a foreshadowing of the group's success later.

2. Civic Organizations

Organizations and clubs in the black community provided a critical method of civic engagement. For one thing, participation in the organizational structure of these clubs created a leadership class within the black community. They also provided outlets for differing racial philosophies, from the W.E.B. Du Bois concept of equal rights and integration found in the L.A. branch of the NAACP, to the Booker T. Washington school of practical self-help found in the Sojourner Truth Industrial Home. Unlike in other cities, members and leaders cross-pollinated within all of these institutions, amalgamating a uniquely pragmatic approach to civil rights.[119] Finally, while the importance of these individual groups ebbed over time, their collective presence provided critical organizational resources for the civil rights and electoral battles.

Afro-American Council - The Afro-American Council (the AAC) was a national collection of civic organizations established in the 1880s to combat Jim Crow discrimination in the South.[120] It originally was called the Afro-American League, but the name morphed into "Council" as the group evolved. While the national group's influence dwindled by 1908, the California affiliate and local Los Angeles sub-council remained a political fixture until 1915.

The Los Angeles sub-council met monthly, and elected delegates to the annual statewide convention. The organization directly appealed for civil rights by lobbying politicians against lynching and pardoning falsely accused African Americans, and providing a connection to the political process through political machines. While some later anti-discrimination organizations (like the NAACP) ostensibly included white members and catered to the intellectual and professional African Americans, AAC membership was explicitly black, male, and blue-collar. Los Angeles leaders included James M. Alexander, a well-educated Texan who was employed as a porter; Charles C. Flint, a grocer; and John H. Jamison, a scrap-iron dealer. Many of the middle-class transplanted AAC members used the group as a vehicle to vault into better patronage jobs, and in the process became political leaders within the black community. This mode fits James M. Alexander, who was elected state AAC president in 1905, and secured a federal patronage post in Los Angeles. The Los Angeles sub-council eventually disbanded as the national organization closed, membership declined, local influence dwindled, and the NAACP established a local chapter.

L.A. Forum - The L.A. Forum organized town-hall style meetings for issues in the black community. The group was established in 1903 by Reverend J.E. Edwards of the First AME Church, Jefferson Edmonds, editor of the

Liberator, and Frederick Roberts.[121] It met weekly, first at the First AME Church and then at Odd Fellows' Hall, to discuss current events, philanthropic causes, and political issues. In the early 1900s, the group raised money for causes as diverse as the San Francisco earthquake, the Colored YMCA, and black agricultural homesteading experiments.[122] The L.A. Forum and local African American attorney High Macbeth were boosters of the "back-to-the-soil" movement of all-black agricultural communities in the U.S. and Mexico. The L.A. Forum became politically active in World War I in order to confront the problem of racism in L.A. and the country at large, providing an outlet for leaders to voice their concerns and demands. This political might helped precipitate the removal of City Attorney John Shenk from office, who had condoned racially discriminatory practices by local businesses. The L.A. Forum rallied the black community to vote for his opponent, who narrowly won. The L.A. Forum joined forces with the NAACP to attempt to suppress the film *Birth of a Nation* in 1915. As black migration to Los Angeles skyrocketed in the 1920s, the influence of the L.A. Forum was diluted. However, it continued to meet until 1942.

Urban League – Founded in 1910, the National Urban League was a Progressive-era organization dedicated to improving conditions for African Americans, particularly in the areas of economic rights and social welfare. The Los Angeles branch opened in 1921, formed in association with the Tuskegee Industrial Welfare League, a local black women's organization. Headquartered on Spring Street downtown, the L.A. Urban League was a biracial organization. Typical of Progressive social reform efforts, the Urban League focused on collecting data and then agitating for change. Its dual goal was to expand job opportunities for black where they already had a foothold, and to open new job sectors as well. In 1926, the L.A. branch conducted an exhaustive study of the racial policies and hiring practices of manufacturers in Los Angeles; the results demonstrated that hiring and opportunity for blacks was very much at the whim of the manager at each site.[123] The L.A. Urban League also sponsored vocational job training programs, and helped blacks integrate into previously all-white workplaces, such as bakeries.[124] This organization represented an important civic institution in the 1920s and 1930s, particularly in addressing the unemployment and poverty of the Depression. However, it was less directly involved with some of the later political and civil rights struggles. Its economic and philanthropic message continued to play a role in the Los Angeles community throughout the study period.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People - The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was organized in New York in 1910 as a bi-racial group committed to eradicating racial discrimination, particularly through the courts. The prominent public face of the group was W.E.B. Du Bois, who campaigned on many fronts for equal rights and integration. His philosophy appealed to professionals, intellectuals, and the middle class, particularly in Los Angeles.[125]

The major figures in the formation of the Los Angeles chapter of the NAACP were E. Burton Ceruti and John Somerville. Ceruti was an attorney and Somerville a dentist; both were prominent leaders in the black community. Ceruti initiated the contact with the New York office to lobby for a Los Angeles charter, but the national organization approached John Somerville to organize the chapter in 1913. Somerville was acquainted with Du Bois, who had stayed with the Somervilles during his 1913 trip to California. It is interesting to note that the first two presidents of the Los Angeles branch were white ministers. However, the white presence in the group appears to have been perfunctory; the key local NAACP players were black. While the L.A. branch

mirrored the policy positions of the national organization, the local chapter launched specific campaigns to address local issues and problems. In 1915, the NAACP waged a vocal campaign against the film *Birth of a Nation*. While the film was ultimately allowed to be shown, Ceruti and the NACCP lobbied the Los Angeles City Council for an ordinance to restrict future racially incendiary films. The local branch also pressed the L.A. County nursing program to admit black women for the first time, which it finally did in 1919.

The NAACP continued its role as the legal watchdog of the black community in the 1920s, and it was kept busy due to the heightened incidence of racially motivated violence and discrimination during the decade. In 1928, the local branch managed to attract the national NAACP convention to Los Angeles, a defining moment in the history of the black community, signifying its coming of age on the national civil rights scene. Indeed, the Somerville Hotel was constructed in order to accommodate and impress visitors to the convention.

One of the NAACP's most important campaigns of the era involved the desegregation of swimming pools in Los Angeles.[126] The official policy was that Los Angeles pools were open to everyone, but managers of individual pools took it upon themselves to restrict black access to pools to certain days of the week. In 1925, the Playground Commission adopted a policy of segregation, regulating blacks to specific days at specific pools. The NAACP filed a lawsuit (*George Cushnie v. City of Los Angeles*) to challenge the policy. However, NAACP officials worried that the case might open a can of worms, as it was likely to evoke the precedent of *Plessy v. Ferguson* and its separate-but-equal philosophy. After several legal setbacks, activist Betty Hill fought the battle over pool segregation outside the purview of the NAACP. The case went to court, and the city was ordered to integrate the pools. Hill and her supporters deftly maneuvered to block the city from appealing the decision. The pools dropped race restrictions in the summer of 1931.[127]

In the 1930s, the NAACP took an active role in making sure blacks were included in New Deal projects.[128] In the 1940s and early 1950s, the group went through more internal leadership disputes, and was stymied by the group's fear of the communist association with specific civil rights campaigns, such as the movement to integrate the workforce of the Sears-Roebuck store in Santa Monica.[129] Membership dwindled in the early 1950s. But under the dynamic leadership of branch vice president Loren Miller and the newly elected branch leader Thomas Neusom, the L.A. branch waged a successful campaign to desegregate the LAFD and remove its segregationist fire chief from office. These efforts breathed new life into the organization.[130]

Although internal disputes and leadership struggles bogged down the L.A. branch at various times in the first half of the twentieth century, the NAACP remained a vital, powerful institution in Los Angeles, arguably the preeminent civil rights organization that spearheaded many of the major campaigns for equal rights discussed below.

Women's Clubs – Black women's clubs in Los Angeles promoted a unique combination of culturally conservative ideals – such as morality and motherhood – and political activism in the cause of civil rights. In 1903, the most significant of these clubs was formed, the California Association of Colored Women's Clubs (CWC), which eventually affiliated with the National Association of Colored Women. CWC efforts included the Sojourner Truth Industrial Home and the Day Nursery of Los Angeles. The home was built by the Sojourner

Truth Club, an affiliate of the CWC, through financial backing from black churches; it provided lodging and training for unmarried African American women. The Day Nursery, run by Vada Somerville, served as a day care center for approximately 260 children every month so their mothers could stay employed. L.A.'s African American "club women" were also famously involved in an early housing civil rights battle, when they rushed en-mass to support a black homeowner under threat from her white neighbors. These women's clubs provided a political outlet for women, since the earliest black civil rights organizations were limited to men, and women couldn't vote in California until 1911. However, the second generation of civic organizations such as the NAACP, the Urban League, and the UNIA were open to women, giving them new avenues of participation. Nonetheless, the unique service contribution of the organizations such as the Sojourner Truth Industrial Club and Women's Day Nursery Association continued.

Other Clubs - Other civic organizations active in the African American community in Los Angeles deserve a mention. The 28th Street YMCA sponsored youth activities, but also included two clubrooms for community activities.[131] Hugh Macbeth established the shorter-lived "All-American League" to steer the patriotism and national discussions about democracy towards voting rights and racism. Fraternal organizations like the Elks and Masons, and social clubs like the Silver Fox Club, the Just for Fun Club, and the Phys-Art-Lit-Mo Club, also presented opportunities for black community engagement in Los Angeles.[132] During the war, the Victory Committee was established to protect the rights of black serviceman, and ensure black access to wartime employment and vocational training.

3. Civil Rights

While the civil rights movement is often associated with the 1950s and 1960s and the institutional segregation of the South, the seeds for the civil rights breakthroughs of the 1960s were planted much earlier and existed in all pockets of America dealing with discrimination and racism – including the West. Southern segregation was "de jure," meaning it was codified in law; in the North and West, "de facto" segregation prevailed. In these regions, segregation existed in everyday practice, even if the laws were nominally non-discriminatory. In Los Angeles, civil rights campaigns focused particularly on de facto segregation in housing, education and employment. A number of these efforts figured centrally in national civil rights cases, revealing the important role that the Los Angeles movement played in the national struggle for civil rights.

In the first half of the twentieth century, blacks in Los Angeles were not segregated by blatant Jim Crow housing laws, but rather confronted segregation through a variety of underhanded mechanisms described earlier. While there were isolated incidents of intimidation and violence when a black family moved into an all-white neighborhood or street, the opportunities for black relocation outside the historical geographical Central Avenue area was presumably legal. Central among these was the restrictive covenant, used widely in Los Angeles and cities nationally from 1900 to 1948. The use of covenants was challenged in two important U.S. Supreme Court cases that had major implications for Los Angeles housing.[133] In the 1948 case *Shelley v. Kraemer*, the Supreme Court ruled that racially restrictive covenants could not be enforced by the state, because the enforcement of the covenant would require the state to implement a discriminatory action. In the 1953 case *Barrows v. Jackson*, the

Supreme Court expanded upon the 1948 decision by barring any financial awards to plaintiffs if covenants were broken.

The *Shelley v. Kraemer* case had roots in an epic Los Angeles covenant battle in the Sugar Hill neighborhood. Up to the late 1930s, Sugar Hill was an exclusive white neighborhood in West Adams. In 1938, blacks finally broke the color line there when businessman Norman Houston purchased a home in the area. He waited three years to move in, fearing a backlash from his white neighbors. Once he did, other members of the black elite followed.[134] The West Adams Heights Improvement Association filed a lawsuit contending that the white homeowners who sold the homes violated the racial covenant on the property. Loren Miller argued the case for the NAACP, and won in California Supreme Court. When the case went to the Supreme Court, it was considered under the *Shelley v. Kraemer* case and Loren Miller argued the case along with Thurgood Marshall.

These court victories redirected black settlement patterns in Los Angeles, as black families faced fewer legal barriers to own a home wherever they chose. A motivating factor for many of these black homebuyers was to access better schools that were concentrated in wealthier, whiter areas. While they would face other roadblocks to home ownership, such as real estate agents refusing to sell white homes to blacks and intimidation by potential white neighbors,[135] blacks could legally choose where they wanted to live.

According to Josh Sides, school segregation in Southern California was the product of racial geography, willful neglect, and racial gerrymandering.[136] In this respect, the civil rights battle over education was very much tied to housing. If black families were restricted to living in certain areas with substandard schools, there was de facto school segregation.

While the LAUSD officially mandated that students attend the school closest to them, white students in racially mixed neighborhoods were able to seek a waiver and attend a predominately white school. This practice, combined with segregated residential patterns, resulted in de facto segregation well into the 1950s. When the NAACP started investigating the schools system in 1953 and U.S. Supreme Court handed down the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* case in 1954, schools became a central focus of the Los Angeles civil rights movement. Resistance from both the LAUSD and white parents in affected neighborhoods throughout the city led to a protracted battle over school desegregation well into the 1970s. .[137]

Civil rights efforts also focused on job discrimination. As explained in the preceding section, blacks faced widespread discrimination in hiring and advancement in Los Angeles. Such practices were legal in these years, in the absence of state or federal statutes to demand otherwise. In L.A., black males were relegated to service and general labor jobs, and black women worked mostly in domestic service roles. The challenges to discriminatory hiring practices usually targeted a specific workplace. An example of this type civil rights campaign was the "Don't Spend Where You Can't Work" campaign during the Depression, part of a national protest movement that boycotted businesses which refused to hire blacks. In the 1940s, black men began breaking into industrial work with the help of federal anti-discrimination laws. During the war, black women made inroads in civil service positions, and gradual progress in other job sectors over time. However, other county and municipal departments, particularly the police and fire departments, did not integrate until forced to do so. The LAFD did

not integrate until 1955 due to pressure from the NAACP, which involved forcing the LAFD Chief out of office.[138] While the LAPD maintained that it didn't practice segregation or discrimination, as late as 1959 only 3 percent of LAPD officers were black.[139] The black community continued to challenge these institutions and specific companies that discriminated in hiring, for much of the postwar period.

E. Entertainment and Culture

The cultural history of black Los Angeles has had a major influence on the broader cultural trends of the city and nation. Music has been recognized as one of African Americans' most important contributions to American culture. In the process of developing music for their own satisfaction, African Americans produced several distinct idioms, including gospel, rhythm & blues, and jazz. Black Angelenos played an important part in the development of those idioms that were embraced by Americans of all races. Many talented musicians were attracted to Los Angeles by the burgeoning entertainment industry, and there was a considerable amount of movement back and forth between the mediums of film, radio, and recording. But like other industries, African Americans met discrimination not only in the way they were depicted in those mediums, but also in their ability to gain employment. After failed attempts at censoring racist films, an indigenous black cinema emerged. This response to racism was not unlike the development of other black businesses that were designed to serve the black community.

1. Music & Recording

Although Central Avenue is famous for the role it played in the development of West Coast jazz, the musical history of the African American community is much deeper and more complex. Music played a key role in the history of African Americans in Los Angeles since the late 19th century. The origins of the cultural life of the black community can be traced to a combination of factors including churches, music teachers, recording companies, and migrants from New Orleans. From these various individuals and institutions Los Angeles contributed to the development of gospel, classical, jazz, and rhythm & blues (R&B) music. The fact that one particular style or generation of musicians did not characterize the Central Avenue music scene allowed these various musical idioms to develop somewhat simultaneously.

Music is important to the religious services of African Americans so it can be surmised that music was abundant during the later part of the 19th century when the city's first black congregations were formed. Until the 1930s, black church music mostly consisted of spirituals that were sung without accompaniment. Spirituals evolved out of slave songs that were lined and repeated in a call-and-response pattern similar to that found in the music of West and Central Africa. The distinction between spirituals and gospel songs is only slight. Gospel music emerged in the first few decades of the 20th century as blues and early jazz styles began to exert their influence on church musicians.[140] This was particularly true of holiness churches, Churches of God in Christ that were removed from the genteel European models of church decorum. Thomas Dorsey is considered the father of contemporary gospel music. The son of a minister, Dorsey was a consummate musician and as a young man composed and arranged blues music. When he began writing religious music in the early 1930s, he continued to employ the rhythmic style of the blues. This combination of the sacred with the secular continues to define

gospel music to this day. Dorsey appeared in Los Angeles around 1937 at the Central Baptist Church, assisted by the Dorsey Gospel Singers the following week at the same church. Years later, the Dorsey ensemble performed numerous times in the Los Angeles area.[141]

During the 1940s, gospel trios and quartets gained popularity and had a major influence in the development of R&B vocal groups during subsequent decades. The most innovative of these groups in Los Angeles was the Three Sons of Thunder. Formed in 1941, the group included E.D. Smallwood, A.A. Peters, and Earl Pleasant. This trio later added another vocalist, Nathan Kirkpatrick and a white organist Kenneth Kramer. Not affiliated with any particular church, they performed at churches, revivals, and meeting halls spreading their particularly high spirited and raw edged brand of gospel music. Smallwood composed and published many of the group's songs, which became popular in the genre of gospel music. He also directed the Zion Hill Baptist Church Choir from 1936 to 1946. In 1946 he started his own congregation, Opportunity Baptist Church. Following Smallwood's path, Peters started Victory Baptist Church in 1943 and Pleasant started Mount Moriah Baptist Church in 1945. By the 1960s, Los Angeles developed into a major center for gospel music primarily due to the groundwork laid by these three men.[142]

Mass choirs in terms of overall popularity soon replaced quartets in gospel music. Perhaps one of the most important of these was the Wings Over Jordan Choir. This group was organized in 1937 by Reverend Glen T. Settles in Cleveland, Ohio, and was the first full-time professional black choir. They made broadcast history with the first independently produced national and international radio programs created by African Americans. They performed weekly on the *Negro Hour* over WGAR, a CBS radio affiliate. The choir relocated in Los Angeles in 1956. As such, many black Angelenos toured with the group in its later years.[143]

Many gospel choirs emerged from local black churches and went on to achieve broader popularity via radio and recording. The St. Paul Baptist Church had a well-known gospel choir named Echoes of Eden, which began broadcasting weekly in 1945 on radio station KFWB. Victory Baptist Church also had a weekly radio program, featuring Thurston Frazier as director of the choir.[144] A.C. Bilbrew was a leading figure in choral and gospel music in Los Angeles. Born in Arkansas and educated at USC, she was the choir director for a number of prominent black churches including Phillips Temple CME Church, the People's Independent Church of Christ, and Hamilton Methodist Church.

Music provided a convenient way for African Americans to participate in the motion picture industry. Not only were choral groups hired to perform on sound tracks, but black songwriters, composers, arrangers, and musicians were employed.[145] A case in point was Jester Hairston. A multi-talented man who composed and arranged more than 300 gospel songs and spirituals for film, Hairston also worked as an actor. For thirteen years he was the assistant conductor for the Hall Johnson Negro Choir. He moved to Los Angeles in 1935 with the choir, which had been hired to create the choral music for the films *Green Pastures* and *Lost Horizon*. Because of Hairston's talent as an arranger, Dimitri Tiomkin hired him as his choral arranger for the next twenty years. In 1943 he formed his own professional choir, the Jester Hairston Metropolitan Choir, which performed in numerous films such as *Carmen Jones* (1954) and *Lilies of the Field* (1963).[146]

An important subtext to the history of African American music in Los Angeles is that of the dedicated teachers who helped their students overcome hurdles of racism, some of them eventually winning international recognition. Some worked as private teachers, some formed conservatories, and others worked in the public school system. There were 22 in 1910, 73 in 1920, 226 in 1930, and 260 in 1940. Overall musicians comprised a large percentage of the city's black professional class.[147]

In the 1910s and 1920s, piano teachers became very popular in the community. Most parents wanted their children to be able to take piano lessons, envisioning it as a means toward upward mobility. In 1912, William Wilkins opened the Wilkins School of Music on Central Avenue at 14th Street.[148] The school had over 250 pupils at the main school, seven assistant piano teachers, and a kindergarten program with forty children. John Gray was another music teacher with a large following. In 1926, he founded the African American Musicians' Association.[149] This organization differed from the Musician's Union in that the Union consisted mainly of jazz musicians seeking employment. The Association was composed of community music teachers, public school music teachers, and community members who appreciated music. In 1928, it became the Los Angeles branch of the National Association of Negro Musicians.[150]

Very fine fundamental training could also be had through Los Angeles public high schools, which were a breeding ground from some of the finest jazz musicians in the United States from the 1930s through the 1950s. Charles Mingus, Buddy Collette, and the Woodman Brothers went to Jordan. Eric Dolphy and Herb Geller were classmates at Dorsey. Walter Benton, Jimmy Knepper, Russ Freeman, and Larry Bunker graduated from Manual Arts. But for sheer numbers, no school in Los Angeles turned out more renowned musicians than Jefferson. Don Cherry, Dexter Gordon, Art Farmer, Ernie Royal, Jackie Kelso, Ginger Smock, Bill Douglass, O.C. Smith, Roy Ayers, and Horace Tapscott are just a few of the gifted musicians who attended Jefferson High School.

In part Jefferson bred so many musicians because it was so close to the jazz clubs on Central Avenue, but the other part of the equation was Samuel Browne. He was the first black music teacher in the Los Angeles public school system. Browne was a native of Los Angeles who graduated from Jefferson in 1926 and taught there from 1936 to 1961. Although trained as a classical musician at USC, his students wanted to play jazz so that is what he taught them. As one of the few African Americans on the faculty of the school, he found friendship amongst his students and their families. Browne often went with his students to the jazz clubs on Central Avenue or took them to orchestra rehearsals led by Duke Ellington, Lionel Hampton, and Stan Kenton. He also invited professional musicians into the classroom. Alma Hightower and Lloyd Reese also played a significant role in music education during the 1940s and 50s.

As a result of the fine quality of musical instruction in the black community, there were many well-educated musicians living in Los Angeles, however very few found success in the world of classical music, which was almost exclusively the realm of white Americans and Europeans. The exception to this rule can be found in the careers of William Grant Still and Florence Cole Talbert. A classical composer, who wrote nearly 200 works, Still is often referred to as the dean of African American composers. Born in Mississippi, Still moved to Los Angeles in 1937. He was the first African American to conduct a major American symphony orchestra, the first

to have a symphony of his own performed by a leading orchestra, the first to have an opera performed by a major company, and the first to have an opera performed on national television.

A critically acclaimed soprano, Florence Cole moved to Los Angeles with her family in 1910 and was the first African American to attend Los Angeles High School. Afterward, she studied at USC and the Chicago Musical College. She began singing in New York City in 1918, and later married a pianist and director named William P. Talbert. In 1924, she traveled to Europe to play in *Aïda*, and returned to the United States three years later. She recorded and released three songs, including *Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen*. After she retired from singing, she became a singing teacher in Los Angeles.[151]

As significant as sacred and formal music were in black culture, it was jazz that made the Los Angeles black community famous nationwide. The music that came to be known as jazz emerged in the first decades of the 20th century from the artistic meeting of other genres including ragtime, gospel, spirituals, work songs, and especially the blues. In contrast to gospel that was powered by strong vocals and blues that grew out of the rural South and was typically performed by a soloist, jazz was primarily an instrumental and collaborative idiom that was very much influenced by the black urban experience. No city was more important in the development of this new form of music than New Orleans where despite strident racial segregation, musicians could tap into the city's spectacularly broad range of musical influences and where opportunities to hear, play, and practice music were extraordinarily abundant. The origin of jazz in Los Angeles has been attributed to a number of musicians who moved here from New Orleans and formed social dance bands. The most noted of these early bands were Bill Johnson's Original Creole Ragtime Band and the Freddie Keppard Original Creole Band. Paul Howard, Kid Ory, Alton Redd, and Jelly Roll Morton all moved to Los Angeles from New Orleans during the 1910s and 1920s, solidifying Los Angeles as an important scene for jazz music.

The Spike Brothers, Benjamin and John, are credited with building the jazz scene in Los Angeles by bring Jelly Roll Morton from New Orleans to cut a record, by forming their own bands, and by running several clubs. In 1919 they opened a record store at 1203 Central Avenue. During this period there was an influx of middle-class African Americans and a significant in-migration of African American musicians who helped make the record store a profitable venture in the community. In addition, bands began to rehearse there and it became a gathering place for musicians by the early 1920s.[152]

Jelly Roll Morton was a seminal figure in the birth and development of jazz in the early decades of the 20th century. A multi-talented pianist, composer, arranger and bandleader, who some call the first composer of jazz music, Morton wove disparate musical strands - blues, stomps, and ragtime, plus French and Spanish influences - into the fabric of early jazz. He moved to Los Angeles around 1917, stayed until 1922, and returned off and on until his death in 1941 at Los Angeles County Hospital.

The jazz brought to Los Angeles from New Orleans by Morton and others was Dixieland. The burgeoning motion picture industry attracted musicians from other parts of the country, and by the mid-1920s there were many homegrown musicians as well who contributed to the development of a new form of jazz. During the 1930s jazz was transformed from an individual, often improvised music into a composed music called "swing."

Swing was considered a less creative and more commercial form of jazz that was largely performed by all-white bands. There were a few African American bandleaders that found success in swing including Count Basie, Lionel Hampton, Duke Ellington, and Benny Carter.

The physical manifestation of jazz music on the built environment can be found in the development of nightclubs. These were mainly located along Central Avenue from Little Tokyo to Watts. They appeared during the 1920s, peaked during the 1930s, and started to fade by the 1950s. As well as being gathering places for the black elite, Central Avenue's nightclubs attracted a substantial white audience. Curtis Mosby, an enterprising musician from Kansas City, led the Dixieland Blue Blowers and by 1929 or 1930 opened nightclubs in Los Angeles and San Francisco. He ran two Apex Clubs, one in each city. The famous Club Alabam succeeded the Southern California Apex Club as the mecca for music lovers around 1932. The Club Alabam occupied the site of the old Club Araby, which itself preceded the Apex. It was owned by the Rizzo Brothers; Mosby managed it; however, and bought it around 1940. It occupied the lower level of a building next to the Dunbar Hotel.[153] Other clubs included the Downbeat, the Flame, and the Casablanca, all owned by or managed by "Black Dot" McGhee; Jack's Basket Room run by the former boxer Jack Johnson; Shepp's Playhouse and Club Finale in Little Tokyo; and Joe Morton's Plantation Club in Watts.

While swing remained popular through World War II, several new forms of jazz began to appear. Bebop originated in New York and was brought to Los Angeles by two of its pioneers, Charlie Parker and Dizzie Gillespie. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, leading bebop players including Dexter Gordon, Charlie Mingus, Wardell Gray, and Buddy Collette emerged from Los Angeles. Several African American bands were more popular than innovative. By 1953, they had modified bebop into a more danceable form that became known as "cool" jazz. A major figure in the cool jazz movement was Benny Carter. In reaction to the commercialization of the art form, some Los Angeles musicians, including Eric Dolphy, experimented with "free" jazz.

According to author Bette Yarborough Cox, the decline of the jazz scene on Central Avenue can be attributed to a variety of factors. The proliferation of the jukebox in the early 1940s allowed smaller clubs to eliminate the cost of live bands, but still provide the dance music craved by their patrons. By the late 1940s black musicians began performing at previously all-white clubs in Hollywood and theaters in downtown Los Angeles. This eliminated the need for white audiences to go to Central Avenue to hear jazz. The amalgamation of the black and white musicians unions in 1953 reinforced this trend by expanding employment opportunities for black musicians. Finally, by the early 1950s the black audience began to decline as the middle class began moving west.

A small, but not insignificant aspect of the musical life of the community were black-owned independent record companies. The earliest of these was the Sunshine Record Company formed by the Spike Brothers in 1921. Although they were not prolific, they produced the first recordings of instrumentals by a black jazz band, Kid Ory's Creole Orchestra. In 1940, a recent graduate of Jefferson High School, Leroy Huerte, left behind a singing career with Victor recording artists, The Four Blackbirds, took over a record store on Central Avenue, installed a basic recording studio in the back, and started Bronze Records. With the successful recording of a gospel group

called The Five Soul Stirrers, Bronze Records was established. In the early 1940s, Leon and Otis Rene embarked on the first of a number of independent recording ventures through the creation of two labels, Excelsior (owned by Otis), and Exclusive (owned by Leon). Beginning with the release of Joe Liggin's The Honeydripper on Exclusive in 1946, the brothers would be at the center of the R&B sound emerging from Los Angeles in the mid-1940s. While none of these ventures enjoyed longevity, they were important forerunners within the community.

2. Film & Radio, 1915-1948

The history of African Americans in film had an inauspicious start with *Birth of a Nation* (1915). Set during the American Civil War and directed by D.W. Griffith, the film was the first Hollywood "blockbuster." It was also hugely controversial, both in its own day and today, for its promotion of white supremacy and glorification of the Ku Klux Klan. The film drew significant protest from the African American community upon its release. The NAACP protested premieres of the film in numerous cities including Los Angeles. The group received no support from liberal whites that viewed censorship as a violation of free speech and appreciated the technical and visual achievements of the film, despite the objectionable subject matter. Nevertheless, the NAACP pressed its campaign and achieved a modest victory in having the most odious scenes excised from the film.[154] But if the subtext of the film was to raise the consciousness of whites, the effect was the opposite. It heightened black racial identity and led to the development of independent black cinema.

The formation of motion picture companies by African Americans was a direct response to *Birth of a Nation*. Based in Los Angeles, the Lincoln Motion Picture Company was the first motion picture company controlled by blacks and was renowned for the quality of its features and its serious treatment of middle-class black life. Founded in 1916, the company sought to produce films that depicted positive images of blacks. Noble Johnson, an actor, was president of the company. The secretary, Clarence A. Brooks, was also an actor. Dr. James T. Smith worked as treasurer and Dudley A. Brooks was assistant secretary. The officers met on the balcony of Smith's Drugstore at 905 Central Avenue.

The first Lincoln production was a drama about black middle-class aspirations entitled *The Realization of a Negro's Ambition* (1916). The second Lincoln production, *A Trooper of Troop K* (1917), dealt with a massacre of black troops in the Army's 10th Cavalry during the American operation against Mexican bandits and revolutionaries in 1916. Although Johnson wanted the films to play to wider audiences, they were mostly booked in special locations at churches and schools and the few "colored only" theaters in America. By 1920 Lincoln had completed five films including *A Man's Duty* (1919), but it proved to be a minor business operation.

Johnson gave up his position with the company when he became a contract actor at Universal Pictures, and Smith assumed the company presidency. Smith accepted an offer for financial backing by a white investor, P. H. Updike. George Johnson, Noble's brother, supervised the marketing and promotion of what would become Lincoln's most ambitious, but last project. In October 1921, Lincoln began production on their film *By Right of Birth*. The script was written by Dora Mitchell based on a story by George Johnson. Johnson rented the Trinity Auditorium (now the Embassy Auditorium) in downtown Los Angeles for the evenings of June 22nd and 23rd, 1921. Although both evenings were sold out, the effort did little to improve the overall financial prospects of the

company. The Lincoln Motion Picture Company began its existence with great expectations that were stymied by a post war depression, an unreliable means of distribution, and a limited pool of capital. Although Lincoln only lasted until 1921, it ushered in a new subset of films, commonly referred to as race movies.[155]

Race movies featured all-black casts and were mostly produced by white-owned studios to appeal to black movie-goers; however, one young African American filmmaker succeeded where others failed. Oscar Micheaux began his filmmaking career after negotiations with the Lincoln Motion Picture Company to adapt his novel *The Homesteaders* to the screen broke down and he determined to make the film himself in 1919. He would go on to produce more than forty more in his long and distinguished career, including *Body and Soul* (1925), Paul Robeson's motion picture debut.[156]

The year 1927 ushered in a new era in the motion picture industry. The use of sound films now connected the silent staged scenes in movies to the voices of actors and the action of those scenes. The usage of blackface in sound films was a carry over from silent films, which often depicted African Americans in this way. Al Jolson epitomized the custom in the *Jazz Singer* (1927), the first feature length sound motion picture.

Within a few years, black-faced white actors were phased-out of films in favor of using African Americans to play black characters. However, African Americans were relegated to roles dealing almost entirely with light comedy, music, or dance. Therefore we see Stepin Fetchit, an African American actor getting star billing in a series of films based on his character known as "The Laziest Man in the World." Stepin Fetchit was the stage name of Lincoln Perry. His film persona and stage name have long been synonymous with the stereotype of the servile, shiftless, simple-minded black man in early 20th Century American film. By the mid-1930s, Perry was at his peak, and black leaders were putting pressure on Hollywood to rid the screen of the stereotype he was responsible for perpetuating. They believed the “Stepin Fetchit” character was keeping white America from viewing blacks as capable of joining the mainstream.

Several other actors and actresses who achieved near stardom in the 1930s and 40s included Clarence Muse, Nina McKinney, Ethel Waters, Lorenzo Tucker, Bill Robinson, Butterfly McQueen, Lena Horne, Dorothy Dandridge, and Louise Beavers. Of course, Hattie McDaniel won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for her performance as “Mammy” in *Gone with the Wind* (1939). Less well known, but equally noteworthy, was Louise Beavers who also played noticeable, yet stereotypical, maid roles in numerous films including *She Done Him Wrong* (1933) and *Bombshell* (1933), for which she received an Oscar nomination. She was one of the first actors to break through the traditional black role of servitude and/or comic relief by bringing more meaning and humanity to the screen, most notably in *Imitation of Life* (1934). Despite the fact that she had yet again been cast in the role of a housekeeper, *Imitation of Life* was the first major film where black characters had story lines equal to white characters. Beaver’s co-star in the film was Nina McKinney, who played her light-skinned daughter who tried to “pass as white.” At the age of sixteen, she was cast in King Vidor’s *Hallelujah* (1929). Based upon the strength of that performance she was given a five-year contract with MGM. But there were no roles for pretty black leading ladies, so she only appeared in two films before her contract expired.

While there were a few African Americans who had contracts with motion picture studios, there were many more who functioned as extras. In 1926 the leading motion picture studios formed the Central Casting Corporation of Hollywood. Central Casting employed several African Americans who were responsible for recruiting extras from the community. In the mid-1930s, extras were paid an average of $7.50 per day, while the scale for actors under studio contracts ranged from $25.00 per day to $500 per week.

The period of integration in the motion picture industry began in 1949 with the release of *Home of the Brave*, a film that dealt with racism and bigotry during World War II. Two other films that year involved light-skinned blacks "passing for white": *Lost Boundaries* and *Pinky*. These films were cutting edge in that they placed black and white actors in dramatic roles depicting situations centered around issues of black plight and race.

The role of African Americans in the motion picture industry was parallel to radio, and performers moved back and forth freely between the two mediums. In the early days of radio, a mixture of positive and negative stereotypes characterized African Americans. Radio shows such as *Beulah* and *Amos and Andy* featured black characters that were carefree, inarticulate, and inept. At the same time, broadcasts by bandleader Duke Ellington, singer Paul Robeson, and others exposed predominantly white radio audiences to the work of talented and refined black artists. In the 1950s black radio fueled the popularity of rock-and-roll and was instrumental in lowering cultural barriers between blacks and whites. Yet blacks did not make gains in radio management and ownership until the 1970s.

The career of Eddie Anderson exemplified the predicament of African Americans in radio. His talent as a singer, comedian, and dancer blossomed on the stage of the Apex Club on Central Avenue. He received his big break when he appeared as a Pullman porter on Jack Benny's radio program. They formed an instant rapport and Benny gave him a recurring part. Debuting in 1937, "Rochester" was the first black character with a regular role on a national radio program. While he played Benny's manservant, "Anderson often got the better of his boss," as historian R.J. Smith points out.[157] The fact that Anderson was cast as a black character was a major step forward from programs such as *Beulah* and *Amos and Andy* where white actors played blacks. Despite the fact that Anderson was cast in a stereotypical role, the black community held him in high esteem. Anderson was a fixture on Central Avenue and was elected honorary mayor, a position he took somewhat seriously.

Black-oriented programming also played a part in early radio. On November 3, 1929, white-owned radio station WSBC in Chicago premiered *The All-Negro Hour,* the first radio program to feature black performers exclusively. The program, hosted by former vaudeville performer Jack L. Cooper, featured music, comedy, and serial dramas. *The All-Negro Hour* went off the air in 1935, but Cooper continued to host and produce black-oriented programming for WSBC. One such program was *Search for Missing Persons*, a series launched in 1938 that reunited black migrants from the south with lost friends and relatives. His success along with a general trend toward expansion in the radio industry led to a rise of black-oriented radio stations following World War II.

The pioneers of black broadcasting in Los Angeles were Forest Perkins and Reverend Clayton Russell. Beginning in the late 1930s they would buy time on white-owned radio stations in fifteen, thirty, and sixty-minute increments and then sell commercial time to black-owned businesses that would run during the programs,

which typically had a religious orientation. In 1938, Russell produced a fifteen-minute church service on KFOX, which included announcers Joe Adams and Forest Perkins. In 1941, Russell's program was expanded to one hour and included gospel music.

KGFJ would become the dominant black radio station in L.A. through the 1960s. From 1941 to 1942 A.C. Bilbrew hosted the *Gold Hour* on KGFJ, which provided a source for church news and song for L.A.'s black community. Charlotta Bass, publisher of the *California Eagle,* also hosted a news discussion program.

Live radio broadcasts during the 1940s were commonplace. Local musicians like Sonny Criss, Dexter Gordon, Art Farmer, Hampton Hawes and numerous others could be heard on radio stations that had remote facilities. These broadcasts gave musicians a new audience by letting outsiders experience the music that was being created on and around Central Avenue. Numerous white disk jockeys like Al Jarvis made important contributions by giving black recording artists airtime on pop music stations. Joe Adams worked for Jarvis at KFWB and around 1943 began doing live in-studio broadcasts featuring Count Basie's Orchestra and Joe Liggins. He also worked at NBC Radio, acted, and hosted his own television show.

ENDNOTES

[1] Douglas Flamming, *Bound for Freedom: Black Los Angeles in Jim Crow America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 90.
[2] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 45-50.
[3] Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 15.
[4] For example, see Lonnie G. Bunche III, "A Past Not Necessarily Prologue: The Afro-American in Los Angeles," in Norman Klein and Martin Schiesl, eds., *20th Century Los Angeles: Power, Promotion and Social Conflict* (Claremont: Regina Books, 1990), 103.
[5] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 47. Flamming's characterization of this rate of growth, contrasts with Lawrence de Graaf, who claims the volume of black migration "increased sharply" during this period. See Lawrence B. de Graaf, "The City of Black Angels: Emergence of the Los Angeles Ghetto, 1890-1930," *Pacific Historical Review* 39 (1970), 330.
[6] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 15.
[7] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 308.
[8] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 2.
[9] Lawrence B. de Graaf, Kevin Mulroy and Quintard Taylor, eds., *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California* (Los Angeles & Seattle: Autry Museum and University of Washington Press, 2001), 21.
[10] Doug Flamming, *Bound for Freedom: Black Los Angeles in Jim Crow America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 118. Flamming refers to this area as the "Brick Block." Mark Wild refers to it as the "Five Points" area. Mark Wild, *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth Century Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 24.On race enterprises in the early twentieth century, also see Kenneth L. Kusmer, *A Ghetto Takes Shape:*

Black Cleveland, 1870-1930 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978); Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[11] Charlotta Bass, *Forty Years: Memories from the Pages of a Newspaper* (Los Angeles: California Eagle Press, 1960), 37, quoted in Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 25.

[12] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 93. The racial geography of Eastside-Westside is also described in Marc Weiss, *Rise of the Community Builders* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987); Dana Cuff, *The Provisional City: Los Angeles Stories of Architecture and Urbanism* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000); George Sanchez, "'What's Good for Boyle Heights Is Good for the Jews": Creating Multiracialism on the Eastside during the 1950s," *American Quarterly* 56 (2004), 634-635.

[13] Lonnie G. Bunche III, "A Past Not Necessarily Prologue: The Afro-American in Los Angeles," in Norman Klein and Martin Schiesl, eds., *20th Century Los Angeles: Power, Promotion and Social Conflict* (Claremont: Regina Books, 1990), 103; de Graaf, "City of Black Angels."

[14] Doug Flamming takes a more nuanced view of this era, seeing both progress and setbacks happening simultaneously. See Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 2-3, 60-61, 65-69.

[15] Josh Sides makes the point that Los Angeles' expansive open space in the early years minimized white hostility to early black dispersion (Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 16).

[16] This multiracial/ethnic quality helps define L.A. and California's distinctiveness in American history. See Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 93, 99-100; de Graaf, "City of Black Angels," 335-336; Wild, *Street Meeting*, 31-33. Flamming and de Graaf reach different conclusions about the significance of this multiethnic environment, in terms of characterizing the black community. De Graaf argues that a ghetto formed after 1920, Flamming doesn't consider it a ghetto, given this ethnic diversity.

[17] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 121-23. Flamming calls the Booker T. Washington Building "the community's architectural landmark" (292). See *California Eagle*, October 4, 1919, for a good list of black-owned businesses in Los Angeles at that time.

[18] There was also a small outlying cluster of black-owned homes at Central and 33rd Street. Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 98. Wild locates a cluster at Hooper and 33rd Street, likely citing J. Max Bond, "The Negro in Los Angeles" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1936), 70. Historians Doug Flamming and Mark Wild characterize the direction of black settlement slightly differently. Flamming sees it starting north and moving southward. Wild emphasizes the two nodes of settlement at 33rd and Hooper and the Furlong Tract, then writes: "From these footholds black Angelenos gradually moved into the intervening districts." So he is implying a northward movement. Wild, *Street Meetings*, 31.

[19] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 98.

[20] This compared to $3,000 to $4,000 in the West Jefferson area and $1,000 and less in the Watts and Furlong Tract area. Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 66, 411n41; de Graaf et.al., eds., *Seeking El Dorado*, 24. In de Graaf, "City of Black Angels," 343, he claims these were four- or five-*room* cottages.

[21] Bunche, "Past," 110. On blue-collar suburbia in Los Angeles, see Becky Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); on black suburbia nationally, see Andrew Wiese, *Place of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

[22] Wiese, *Place of Their Own*, 84.

[23] Wiese, *Place of Their Own*, 84-91.

[24] Du Bois quote from Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 51. On home ownership as part of L.A.'s image as a black promised land, see especially de Graaf, "City of Black Angels," 343-344; Bunche, "Past," 103; Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 51, 78-81. On black home ownership rates in LA, see de Graaf, "City of Black Angels," 343-344, 351; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 16; Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 306. On black home ownership rates nationally, see Wiese, *Places of Their Own*, 123.

[25] "Ghetto" refers to a severely restricted area, in which people of a particular ethnic or racial group are confined.
[26] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 16.
[27] Lawrence de Graaf argues this ushered in the beginning of the black ghetto in Los Angeles, although this is a point of some scholarly controversy. See note 7.
[28] de Graaf, "City of Black Angels," 346.
[29] de Graaf, "City of Black Angels," 349-50; Vivian, *Story of Negro*, 30.
[30] Ervin, *The Participation of the Negro in the Community Life of Los Angeles*, 12. Technically, they moved into the 62nd Assembly district, which hugged Central Avenue. Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 308. See map on page 307.
[31] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 306-308.
[32] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 98.
[33] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 45-46; Negro Digest cited in Sally Jane Sandoval, "Ghetto Growing Pains: The Impact of Negro Migration on the City of Los Angeles, 1940-1960" (M.A. Thesis, Cal State Fullerton, 1974), 21-22.
[34] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 44-46.
[35] Bond, "Negro in Los Angeles," 69; Leonard Pitt and Dale Pitt, *Los Angeles A to Z* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 163. Bond and the Pitts differ on the date of the Furlong Tract's origins: 1903 and 1905, respectively.
[36] The value of housing there was thus considerably cheaper than in other black enclaves, about $1,000 or less in the 1910s. On comparative house values, see note 11.
[37] For example, see Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 264.
[38] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 19, 109; Patricia Rae Adler, "Watts: From Suburb to Black Ghetto," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1977); Octavia Vivian, *The Story of the Negro in Los Angeles County* (Federal Writers Project, 1936), 29; Pitt and Pitt, *Los Angeles A to Z*, 537; Becky Nicolaides, "'Where the working man is welcomed': Working-Class Suburbs in Los Angeles, 1900-1940," *Pacific Historical Review* 68 (November 1999), 544-45.
[39] Sanchez, "'What's Good for Boyle Heights," 635.
[40] Sanchez, "'What's Good for Boyle Heights," 633-635; Bond, "Negro in Los Angeles," 68.
[41] Bond, "Negro in Los Angeles," 69.
[42] de Graaf, "City of Black Angels," 346-47; Bond, "Negro in Los Angeles," 69; Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 66, 68, 97, 290, 350; Sides, *LA City Limits*, 98-99. Sugar Hill was part of the landmark *Shelley v. Kraemer* Supreme Court case that struck down race restrictive covenants in 1948.
[43] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 238n3.
[44] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 372, 380; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 121-123, 191.
[45] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 126-129; Emily Straus, "The Making of the American School Crisis: Compton, California and the Death of the Suburban Dream" (Ph.D. dissertation, Brandeis, 2006).
[46] Pitt and Pitt, *Los Angeles A-Z*, 375; Wiese, *Places of Their Own*, 151; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 104-105.
[47] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 110, 130; Charlotte Brooks, *Alien Neighbors or Foreign Friends? Asian Americans and Housing in Twentieth Century California* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming).
[48] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 108-112, 125; Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 378 (quote). Flamming makes the point, too, that the demise of Central Avenue was especially exacerbated by the building of Interstate 10 in the 1960s, which cut right through the area.
[49] Bond, "Negro in Los Angeles," 69.
[50] Both of these cases had ties to the civil rights movement in Los Angeles.
[51] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 69; de Graaf, *Seeking El Dorado*, 25; Wendy Plotkin, "Restrictive Covenants," in David Goldfield, ed., *Encyclopedia of American Urban History*, vol. 2 (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2007), 681.

[52] de Graaf, "City of Black Angels," 337; Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 69, 221; Arnold R. Hirsch, "With or Without Jim Crow: Black Residential Segregation in the United States," in Arnold R. Hirsch and Raymond A. Mohl, eds., *Urban Policy in Twentieth Century America* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 75.
[53] Hirsch, "With or Without," 75; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 106; Flamming, *Bound for Freedom,* 219-221. A good example of "steering" is described in Sides, p. 87.
[54] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 69; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 107.
[55] Other criteria were also used to rank neighborhoods, such as class, the presence of industry, density, tax blight, etc. Race was a particularly salient category that determined an area's ranking.
[56] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 352-353; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 107-108; Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven*, 179.
[57] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 67.
[58] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 101. These incidents are described in numerous sources.
[59] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 70-78; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 21-26; de Graaf, "City of Black Angels," 341-343. In 1920, there were 200 black professional men. Black-owned manufacturing enterprises were rare. One was the Hefflin Manufacturing Company which manufactured furniture, caskets, and toys. Two addresses were identified for this company: 2330 Santa Ana Boulevard, at 111th Street, and 3429 Central Avenue. *Western Progress: A Pictorial Story of Economic and Social Advancement in Los Angeles, California* (Los Angeles: Tenette & Bratton, 1929) 48-49 intervening pages; Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 253.
[60] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 296; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 27.
[61] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 58-59.
[62] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 57-88, 94.
[63] Sides, *L.A. City Limits,* 88-91.
[64] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 78. Wiese makes the same point in *Places of Their Own*.
[65] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 70, 131-32.
[66] The total of 40,000 card-carrying union members in L.A. represented only 8 percent of the total workforce, illustrating the power of the open shop at this time. Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 247.
[67] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 247-253.
[68] Sides, *L.A. City Limits,* 64-88.
[69] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 103-104.
[70] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 30.
[71] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 104.
[72] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 104-106.
[73] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 27, 111, 119, 131.
[74] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 26-33, 104-109; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 148.
[75] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 26-33, 104-109; Bass, *Forty Years*; http://www.pbs.org/blackpress/news_bios/ca_eagle.html.
[76] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 106-107.
[77] The end date is estimated from the listing on WorldCat, which is not wholly reliable since it lists various contradictory dates of the run. On one listing, it shows 1949 as the possible end date.
[78] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 303.
[79] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 30.
[80] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 303; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 30; *Sentinel 50*, April 14, 1983, 1.
[81] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 110.

[82] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 109-110; Michael E. Engh, S.J. "Practically Every Religion Being Represented," in Tom Sitton and William Deverell, eds., *Metropolis in the Making: Los Angeles in the 1920s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 201-202.
[83] Engh, "Practically Every Religion," 205.
[84] de Graaf and Taylor, "Introduction" in *Seeking El Dorado*, 20.
[85] Quote from Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 113.
[86] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 24-25, 113-14. In 1999, First AME's membership was 17,000, and the church ran a wide array of social outreach programs. It continues to represent a leading institution of in the black community. See de Graaf and Taylor, "Introduction" in *Seeking El Dorado*, 52.
[87] Engh, "Practically Every Religion," 205-206.
[88] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 111-112; *Sentinel 50*, April 14, 1983,105.
[89] E. Frederick Anderson, *The Development of Leadership and Organization Building in the Black Community of Los Angeles From 1900 through World War II* (Century 21 Publications, 1980), 82.
[90] Anderson, *The Development of Leadership*, 81-83; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 52; Engh, "A Multiplicity and Diversity of Faiths: Religion's Impact on Los Angeles and the Urban West, 1890-1940," *Western Historical Quarterly* 28 (Winter 1997), 466.
[91] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 111.
[92] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 115.
[93] Bond, "Negro in Los Angeles," 202-204. In her study of Chicago, Liz Cohen argues that the black church was actually a fragmenting force in the black community, exacerbating schisms by class, especially. "Church membership served as an index to social and economic status, and membership change became part of upward mobility" (*Making a New Deal*, 148). The same might be concluded for Los Angeles, although historians have yet to show this through systematic research.
[94] Bass, *Forty Years*, 21, 13, quoted in Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 116.
[95] Bond, "Negro in Los Angeles," 219.
[96] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 117.
[97] Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, 148.
[98] Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, 149.
[99] Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, 149-50.
[100] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 118-119.
[101] Quoted in Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 120.
[102] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 120-123; *California Eagle*, October 4, 1919.
[103] *Western Progress: A Pictorial Story of Economic and Social Advancement in Los Angeles, California* (Los Angeles: Tenette & Bratton, 1929), 23.
[104] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 229.
[105] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 252.
[106] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 253-258; de Graaf et. al., eds., *Seeking El Dorado,* 22.
[107] *Flash Magazine*, 9 February 1929, p. 21.
[108] *Flash Magazine*, 1 June 1929, p. 10.
[109] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 281-2, 284-287. Du Bois quote at p. 287.
[110] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom,* 127.
[111] Bunch, *The Los Angeles Black Community, 1781-1940.* America's Black Heritage: An Exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, December 3, 1969-February 1970.
[112] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom,* 160.
[113] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom,* 175.

[114] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom,* 318.
[115] Flamming *Bound for Freedom*, 320-329, 350.
[116] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 154.
[117] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 152.
[118] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 157.
[119] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom,* 192.
[120] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom,* 129-135.
[121] Schiesl, 63-65
[122] Bunch, *Black Angelenos,* 26.
[123] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom,* 244-47.
[124] Bond, "Negro in Los Angeles," 249.
[125] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom,* 143.
[126] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom,* 216.
[127] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom,* 291
[128] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom,* 337.
[129] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 146.
[130] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 148-150.
[131] Bond, "Negro in Los Angeles," 225-220.
[132] Bunch, *Black Angelenos*, 34.
[133] Flamming, 69; de Graaf, *Seeking El Dorado*, 25.
[134] de Graaf, "City of Black Angels," 346-47; Bond, "Negro in Los Angeles," 69; Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 66, 68, 97, 290, 350; Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 98-99. Sugar Hill was part of the landmark *Shelley v. Kraemer* case that struck down race restrictive covenants in 1948.
[135] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 104-106.
[136] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 159.
[137] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 161.
[138] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 148.
[139] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 137.
[140] Alternatively, church choirs and gospel music were the earliest musical influences for many of the prominent musicians who were born and raised in Los Angeles including Hampton Hawes and Charles Mingus.
[141] Reed, *The Black Music History of Los Angeles*, p. 397.
[142] Reed, *The Black Music History of Los Angeles*, p. 398.
[143] www.africanamericanspirituals.com
[144] Cox, *Central Avenue: Its Rise and Fall*, 83.
[145] Cox, *Central Avenue: Its Rise and Fall*, 41.
[146] Reed, *The Black Music History of Los Angeles*, p. 391.
[147] Cox, in *Seeking El Dorado*, 252.
[148] Cox, *Central Avenue: Its Rise and Fall*, 14.
[149] Cox, *Central Avenue: Its Rise and Fall*, 19.
[150] Cox, *Central Avenue: Its Rise and Fall*, 35.
[151] For a full discussion of Florence Cole Talbert's life and music see Patricia Turner's "Our Divine Florence."
[152] Cox, *Central Avenue: Its Rise and Fall*, 13.
[153] Daniels, "Los Angeles' Jazz Roots," 50-51.
[154] Cripps, *Slow Fade to Black*, 41-69; Lupack, *Literary Adaptations in Black American Cinema*, 25-33.

[155] Lupack, *Literary Adaptations in Black American Cinema*,75-80.
[156] The Micheaux Film and Book Company, was based in Chicago and later New York.
[157] Smith, *The Great Black Way*, 17.

F. ASSSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

A. Churches

Description – The oldest black churches in Los Angeles have had several homes. The earliest churches met in the homes of congregants or rooms in commercial buildings until enough funds could be raised for dedicated buildings. The Second Baptist Church constructed a two-story Gothic Revival style church out of bricks at 740 Maple Avenue in 1892. In a few short years the congregation had outgrown the building and purchased property on Paloma Avenue, which was home to several other black churches. By the time the Second Baptist Church had enough funds to build a new edifice, they decided it should be located further south and secured a site at Griffith Avenue and 24th Street. In 1926, they commissioned Paul Williams, a talented young African American architect, to design their new building, which still stands at 2412 Griffith Avenue. It is a locally designated landmark and a fine example of Lombardy Romanesque Revival style architecture. In 1903, the First AME Church had constructed an impressive Gothic Revival style church at 801 S. Towne Avenue. This building was declared a local landmark in 1972, but was destroyed by fire the following year. The congregation had already moved into a new building designed by Paul Williams at 2207 S. Harvard Boulevard in the West Adams area.

The City Directories document the growth and location of black churches in Los Angeles because the race or ethnicity of congregations was noted in parenthesis: (Colored), (Armenian), (Japanese), etc. By 1916 there were twenty black churches in the city, all of which were located near Central Avenue between downtown Los Angeles and the Furlong Tract. The only exception was one church in the West Temple district. By 1921, there were twenty-nine churches. Once again, they were located on the side streets along the Central Avenue corridor, particularly Hooper and Paloma Avenues. One church in Boyle Heights and another in West Adams were the only two exceptions. Generally speaking, the buildings associated with these early 20th century congregations were wood-framed structures sheathed in clapboard or shingles. They often included bell towers at the intersection of steeply gabled roofs. Pointed arched windows were filled with stained glass, if the congregations could afford it. While many of these church buildings remain, most have been substantially altered. One of the very few remaining that still retains its original wood cladding is located at 1001 E. 27th Street. Churches from the 1930s and 1940s tended to exhibit more Classical and Colonial Revival style features with symmetrically organized facades divided by pilasters and monumental pediments over entrances, or in the case of Louella Beaver's Spiritual Temple, across entire façades.

Significance - Churches associated with the history of African Americans in Los Angeles may qualify for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at the local level. Churches are significant in the context of community development if they were the home of a socially active congregation like First AME and Second Baptist. No single institution was of greater importance to the social history of African Americans than the church. Founding churches gave blacks some of their first experiences in organizing their own institutions after emancipation. The first African American church organized in Los Angeles was in 1872, First AME. In 1885, the Second Baptist Church was organized. Methodist and Baptist continued to be the most prevalent denominations among African Americans as members left to form their own congregations. First African Zion Methodist Episcopal Church, Phillips Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church, New Hope Baptist Church, Hamilton

Methodist Episcopal Church, Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church, and The Peoples Independent Church of Christ were some of the congregations that formed during this period. These early churches were the locations of important political meetings and social gatherings. Churches played a major role in stressing political involvement and the importance of supporting local individuals by providing scholarships. For example, the L.A. Forum was founded in 1903 in the First AME Church.

Churches are also significant in the context of entertainment and culture if they played an important role in the development of gospel and choral music, such as The People's Independent Church of Christ. By the early 1940s, it became the most popular center for the arts and culture in the community. Other churches with influential choirs and musical directors included St. Paul Baptist Church, Victory Baptist Church, and Zion Hill Baptist Church.

Registration Requirements - To meet eligibility requirements for inclusion in the National Register, religious properties must first satisfy Criteria Consideration A. To satisfy Criteria Consideration A, religious properties must derive their primary significance from architectural distinction or historical importance. A religious property must also meet either Criterion A or C, or both. To meet Criterion A, religious properties should be reflective of the growth of the African American population in Los Angeles, first in downtown, then mostly south along Central Avenue, and later west along Jefferson Boulevard. The significance of the congregation is also an important factor to consider when determining eligibility under Criterion A. To be eligible under Criterion A, the congregation must have played a major role in the political, social, or cultural history of the community. It is not necessary for the congregation to have constructed the building, but only to have occupied it as their primary place of worship during the period of significance. Many black congregations adopted church buildings constructed for other, usually white, congregations that moved to other parts of the city. This trend represents the changing demographics of neighborhoods such as the Central Avenue corridor and the West Adams area. For example, the First AME Zion Church moved into what was a Presbyterian church in the West Adams area in 1968. The properties will be primarily traditional church buildings, but may include properties constructed as dwellings or commercial buildings as well. The historic location, setting, design, feeling, and association must be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Churches may be modest in their workmanship and materials due to the limited financial resources of most congregations. The application of newer materials, such as stucco or stone, on top of original materials should not automatically exclude the building from eligibility, especially if the alteration occurred during the period of significance and if the essential form and other major design features are present. Additions and related buildings such as parsonages, Sunday school buildings, and social halls should also be evaluated and included in nominations if they were present during the period of significance and retain their integrity.

B. Residences and Residential Neighborhoods

Description - The residences of the pioneering black families of Los Angeles were located in downtown and have all been demolished. A public art project and pocket park commemorates the home site of Biddy Mason, the first black woman to own property in the city. Residential neighborhoods from the period of significance are generally located in the Central Avenue corridor, or the Watts, West Jefferson, West Adams, or Pacoima areas.

Architecturally, the buildings are of wood-framed construction and reflect the styles popular in Los Angeles during the first half of the 20th century. The single-family residential buildings along the Central Avenue corridor were constructed primarily between 1895 and 1920. They are mostly one or two stories in height with hipped or gabled roofs, wood-framed windows, and clapboard exteriors. Most can be described simply as turn of the century cottages, while others are more substantial in size and decoration with varying degrees of Victorian and Classical Revival elements. A particularly fine collection of these types of residential buildings remains on 27th and 28th Streets between Central and Griffith Avenues. Moving south along the Central Avenue corridor, more Craftsman style residences were constructed. These buildings exhibit the typical features of the style with low-pitched roofs, overhanging eaves, wide porches, casement windows, as well as arroyo stone and brick foundations, chimneys, and porch columns. The best collection of Craftsman style residences is located on the 600 and 700 blocks of E. 52nd Place.

The residential buildings in the West Jefferson and West Adams areas were constructed slightly later than those along the Central Avenue corridor, 1905 through 1930, and therefore more Period Revival styles are present. These areas are generally occupied, however, by modest Craftsman style bungalows. In the late 1940s, eminent and professional African Americans moved into the Sugar Hill and Lafayette Square neighborhoods. Sugar Hill was developed in the 1910s with stately two-story Craftsman style houses. Although early Period Revival styles such as Italian Renaissance, Mission, and English Tudor are also present. During the 1920s Lafayette Square was developed with elegant two-story Period Revival styles homes.

Significance – Residential buildings associated with the history of African Americans in Los Angeles may qualify for listing in the National Register at the local level separately or collectively as historic districts. Individual single-family residences will most likely fall under Criterion B for their association with African Americans of historic significance. For example, the childhood home of Ralph Bunch at 1221 E. 40th Place is a designated National Historic Landmark. Other known examples are the homes of William Grant Still at 1242 Victoria Avenue, Paul Williams at 1690 Victoria Avenue, Ivie Anderson at 724 E. 52ndPlace, and George Beavers at 814 E. 31st Street. Single-family residences can also be significant in the context of civic engagement if they represent the battle for racial integration. Businessman Norman Houston helped break the color barrier by purchasing the home at 2211 S. Hobart Boulevard in the restricted West Adams area.

Historic districts that represent the settlement patterns of the African American population in Los Angeles during the period of significance may be eligible under Criterion A for several reasons. One of the most powerful factors that first attracted African Americans to Los Angeles was the possibility of homeownership. Los Angeles had one of the highest rates of homeownership of any major American city. In 1910, forty percent of African Americans in Los Angeles County owned their homes. By the 1920s, however, racially restrictive housing covenants designed to protect and maintain white neighborhoods were commonplace, thereby creating all white and racially mixed neighborhoods. This phenomenon was very different from East Coast and Midwestern cities that created ethnic ghettos by confining blacks and other minorities to their own particular neighborhoods. Prior to World War II, African Americans lived in racially mixed neighborhoods with people of Mexican and Japanese ancestry, and occasionally Jewish people. It was not until the Supreme Court ruled against restrictive housing

covenants in 1948 that non-whites could purchase homes in the other neighborhoods, although it took another decade for the racial geography of Los Angeles to change.

Primarily residential neighborhoods are significant in the context of early settlement if they contain important institutions such as clubs and churches or businesses, thereby reflecting the complexity and nuisances of the black community. 27th and 28th Streets between Central and Griffith Avenues is a case in point. It is a primarily residential neighborhood that also includes two church buildings that housed black congregations and the 28th Street YMCA. Residential neighborhoods are also significant in the context of early settlement if they were the home of several African Americans of historic significance. Such districts provide a greater understand of the daily lives of such individuals. For example, 600 and 700 blocks of E. 52nd Place were the home of singer and businesswoman Ivie Anderson; publishers and civil rights activists Joseph and Charlotta Bass; and politician Gilbert Lindsay. Likewise, Lafayette Square was the home of architect Paul Williams; composer William Grant Still; and businessman Paul Hudson. Residential neighborhoods are significant in the context of civic engagement if they were the subjects of a major battle for integration, such as the Sugar Hill area of West Adams.

Registration Requirements – Residential buildings may be eligible under Criterion A or B. To be eligible under Criterion A, historic districts must be located in one of the primary areas of settlement by African Americans during the period of significance (prior to 1958). Historic districts should reflect the period of time they were settled and occupied by African Americans. While they may be exclusively comprised of residential buildings, they may also include other property types important to the community such as churches, schools, club buildings, and commercial buildings. Residential neighborhoods in Los Angeles were rarely the exclusive dominion of African Americans. As such, mixed race neighborhoods that were predominately African American can be considered for listing under this Multiple Property Documentation Form. The evaluation of integrity should focus on the totality and overall characteristics of the historic district, not the individual contributing buildings. Additions and alterations should respect the design, materials, and scale of the original portion of the contributing buildings.

To be eligible for listing under Criterion B, single-family residences must be associated with African Americans who provided leadership within the community or who excelled in some arena such as music or literature. The accomplishments of these individuals should have occurred primarily during the period of significance. The childhood home of a significant individual could be eligible if there are no other properties associated with them still standing, or if their youth was particularly influential in their life. Properties associated with Los Angeles citizens of other races who have been instrumental in furthering opportunities for the African American community should also be considered eligible. Single-family residences should retain their integrity from the period of time the significant individual lived there. The historic location, setting, design, feeling, and association must be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Buildings with reversible alterations to the exterior such as enclosed porches and replaced windows should not be automatically excluded from consideration given the limited number of resources remaining. However, buildings originally sheathed in wood such as shingle or clapboard that have been stuccoed should not be considered eligible.

C. Schools

Description - The first dedicated public schoolhouse in Los Angeles was constructed in 1855 at the corner of 2nd and Spring Streets. A second school opened shortly thereafter on N. Main Street. Each was two stories in height and constructed of brick. The school buildings that were constructed during the later part of the 19th and early part of the 20th century followed this same general format, only larger and somewhat more formal. The Classical Revival was especially favored with impressive porticos and colossal columns proclaiming the importance attached to education. Most of these buildings fell victim to the 1933 Long Beach Earthquake. The State passed the Field Act in response to the public outcry over the vulnerability of school buildings to earthquake damage. Severely damaged schools were demolished, while others were rehabilitated and reinforced. Most of the schools reconstructed exhibit the mix of classicism and streamlining referred to as P.W.A. Moderne. Public schools from the period of significance are generally located in the Central Avenue corridor, or the Watts, West Jefferson, or West Adams areas. They include the Holmes Avenue Elementary School, 9th Street Elementary School, 20th Street Elementary School, 28th Street Elementary School, Wadsworth Avenue Elementary School (formerly 35th Street School), McKinley Avenue Elementary School, Hooper Avenue Elementary School, Carver Middle School (formerly McKinley Junior High School), and Jefferson High School. Lafayette Junior High School was the other middle school in the area. The building still stands, but the school has been closed.

Significance - Schools associated with the history of African Americans in Los Angeles may qualify for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at the local level. California joined the Union in 1850. During the first legislative session, statutes were enacted that denied African Americans the right to receive a public education, among other things. Between 1872 and 1879, black children gained some access to a public education, but the law proscribing their right to a public education was not repealed until 1880. At this point in time the population of African Americans in Los Angeles was approximately 102, out of a total population of 11,000. The number of school age black children is unknown.

Schools are significant in the context of early settlement if they played an important role in attracting African Americans to a particular neighborhood, such as the Holmes Avenue Elementary School. To the black community, education represented a means toward upward mobility. Access to educational opportunities was a powerful factor in attracting African Americans to Los Angeles. By 1910, the African American population of Los Angeles had grown to 7,599 and began to coalesce in the area south of downtown. Many settled in the Furlong Tract where black families could buy lots for $750 dollars. Businesses and services needed by the community of 200 homes opened, including three churches and a school. After many of the homes were damaged in the 1933 Long Beach Earthquake, families began to leave the neighborhood. The remaining houses were torn down in 1942 and the Pueblo Del Rio housing project was built to house defense industry workers. All that remains of the original Furlong Tract is the Holmes Avenue Elementary School. Built as the 51st Street School in 1910, it was rebuilt after a fire in 1922 and reopened as the Holmes Avenue Elementary School.

Public schools in Los Angeles were not segregated by law, but rather racial geography and the policies of the school district. Schools are significant in the context of civic engagement if they reflect the community's struggle for equal access to education or equal access to employment opportunities in the field of education. Holmes

Avenue Elementary School also exemplifies this context. While mainly African American children attended the school, the principals and teachers were exclusively white. In 1911, Bessie Burke joined the staff. She was the first African American teacher in the Los Angeles public school system. By 1918, she was promoted to principal of the school, another first for her race.

Schools often served as the educational and social focal point for their respective communities. This was particularly true of high schools that also had extracurricular activities such as athletic and music programs. Most blacks attended either Jefferson or Jordan High Schools, although they were racially mixed through the late 1950s. Many of the most distinguished African Americans who grew up in Los Angeles, such as Ralph Bunche, Alvin Ailey, Augustus Hawkins, and Dorothy Dandridge, graduated from Jefferson High School. The music program at Jefferson High School was particularly noteworthy for the number of famous jazz musicians it produced including Don Cherry, Dexter Gordon, Art Farmer, Ernie Royal, Jackie Kelso, Ginger Smock, Bill Douglass, O.C. Smith, Roy Ayers, and Horace Tapscott. As such, Jefferson High School is significant in the context of entertainment and culture for the role it played in the development of West Coast jazz music.

Registration Requirements - To be eligible under Criterion A, schools must have been constructed during the period of significance (prior to 1958); and must have contributed to the settlement of the neighborhood in which they are located; represent the community's struggle for equal access to education or employment opportunities in the field of education, or must be strongly associated with a large number of distinguished individuals in the community. A school that was attended by an African American who is considered a historic personage would not be considered eligible under Criterion B, because it is highly unlikely that it would reflect the person's life work. However, a school such as Jefferson attended by numerous African Americans who are considered historic personages may be eligible under Criterion A for the cumulative importance of those individuals in the community. Schools should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their original use and character from the period of significance. The entire campus should be evaluated, and if there are multiple buildings with integrity remaining from the period of significance, consideration should be given to nominating them as an historic district. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association must be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. The mid-1930s may be considered the baseline for evaluating the integrity of design, materials, and workmanship even for much older schools as virtually every school in Los Angeles was rehabilitated after 1933.

D. Fire Stations

Description - When the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) was formed in 1886 it had four fire stations to protect 50,000 residents in thirty square miles. By 1911, LAFD had thirty-two fire stations for a population of over 300,000. In that year the last of the fire stations designed for horse-drawn engines were constructed. These older fire stations tended to be long and narrow, two-story, un-reinforced masonry buildings. On the ground floor there was one large opening with double doors for the engine and stables, and upstairs there were living quarters for the firemen. Larger stations in more intensely developed areas such as Hollywood were larger because they had to accommodate more equipment and employees. Stations in more suburban settings tended to be smaller and blended into the residential neighborhoods they were situated. The oldest fire station still standing is the Plaza Firehouse in El Pueblo.

Fire stations associated African Americans from the period of significance are generally located in the Central Avenue corridor There are three fire stations along the Central Avenue corridor. Stylistically, they followed the larger architectural trends in the region. Constructed in 1913, Fire Station #30 is the oldest and reflects a combination of Beaux Art and Prairie styles. Fire Station #21 exhibits the Streamline Moderne styling from the 1930s. The International Style Fire Station #14 was constructed in 1949.

Significance - Fire stations associated with the history of African Americans in Los Angeles may qualify for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at the local level. Fire stations are significant in the context of civic engagement if they are strongly associated with the social history of the African American communities in which they are located, like Fire Stations #14 and #30. They are also significant if they reflect a particular milestone in the community's struggle for equal access to employment, like Fire Station #46. All-black fire stations were simultaneous representations of racial segregation and sources of community pride. The first African American member of the LAFD, Sam Haskins, was hired in 1888. Born a slave in Virginia, he was assigned to Engine Company #4. He died in the line of duty in 1895. George Bright became the second black fireman in Los Angeles when he was hired in 1897. By 1902, he had attained the rank of lieutenant and the department was faced with a dilemma – segregate crews or allow a black man to supervise white men. In 1924, the department decided to assign all of the black firefighters in the city to Fire Station #30 under Bright's supervision. As more blacks joined the department, Fire Station #30 became crowded. In 1936, Fire Station #14 was open to black firemen (the building was replaced in 1949). Civil service regulations were regularly violated to maintain the segregated system and retain captain as the highest rank open to African Americans. By 1953, the NAACP was pressing for equality in hiring, transfers, and promotions in LAFD. An alternative put forth to integration was to convert Fire Stations #20 and #21 to all-black companies to open up promotional opportunities. The idea, however, was rejected in favor of full integration. African American members of the Los Angeles County and City Fire Departments founded the Stentorians organization in 1954. Their purpose was to band together to address discrimination. In 1956, all the fire stations were finally integrated, but not without conflict. The Stentorians occupy as their office and training facility Fire Station #46, one of the very first stations integrated.

Registration Requirements - To be eligible under Criterion A, fire stations must have been constructed during the period of significance (prior to 1958) and need to be representative of the community's struggle for equal access to employment - for better or worse. While Fire Station #21 is located in the Central Avenue corridor, it is not strongly associated with the African American community and is therefore ineligible under this Multiple Property Documentation Form. Fire stations should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their original use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, design, materials, feeling, and association must be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Alterations to the setting are acceptable and assumed, as the neighborhoods in which the older fire stations are located have changed over time. Furthermore, some of the older fire stations have been decommissioned and changed use, which have required additional alterations. The replacement of the doors for the engines is a common alteration amongst older fire stations and should be expected.

E. Theaters

Description - The American movie theater developed during the first half of the 20th century. During this time, theaters became centerpieces of major commercial streets across the American landscape. The first movie theaters in Los Angeles were located downtown along Broadway and had large prominent marquees, such as "The Million Dollar Theater." In the 1920s and 1930s, studios began marketing their films through unique and exotic theater architecture, such as the Egyptian, Mayan, and Chinese Theaters. Theaters associated with African Americans from the period of significance are located primarily along Central Avenue, the cultural and commercial strip for the community. There were at least five theaters along Central Avenue: the Lincoln, Globe, Tivoli, Angelus, and Hub. Constructed in 1926, the Lincoln Theater was the largest. Embellished with Moorish features such as scalloped archways and ceramic tile work, it is a reflection of the general architectural trend towards the unique and exotic in theater design. The Globe Theater opened in 1911 with a capacity of 700.The theater still stands, but has been substantially altered. The Tivoli, Angelus, and Hub Theaters have been demolished. Nick Stewart and his wife Edna founded the Ebony Showcase Theater in 1950 as a beacon for black artists and audiences of the period. It occupied a pre-existing neighborhood movie theater in the West Adams area. The theater closed in 1996 and was demolished in 1998 to make way for the Nate Holden Performing Arts Center.

Significance – Theaters associated with the history of African Americans in Los Angeles may qualify for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at the local level. Theaters are significant in the context of entertainment and culture if they are strongly associated with the cultural history of the African American communities in which they are located, like the Lincoln Theater. Such theaters not only showcased African American performers, but also provided entertainment venues, free of racial inequality, to the local community. African Americans were either excluded from theaters in downtown Los Angeles, or relegated to "colored only" seating sections. As a result, theaters granting equal access to African Americans were one of the many commercial enterprises that developed along Central Avenue. In terms of film, they exhibited the standard Hollywood productions, but featured all-black films when available. The custom along Central Avenue was to exaggerate the billing of black supporting cast members at the expense of the white leading actors.

The largest of these was the Lincoln Theater at 2300 S. Central Avenue. In addition to the Lincoln, the Florence Mills and Tivoli were a few of the somewhat accepted entertainment venues in Los Angeles where blacks and whites mixed during a time of segregation. Although not as elaborate as and much smaller than the Lincoln, the Globe and Tivoli were also important venues of entertainment for the African American community during the "golden age" of Central Avenue. By 1932, the name of the Globe Theater had been changed to honor Florence Mills, the celebrated black stage star who died at a tragically young age in 1927. The building still stands, but has been severely altered. The Tivoli Theater was also renamed in honor of a famous black performer, Bill "Bojangles" Robinson. As previously stated, it has been demolished.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under Criterion A, theaters must have been constructed during the period of significance (prior to 1958) and must have played a key role in the cultural history of the African American by providing entertainment free of racial inequality to the community and by showcasing black

performers. Theaters should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their original use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, design, materials, feeling, and association must be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. As most theaters are located on major commercial corridors and occupy their entire legal lots, setting is probably not an important factor of integrity. Many older single screen theaters have been converted to churches or other uses, so some interior modifications are expected. However, primary interior spaces associated with theater uses such as vestibules, lobbies, and auditoriums should remain as readable spaces.

F. Club Buildings

Description - In the 1890s and following decades, the surge of immigration to Los Angeles contributed to the development of the African American community along the Central Avenue corridor. During this time, numerous fraternal and social clubs as well as charitable and mutual aid organizations were created to support the newly arrived immigrants as well as the entire African American community. In the early years, African American clubs did not have dedicated buildings. The community was small and generally located downtown. Meetings and events were held in residences, churches, or rented spaces. Numerous clubs and lodges rented Odd Fellows Hall at 7th and Wall Streets, as well as the upper floor of Scott Hall, which contained a large ballroom. Scott Hall was located on Central Avenue around 6th Street. Both buildings have been demolished. By the 1920s, several clubs and organizations constructed official buildings. The Prince Hall Masonic Temple, located at 1050 E. 50th Street, was constructed in 1924. Stylistically, the Masonic Temple is a two-story vernacular brick building. One of the more prominent buildings associated with African American social organizations is the 28th Street YMCA. Constructed in 1926 and designed by Paul Williams, the building is representative of the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Williams also designed the Golden State Lodge for the Order of the Elks in 1930. It has since been demolished. The Sojourner Truth Home represents a sub-type among club buildings. It is not a social hall with large meeting spaces, but rather appeared and functioned more like a residential building. It was constructed in 1913 in the Mission Revival style; however, it has been seriously altered.

Significance - The club buildings associated with the history of African Americans in Los Angeles may qualify for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at the local level. Club buildings are significant in the context of civic engagement if they were the home of an important African American club or organization, like the Prince Hall Masons Temple or the 28th Street YMCA. Clubs and organizations played a key role in the social and political history of black Angelenos. While some clubs were organized for purely social purposes, others worked to improve the lives of African Americans through charitable and political activities. Mutual aid organizations such as the L.A. Forum, the Sojourner Truth Industrial Club, the Women's Day Nursery Association and the local branch of the NAACP formed during the early 20th century. The YMCA building, at 28th Street, was the site of political meetings, social gatherings, and a leading organization working with African American youth in Los Angeles. Social clubs, such as the Silver Fox Club and the Just for Fun Club were formed during the 1920s, as was a literary group, the Phys-Art-Lit-Mo Club. The Order of Odd Fellows, Order of the Eastern Star, Order of Elks, and Prince Hall Masons were "colored chapters" of national fraternal orders, while the Twelve Knights and Daughters of Tabor were founded by African Americans. The 1921 City Directory

documents no less than thirty-three chapters of such fraternal order. These orders promoted morality, charity, and community service among its membership.

Registration Requirements - To be eligible under Criterion A, club buildings must have been constructed during the period of significance (prior to 1958) and need to be strongly associated with the social and political history of the African American community. Club buildings should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their original use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, design, feeling, and association must be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Club buildings may be modest in their workmanship and materials due to the limited financial resources of most organizations. Primary interior spaces associated with club buildings such as social halls and large meeting rooms should remain as readable spaces.

G. Commercial Buildings

Description – By 1910, Central Avenue had become the major thoroughfare for black Los Angeles, with a cluster of black-owned businesses between 8th and 12th Streets. Although there are a small number of historic photographs of these blocks, the few that exist, along with Sanborn maps, indicate that one- to three-story commercial brick vernacular buildings occupied them. Virtually all of these buildings were demolished as the area transitioned to industrial uses. In the late 1920s, the commercial core of the black community had moved to the intersection of 41st Street. The Dunbar Hotel, Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Building, and the Hudson-Liddell Building were located at this junction. The Dunbar Hotel and the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Building are both listed in the National Register, while the Hudson-Liddell Building was demolished after the Northridge Earthquake.

While most of the commercial buildings during this period could still be described as commercial brick vernacular, there were several that were more high-styled and reflected the Period Revival architectural trends. Particularly popular among the Period Revival styles was the Spanish Colonial Revival. The Angelus Funeral Home, designed by Paul Williams in 1934, successfully combines the unlikely pairing of the Spanish Colonial Revival with the Georgian Revival. After World War II, several of the larger businesses relocated to the West Jefferson and West Adams areas. These included the Angelus Funeral Home, the Los Angeles Sentinel, and the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company. Commercial buildings remaining from the period of significance housed a variety of businesses, however, few remain. They include hotels, funeral homes, and financial institutions. The numerous jazz clubs that once dominated Central Avenue have been mostly demolished or severely altered. Jack's Basket Room at 3219 S. Central Avenue is a rare survivor.

Significance - The commercial buildings associated with the history of African Americans in Los Angeles may qualify for listing in the National Register under Criterion A at the local level. Commercial buildings are significant in the context of community development if they were the homes of important black-owned businesses or professionals such as the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company and the Angelus Funeral Home. As African Americans were excluded from employment in many sectors of the economy out of racial prejudice, they were forced to open their own businesses as a means of employment. The people who ran these businesses often emerged as community leaders. People of color were often denied services at hotels, restaurants,

retail stores, mortuaries, insurance companies, dentist and doctors' offices, etc. Black entrepreneurs and professionals filled the need by founding these and other businesses to serve the growing community. Black-owned businesses were a great source of pride for the community. Successful black-owned enterprises such as the Angelus Funeral Home, Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company, Liberty Savings and Loan, and Broadway Federal Savings and Loan were also thought to validate the African American community as a whole in the eyes of Los Angeles.

Registration Requirements - To be eligible under Criterion A, commercial buildings must have been constructed during the period of significance (prior to 1958) and need to be strongly associated with the commercial and professional development of the African American community. Buildings need not have been constructed by African Americans to be eligible, if they were occupied by important black-owned enterprises for a significant period of time. However, buildings constructed by African Americans are more important than those that were not. Commercial buildings should retain sufficient integrity to illustrate their original use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, design, feeling, workmanship, materials, and association must be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Street-facing elevations should retain most of their major design features. The replacement of storefronts is a common alteration found in early 20th century commercial buildings and should be expected. Therefore missing storefronts should not automatically exclude buildings from eligibility.

G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The geographical area covered by this Multiple Property Documentation Form is the City of Los Angeles, California; however known and potential historic resources associated with African Americans are mostly located in three Community Plan Areas: Southeast Los Angeles, South Los Angeles, and West Adams/Leimert Park/Baldwin Hills.

H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFIATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The preparation of this Multiple Property Documentation Form was coordinated by Teresa Grimes and involved the participation of a number of individuals and organizations. Ms. Grimes is the Senior Architectural Historian at Christopher A. Joseph & Associates. The project team included Becky Nicolaides Ph.D, Joseph Fantone, and Josh Sides Ph.D. Dr. Nicolaides is the author of *My Blue Heaven: Life in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965*. She is currently an Adjunct Professor of History at UCLA. Dr. Nicolaides researched and wrote portions of the statement of historic contexts. Mr. Fantone functioned as a research assistant, assisted in conducting the fieldwork, and contributed to the analysis of property types. Dr. Sides is the Whitsett Chair of California History at California State University at Northridge and the author of *Los Angeles City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present*. He acted as an advisor on the project. The City of Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency funded the project. Groups consulted included Los Angeles City Council District #9, City of Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources, Los Angeles Conservancy, and West Adams Heritage Association.

An extensive literature review was conducted on the history of African Americans in Los Angeles. There are a number of well-researched and scholarly books on the subject; however, the works of Lawrence De Graaf, Quintard Taylor, Douglas Flamming, and Josh Sides proved to be particularly useful. A number of unpublished Master's Thesis and Ph.D. Dissertations from UCLA and USC were also good sources of information and often provided a glimpse into the early scholarship in the fields of ethnic and social history. In addition, the *California Eagle* and the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, two of the African American newspapers in Los Angeles, were invaluable in documenting important events, people, businesses, and places in the community.

A study list of approximately 150 properties (See Appendix I) was developed based upon library research, interviews with experts, fieldwork, Sanborn maps, city and "negro" directories, and local registries and surveys. A reconnaissance level survey was conducted of the Central Avenue corridor between 14th Street on the north, Slauson Avenue on the south, McKinley and Griffith Avenues on the west and Hooper Avenue on the east. This area was the heart of the African American community during the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. The Central Avenue corridor includes commercial buildings along Central Avenue, institutional buildings such as schools and churches situated mostly on Hooper, McKinley, and Griffith Avenues, and single-family houses on the numbered side streets. As it was quickly discovered that most of the commercial buildings from the period of significance had been demolished and that many of the churches had been altered, a special effort was made to establish key individuals in the community who would be considered bona fide historic personages and to identify the location of their homes (See Appendix II).

A number of properties associated with the history of African Americans in Los Angeles are already listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, and the local landmark registry. The applications for the designation of those properties were collected and reviewed. The applications provided background information for the preparation of individual National Register applications. The following properties are already listed in the National Register:

Dunbar/Sommerville Hotel, 4225 S. Central Avenue
Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Building, 4263 S. Central Avenue
Ralph Bunche Home, 1221 E. 40th Place

The remaining properties were grouped under five historic contexts that conform to the broad historical trends and forces that shaped the African American community in Los Angeles: 1) settlement patterns and the mechanisms of residential segregation, 2) employment and labor conditions, 3) key institutions in the development of the community including churches, race papers, and businesses, 4) civil rights and political activism, and 5) the role of blacks in the entertainment industry. The analysis of property types was based upon function, not architectural style. The fieldwork revealed a wide variety of property types, but with few remaining in each category. Integrity requirements were based upon a knowledge of the existing properties.

While African American pioneers arrived in Los Angeles as early as 1852, the period of significance begins in the late 1880s when the black population reached historically significant levels. Various end dates for the period of significance were considered. The purpose of the project was to document the rise and fall of the Central Avenue corridor as the hub of the African American community. As such, it was necessary to consider certain events that contributed to its decline. U.S. Supreme Court decisions in 1948 and 1953 ruled against housing covenants that previously restricted the mobility of African Americans in Los Angeles. However, it took many years for the implications of those decisions to be worked out in the geography of the city because of white resistance. As such, the period of significance conveniently ends in 1958, the 50-year mark.

Figure: 3 Study area for reconnaissance survey.

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APPENDIX I: Properties Associated with African Americans

Name	Street Address	Sort Address	CRSC 2	APN#	Date	Comments
Ralph Bunche Home	1221 E. 40th Pl.	40th Place	1S/5S1	5114-032-027	1904/10	National Historic Landmark, LAHCM #159
Dunbar/Sommerville Hotel	4225 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	1S/5S1	5115-019-004	1928/70	LAHCM #131
Golden State Mutual Life Insurance #1	4261 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	1S/5S1	5115-018-004	1928/65	LAHCM #580
27th & 28th Street District		27th & 28th Street	3D	n/a	n/a	Between Central and Griffith
E. 52nd Place bet McKinley and Avalon		52nd Place	3D	n/a	n/a	Between McKinley and Avalon
Azusa Pentacostal Temple	1001 E. 27th St.	27th Street	3S	5128-024-026	1905	27th & 28th Street District
Louise Beavers Residence #1	2130 W. 29th St.	29th Street	3S	5052-027-035	1907	1941 City Directory
Hattie McDaniel Residence #1	2177 W. 31st St.	31st Street	3S	5052-025-002	1923/25	1941 City Directory
George Beavers Residence	814 E. 31st St.	31st Street	3S	5120-026-004	1903/10	1930 City Directory
Eric Dolphy Residence	1593 W. 36th St.	36th Street	3S			1942-43 Negro Directory
Noble Johnson Residence	1212 W. 37th St.	37th Street	3S			1930 City Directory, Look again Place or Drive
Bessie Burke Residence	1351 W. 37th St.	37th Street	3S			1941 City Directory, Look again Place or Drive
Jefferson High School	1319 E. 41st St.	41st Street	3S	5114-036-900		2s School Streamline Moderne
St. Paul Baptist Church #2	100 W. 49th St.	49th Street	3S	5110-019-027	1950	
Prince Hall Masonic Temple	1050 E. 50th St.	50th Street	3S	5108-015-005	1926	2s Brick Club Building
Joseph & Charlotta Bass Residence	697 E. 52nd Pl.	52nd Place	3S	5103-003-030	1911	Tax Assessor Records
Ivie Anderson Residence	724 E. 52nd Pl.	52nd Place	3S	5103-006-029	1911/19	Tax Assessor Records
Golden State Mutual Life Insurance #2	1999 W. Adams Blvd.	Adams Boulevard	3S		1948/49	Late Moderne, Paul Williams
Fire Station #30	1401 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	3S	5132-023-901	1913	LAHCM #289
Lincoln Theater	2300 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	3S	5119-007-001	1926	LAHCM #744
Fire Station #14	3401 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	3S	5114-015-901	1949	
Hattie McDaniel Residence #2	2203 S. Harvard Blvd.	Harvard Boulevard	3S			
Norman Houston Residence #2	2211 S. Hobart Blvd.	Hobart Boulevard	3S			
Louise Beavers Residence #2	2219 S. Hobart Blvd.	Hobart Boulevard	3S			
Holmes Avenue Elementary School	5108 Holmes Ave.	Holmes Avenue	3S	5105-007-900		
Nat King Cole Residence	401 S. Muirfield Rd.	Muirfield Road	3S	5505-008-021	1924	Purchased in 1948
28th Street YMCA	1006 E. 28th St.	28th Street	3S/5S1	5128-02-009	1926	LAHCM #851, 27th & 28th Street District
Second Baptist Church	2412 Griffith Ave.	Griffith Avenue	3S/5S1	5131-021-025	1926	LAHCM #200, aka 11-- E. 24th Street
Angelus Funeral Home	1030 E. Jefferson Blvd.	Jefferson Boulevard	3S/5S1	5114-015-010	1934	LAHCM #744
William Grant Still Residence	1242 Victoria Ave.	Victoria Avenue	3S/5S1	5082-024-006	1923/25	LAHCM #169
Paul Williams Residence	1690 Victoria Ave.	Victoria Avenue	3S/5S1	5071-001-023	1951	LAHCM #170
Gilbert Lindsay Residence #2	774 E. 52nd Pl.	52nd Place	5S1			LAHCM #726
Institute of Musical Art	3210 W. 54th St.	54th Street	5S1	5006-011-016	1927	LAHCM #344
Maverick's Flat	4225 Crenshaw Blvd.	Crenshaw Boulevard	5S1	5024-008-005	1937/40	LAHCM #679
First AME Church	801 Towne Ave.	Towne Ave.	5S1			LAHCM #71, destroyed by fire 1972
St. Paul Baptist Church #1	1385 E. 21st St.	21st Street	5S3	5119-002-018	1906/20	Altered, now Mount Olive Church of God in Christ

Name	Street Address	Sort Address	CRSC 2	APN#	Date	Comments
Louella L. Beavers Spiritual Temple	906 E. 23rd St.	23rd Street	5S3	5131-019-001	1937	Intact 2s Classical Revival Church
Ward Memorial AME Church	1250 E. 25th St.	25th Street	5S3	5119-023-024	1910/28	Altered, New Faith Baptist Church
St. Paul's Episcopal Church	801 E. 28th St.	28th Street	5S3	5128-019-014	1929	Altered
Pilgrims Missionary Baptist Church	950 E. 45th St.	45th Street	5S3	5108-026-036	1905/41	Altered
Gilbert Lindsay Residence	750 E. 51st St.	51st Street	5S3	5103-002-010	1910/13	1941 City Directory
Triangular Church of Truth	958 E. 52nd St.	52nd Street	5S3	5103-026-031	1945	Altered
June Cobb Church of Progressive Christia	1195 E. 55th St.	55th Street	5S3	5104-015-036	1939	Intact, 1s Colonial Revival Church
Sojourner Truth Home	1119 E. Adams Blvd.	Adams Boulevard	5S3	5119-010-036	1913	Altered, now church
Jack's Basket Room	3219 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	5S3	5114-019-013	1923	Altered, Jazz Club
New Hope Missionary Baptist Church	5200 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	5S3	5104-003-034	1954	Intact, 2s Late Period Revival Church
Victory Baptist Church	4800 McKinley Ave.	McKinley Avenue	5S3	5108-020-011	1940/50	Altered
La Vada Apartments	249 E. Vernon Ave.	Vernon Avenue	5S3	5113-017-004	1926	Altered
Saints Home Church	1460 E. 20th St.	20th Street	5S3	5119-031-028	1903/30 1923/25	2s Streamline Moderne Church
St. John's Baptist Church	1319 E. 22nd St.	22nd Street	5S3	5119-003-012	1929	Altered, now Mission Evangelica del Dios Vivo
Evening Star Baptist Church	1123 E. 34th St.	34th Street	5S3	5114-026-019	00/00	Altered, now Everlasting True Vine Missionary/Baptist Churcl
Lee Young Residence	760 10th Pl.	10th Place	6Z			1941 City Directory, demolished
Alma Hightower Residence	1417½ E. 12th St.	12th Street	6Z			1930 Negro Directory, demolished
Leonard Stovall Office	963 E.12th St.	12th Street	6Z			Demolished, 1921 City Directory
A.C. Bilbrew Residence	1550 E. 14th St.	14th Street	6Z			Demolished, 1921 City Directory
Dunbar Hospital	1393 E. 15th St.	15th Street	6Z			Demolished
The People's Independent Church of Chris	1025 E. 18th St.	18th Street	6Z			Demolished
Hamilton M.E. Church	1376-80 E. 18th St.	18th Street	6Z			Altered, now Church of Light
Mary Johnson Residence	18th St./Central Avenue	18th Street	6Z			Harassed by whites, black women defend her
Clayton D. Russell Residence	736 E. 18th St.	18th Street	6Z			1941 City Directory, demolished
William Nickerson Residence	1214 E. 20th St.	20th Street	6Z			1930 City Directory, altered
Margaret Johnson Scott Residence	1251 E. 21st St.	21st Street	6Z			1930 Negro Directory, altered
21st Street Temple Church of God in Chri	1327 E. 21st St.	21st Street	6Z			Demolished
Loren Miller Residence	1385 E. 22nd St.	22nd Street	6Z			1930 City Directory, demolished, 207 E. 45th St. (1941 City Directory)
C.C. Flint's Grocery Strore	239 E. 2nd St.	2nd Street	6Z			Demolished
Claude Hudson Residence	826 E. 31st St.	31st Street	6Z			1930 Negro Directory, altered
A.C. Bilbrew Residence	835½ E. 32nd St.	32nd Street	6Z			1941 City Directory, altered
Sidney P. Dones Residence	861 E. 32nd St.	32nd Street	6Z			1930 Negro Directory, new home, altered
Bill Spiller Residence	1674½ E. 33rd St.	33rd Street	6Z			1941 City Directory, altered
Leonard Stovall Residence	753 E. 33rd St.	33rd Street	6Z			1941 City Directory, altered
Benjamin Spikes Residence	1488 W. 35th Pl.	35th Place	6Z			1930 Negro Directory, altered
Noah Thompson Residence	1627 W. 35th Pl.	35th Place	6Z			1930 Negro Directory, altered

Name	Street Address	Sort Address	CRSC 2	APN#	Date	Comments
Los Angeles Academy	1194 E. 35th St.	35th Street	6Z			3s mfr unreinforced masonry, "King Jr. Hotel", windows gone, altered, originally classroom building for 7th Day Adventist Los Angeles Academy
Hampton Hawes Residence	1228 W. 35th St.	35th Street	6Z			1942-43 Negro Directory, altered
Augustus Hawkins Residence	1336 E. 40th St.	40th Street	6Z			1930 City Directory, demolished for Jefferson High
Third Baptist Church	1210 E. 41st St.	41st Street	6Z			Altered
Norman Houston Residence #1	950 E. 41st St.	41st Street	6Z			1930 Negro Directory, altered
Leon Washington Residence	1050 E. 43rd St.	43rd Street	6Z			1941 City Directory, altered
Eddie Anderson Residence	772 E. 43rd St.	43rd Street	6Z			1941 City Directory, altered
Samuel Browne Residence	901½ E. 43rd St.	43rd Street	6Z			1941 City Directory, altered
Dexter Gordon Residence	904 E. 43rd St.	43rd Street	6Z			1930 Negro Directory, altered
Phillips Temple CME Church	971 E. 43rd St.	43rd Street	6Z			Altered
Beulah Woodward Residence	1521 E. 50th St.	50th Street	6Z			1930 City Directory, altered
Christ Temple Church	1275 E. 54th St.	54th Street	6Z			Altered
YMCA #1	1400 E. 9th St.	9th Street	6Z			Demolished, 1921 City Directory
Louis G. Robinson Residence	1135 E. Adams Blvd.	Adams Boulevard	6Z			1930 Negro Directory, altered
Robert C. Owens Home	10th & Albany St.	Albany Street	6Z			Demolished
Azuza Street Mission	312 Azuza St.	Azuza Street	6Z			1921 City Directory, also home of William Seymour
Temple el Siloe Apostolic Assembly	1260 Birch St.	Birch Street	6Z			Demolished
Hub Theater	1007 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
	1011-17 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Not Booker T. Washington Building
New Age Newspaper	1203 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished, Frederick Roberts Funeral Home
Meeting Hall	1209 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished, Meeting Hall
Alvine House	125 N. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished, probably the first black-owned hotel. Now the site of the Japanese Buddist Temple.
William Wilkins Residence	1325 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			1921 City Directory, also his piano academy
A.J. Roberts Funeral Home	1415 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Dreamland Roller Rink	15th St./Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished, indicative of popular culture
La Republic Tea Room	1710 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Musicians' Union #767	1710 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished, moved into tea room
Clark Hotel	1820 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Blodgett Motor Company	2411 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Liberty Savings & Loan Association	2510 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z	5119-009-004	1920/36	Altered
Kentucky Club	25th & Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Club de Lisa	3301 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z	5114-018-016	1907	Altered, Jazz Club
Florence Mills Theater	3509 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z	5114-014-004	1912	Altered
Apex Club	4015 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z	5114-010-008	1925	Altered (Apex nightcub was renamed Club Alabam)
Elks Club	4016 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
California Eagle Newspaper	4071 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z	5114-010-001	1906	Previously 5S2- altered

Name	Street Address	Sort Address	CRSC 2	APN#	Date	Comments
Downbeat Club	4201 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z	5115-019-029	1996	Demolished, Jazz Club
Last Word	4206 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z	5115-027-036		Demolished, Jazz Club
Club Congo	4215 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z	5115-019-003		Demolished, Jazz Club
Turban Room	4217 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z	5115-019-003		Demolished, Jazz Club
Club Alabam	4221 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished, next to Dunbar Hotel
Hudson-Lidell Building	4226 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Victory Market	4236 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Tivoli Theater	4315 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Kunin Furniture Co.	4700 S. Cetnral Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Savoy Club	5326 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Cadillac Café	5th and Central	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished, Jazz Club
Scott Hall	6th St. & Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished, the upstairs had a large hall which was rented to lodges and other organizaions
Hilliard Stricklin's Meat Market	804 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
California Eagle Newspaper #1	814 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Pacific Coast Industrial Federation	824 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
California Eagle Newspaper #2	874 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Angelus Theater	932 S. Central Ave.	Central Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Women's Day Nursery	1322 Channing St.	Channing Street	6Z			Demolished
Tabernacle Baptist Church	950 Hemlock	Hemlock	6Z			Demolished
Lincoln Memorial Congregational Church	4415 Hooper St.	Hooper Street	6Z	5107-002-022	1898/1905	Altered
Union Hill Baptist Church	4415 Hooper St.	Hooper Street	6Z	5107-002-022	1898	Altered
Louise Beavers Residence #1	1299 W. Jefferson Blvd.	Jefferson Boulevard	6Z			1921 City Directory, demolished
Frederick Roberts Residence	350 E. Jefferson Blvd.	Jefferson Boulevard	6Z			Demolished
Sidney P. Dones Residence	905 E. Jefferson Blvd.	Jefferson Boulevard	6Z			1930 Negro Directory, demolished
Robert Owens Sr. Home	1st & Los Angeles St.	Los Angeles Street	6Z			Demolished
Roberts & Sons Funeral Home	Los Angeles Street	Los Angeles Street	6Z			Demolished, Frederick Roberts' father
Second Baptist Church #1	740 Maple	Maple	6Z			Demolished
Creator Corner Stone Baptist Church	1501 Paloma St.	Paloma Street	6Z			Demolished
Camp Zion Bapist Chuch	1527 Paloma St.	Paloma Street	6Z			Demolished
New Hope Baptist Church	1623 Paloma St.	Paloma Street	6Z			Demolished
John Donnell's Blacksmith Shop	238 S. San Pedro St.	San Pedro	6Z			Demolished
New Age #1	829 S. San Pedro St.	San Pedro	6Z			Demolished
Katherine Barr Employment Agency	102 S. Spring St.	Spring Street	6Z			Demolished
Biddy Mason Home	331-35 S. Spring St.	Spring Street	6Z			Demolished, site is commemorated w/ public art projet
Jester Hairston Residence	4432 Stanford Ave.	Stanford Avenue	6Z			1930 Negro Directory, altered
Dolphin's of Hollywood	1065 E. Vernon Ave.	Vernon Avenue	6Z			Demolished
Charlie Mingus Residence	1621 E. 108th St.	108th Street	7R			1930 Negro Directory, parents possibly lived here?

Name	Street Address	Sort Address	CRSC 2	APN#	Date	Comments
Harry Mitchell Residence	1108 E. 16th St.	16th Street	7R			African American pioneer, Vivian
Julia Chamberlain Residence	349 W. 16th St.	16th Street	7R			African American pioneer, Vivian
George Beavers Residence	756 E. 18th St.	18th Street	7R			1921 City Directory
Leon Washington Residence	1385 E. 22nd St.	22nd Street	7R			1930 Negro Directory, check address
Arthur Valentine Residence	1546 E. 23rd St.	23rd Street	7R			Valentine harassed by police and fights back and wins legal battle, must have been demolished
Claude Hudson Residence	759 E. 31st St.	31st Street	7R			1921 City Directory, maybe different Henry
Fredi Washington Residence	1515 E. 33rd Pl.	33rd Place	7R			1930 Negro Directory
R.E. Banks Residence	1523 W. 35th St.	35th Street	7R			African American pioneer, Vivian
W. Qualls Residence	1661 W. 36th St.	36th Street	7R			African American pioneer, Vivian
Gray Conservatory of Music	1106 E. 38th St.	38th Street	7R			Need to confirm address
Los Angeles Sentinel #3	1112 E. 43rd St.	43rd Street	7R			Sentinel moved here in 1949
Augustus Hawkins Residence	220 E. 46th St.	46th Street	7R			1942-43 Negro Directory
Noah Thompson Residence	1711 E. 55th St.	55th Street	7R			1921 City Directory
James Alexander Residence	1735 E. 55th St.	55th Street	7R			1930 Negro Directory
S.H. Holt Residence	1320 Albany St.	Albany Street	7R			African American pioneer, Vivian
C.C. Halford Residence	239 Ave. 38	Avenue 38	7R			African American pioneer, Vivian
Pentacostal Historic Site	216 N. Bonnie Brae Ave.	Bonnie Brae	7R			First Recorded Speaking in Tongues
Los Angeles Sentinel #2	3800 Crenshaw Blvd.	Crenshaw Boulevard	7R			
Angelus Funeral Home #2	3875 Crenshaw Blvd.	Crenshaw Boulevard	7R			
L.M. Blodgett Residence	978 Dewey Ave.	Dewey Avenue	7R			African American pioneer, Vivian
Leonard Stovall Residence	1300 Fleming	Fleming	7R			1921 City Directory
John Sommerville Residence	334 E. Jefferson Blvd.	Jefferson Boulevard	7R			1941 City Directory
John O. Banks Residence	1235 New Hampshire	New Hampshire	7R			African American pioneer, Vivian
Eddie Anderson Residence #2	1932 Rochester Cir.	Rochester Circle	7R			
Palestine Missionary Baptist Church	1193 E. Vernon Ave.	Vernon Avenue	7R			
	776 1/2 Wall St.	Wall Street	7R			1921 City Directory

APPENDIX II: Historic Persons in the African American Community of Los Angeles

Note: Appendix II includes brief biographical statements about individuals who made important contributions to the history of African Americans in Los Angeles through 1958, or who are considered significant in some other context such as literature or music. Generally speaking, only those individuals strongly associated with Los Angeles by virtue of their upbringing or work are included. Individuals whose accomplishments mostly post-date 1958 are not included. A few individuals still living are included because of their exceptional importance to their respective fields, and because their professional careers have come to an end. Exclusion from Appendix II does not necessarily imply that an individual was not of importance. Extended biographical information on many of these individuals can be found online at www.blackpast.org and www.aaregistry.com

Anderson, Ivie (1905-1949) Music – Anderson was a jazz singer best known for performing with Duke Ellington's orchestra between 1931 and 1942. She also appeared as a singer in films such as *A Day at the Races* (1937) and the *Hit Parade* (1937). Chronic asthma forced her to retire from touring, but she continued singing in local nightclubs. She opened Ivie's Chicken Shack at Central and Vernon Avenues in 1941, which remained open until 1957. According to the 1930 City Directory, she lived at 724 E. 52nd Place. The house still stands and is in good condition.

Anderson, Eddie (1905-1977) Radio, Film & Television – The son of a minstrel and tightrope walker, Anderson was born into show business. His talent as a singer, comedian, and dancer blossomed on the stage of the Apex Club on Central Avenue. Best known for his comic portrayal of the character "Rochester" on the Jack Benny radio show, Anderson also acted in numerous films without Benny. He appeared in over sixty motion pictures, including *Gone with the Wind* (1939) and *Cabin in the Sky* (1943). He was among the highest paid performers of the time and invested wisely, eventually becoming quite wealthy. Anderson was inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame in 2001. The 1941 City Directory lists his residence at 772 E. 43rd Street. The house still stands, but has been altered. Later he moved to the West Adams area. The street he lived on, 37th Drive, was changed to Rochester Circle in his honor.

Bass, Joseph (1863-1934) Civic Affairs – Bass was a teacher, businessman, and newspaper editor. He was teacher for seven years in his hometown of Jefferson, Missouri before leaving in 1894 for a newspaper job in Topeka. In addition to Topeka, Joseph worked for newspapers in Helena, Montana and San Francisco before finally settling in Los Angeles in 1913. He worked as a general newspaperman for Charlotta Bass, at the *California Eagle*. Bass was promoted to editor and married his boss in 1914.

Bass, Charlotta (1874-1969) Civic Affairs – Bass was an educator, publisher-editor, and civil rights activist. She owned and operated the *California Eagle* from 1912 until 1951. At its height, the *Eagle* had a circulation of sixty thousand, making it the largest African American newspaper on the West Coast. In 1913, she met Joseph Bass who would eventually become editor of the *Eagle* and her husband. She was particularly active against restrictive covenants in housing and segregated schools. She also campaigned heavily against job discrimination and was an advocate of the "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" campaign in the 1930s. According to the 1921 City Directory, the California Eagle was located at 822 S. Central Avenue. The paper occupied various other buildings along Central Avenue in later years; however, all have been demolished or altered. During the 1930s, the couple lived at 697 E. 52nd Place. The house still stands and is in good condition.

Beavers, George Jr. (1892-1989) Business & Civic Affairs – Beavers was a respected leader in the black community who was active in the NAACP and Urban League, and helped found two important institutions, the People's Independent Church and Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company. In 1915, Beavers and his wife, Willie Mae, helped found the People's Independent Church, which became a force for social change. In 1925, Beavers, along with William Nickerson, Jr. and Norman O. Houston, established what would become the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company. The company was begun in response to discriminatory practices across the insurance industry. In 1946, Beavers was appointed by Los Angeles Mayor Fletcher Bowron to the City of Los Angeles Housing Authority Commission, on which Beavers served for fifteen years. According to the 1921 City Directory he lived a 756 E. 18th Street. By 1930 he had moved to 814 E. 31st Street. The house still stands and is in good condition. According to 1953 City Directory, his residence was located at 1369 E. 41st Place.

Beavers, Louise (1902-1962) Film - Beavers was a prominent actress in the 1930s and 1940s, who is known for her contribution to African American cinema. She played noticeable, yet stereotypical, maid roles in numerous films including *She Done Him Wrong* (1933) and *Bombshell* (1933), for which she received an Oscar nomination. Beavers was one of the first actors to break through the traditional black role of servitude and/or comic relief by bringing more meaning and humanity to the screen; most notably in *Imitation of Life* (1934). Despite the fact that she had yet again been cast in the role of a housekeeper, *Imitation of Life* was the first major film where black characters had story lines equal to white characters. In 1976, she was posthumously inducted into the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame. The 1921 City Directory identifies her address as 1299 W. Jefferson Boulevard. By 1941 she had moved to 2130 W. 29th Street. The house still stands and is in fair condition.

Bilbrew, A.C. (1888-1972) Music – Bilbrew was a leading figure in choral and gospel music in Los Angeles. Born in Arkansas and educated at USC, she was the choir director for a number of prominent black churches including Phillips Temple CME Church, the People's Independent Church of Christ, and Hamilton Methodist Church. In 1929, she produced the first black chorus that was filmed in Hollywood for the first black talking picture *Hearts in Dixie* (1929). Her "Gold Hour" on KGFJ Radio from 1940 to 1942 provided a source of religious information and song for LA's black community. Bilbrew was also a community leader and a form deputy to Los Angeles County Supervisor, Kenneth Hahn. The A.C. Bilbrew County Public Library in Compton is named in her honor. The 1921 City Directory identifies her address as 1550 E. 14th Street. By 1941 she had moved to 835½ E. 32nd Street. The building still stands, but has been altered.

Bontemps, Arnaud (1902-1973) Writer – Bontemps moved to Los Angeles around 1905. He wrote about his growing up in Watts in his novel, *Anyplace But Here* (1945/66). After graduating from Pacific Union College in 1923, he moved to New York's Harlem and became an important figure in the literary scene.

Browne, Samuel (1908-1991) Music and Education – Browne was a pioneer educator and musician. He was the first black music teacher in the Los Angeles public school system. Browne was a native of Los Angeles who graduated from Jefferson High School in 1926. He obtained undergraduate and graduate degrees in music from USC, and returned to Jefferson High School where he taught from 1936 to 1961. Although he worked as a musician as well, his major contribution to the Los Angeles music scene was in nurturing the talent of his students who included luminaries: Don Cherry, Dexter Gordon, Art Farmer, Ernie Royal, Jackie Kelso, Ginger Smock, Bill Douglass, O.C. Smith, Roy Ayers, and Horace Tapscott. The 1941 City Directory identifies his address as 901½ E. 43rd Street. The building still stands, but has been altered.

Bunche, Ralph (1904-1971) Politics – Bunche was a scholar and diplomat significant for his work with the United Nations. He chaired the Department of Political Science at Howard University from 1928 until 1950. While teaching at Howard, he received a doctorate from Harvard University. During World War II he was a senior analyst for the State Department. In 1950, he won the Noble Peace Prize for negotiating an armistice between the Arab States and Israel. In 1955, he was appointed the United Nations Undersecretary for Special Political Affairs. His boyhood home at 1221 E. 40th Place is a designated National Historic Landmark and Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #159.

Burke, Bessie (1891-1968) Education – Burke was the first African American teacher and principal hired in the Los Angeles public school system. In 1911 she graduated from the State Normal School (the precursor to UCLA) and joined the staff of the Holmes School in the Furlong Tract. In 1918 she became the principal. Burke also served as principal at the Nevin Avenue School in 1938, becoming the first black principal in the state to head a racially integrated school. According to the 1941 City Directory, she lived at 1351 W. 37th Street. The house still stands and is in good condition.

Ceruti, Burton (0000–0000) Civic Affairs – Ceruti was an attorney and founding member of the Los Angeles chapter of the NAACP. He was at the forefront of many of the early civil rights campaigns, including organizing against *Birth of a Nation* and challenging restrictive housing covenants.

Cole, Nat King (1919-1965) Music – One of the most popular vocalists of all time, Cole was also known for his skills as a pianist as well as his influence on jazz music. He had numerous hits in 1950s and 1960s. The popularity of his music inspired an international tour that included a performance for Queen Elizabeth II. In 1990, his prolific contributions to American music were recognized when he was posthumously awarded the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. In 1948, Cole purchased a house at 401 S. Muirfield Road in the all-white neighborhood of Hancock Park. Property owners were upset and told Cole that they did not want undesirables moving into their neighborhood. Cole retorted "Neither do I. And if I see anybody undesirable coming in here, I'll be the first to complain."

Collette, Buddy (1921-Living) Music – Collette was born in Watts and attended Jordan High School along with jazz legends, Charles Mingus and Chico Hamilton. Collette was one of the leading figures in bebop and also played an important role in the cool jazz movement. He was the first African American to perform in a television studio band, appearing on Groucho Marx's television show, *You Bet Your Life*. Discontent with being the only black musician in a studio band, he became a leading activist against discrimination in the music industry. In 1955 he became one of the founding members of Chico Hamilton's quintet.

Covington, Floyd (1901-1989) Civic Affairs – Covington moved to Los Angeles, where he was hired as the membership secretary of the 28th Street Branch of the YMCA. He later took the position of industrial secretary of the Los Angeles branch of the National Urban League, and in 1931, he was appointed executive director of the branch, a position he held until 1950. During World War II, Los Angeles Mayor Fletcher Bowron appointed Covington to the Mayor's Committee on Home Front Unity, whose goal was to reduce racial and ethnic tensions in the city. In 1947, California Governor Earl Warren appointed Covington to a special commission to investigate crime and delinquency. Covington resigned his post with the Urban League in 1950 and accepted a position as a racial relations advisor with the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). He worked for the FHA until 1975. According to the 1930 City Directory, Covington lived at 1000 E. 28th Street, which is the YMCA. According to 1953 City Directory, Covington

lived at 2003 Virginia Road.

Dandridge, Dorothy (1924-1965) Film & Music –Dandridge was the one of the leading African American actresses of her generation, along with Lena Horne, Fredi Washington, and Nina McKinney. Dandridge was the first African American nominated for an Academy Award for Best Actress in 1954 for her role in *Carmen Jones*. As Dandridge became a film star, local and national nightclub engagements became commonplace. She performed regularly at Ciro's, Mocambo, and the Coconut Grove.

Dolphy, Eric (1928-1964) Music – Dolphy was a versatile reedman who was the first important bass clarinet soloist in jazz, and among the earliest significant flute soloists. He was born and raised in Los Angeles where he attended Dorsey High School and Los Angeles City College. Dolphy got his big break as a member of Chico Hamilton's quintet. He toured with the group extensively through 1959, when he parted ways with Hamilton and moved to New York City. According to the 1942-43 Negro Directory, Dolphy lived at 1593 W. 36th Street. The same address was listed in his name in the 1953 City Directory.

Dones, Bessie (1891-1985) Music - The most outstanding violin instructor and concert violinist in the community was Bessie Dones. After teaching for Wilkins and Gray, she established her own private studio, which she maintained for half a century. Her specialty was in ensemble training. Many of her students were selected to play in the All-City Schools Orchestra in Los Angeles. One of her most talented pupils was Virginia 'Ginger' Smock who later became a highly respected jazz violinist.

Dones, Sidney P. (1888-1947) Business – Dones was the president of the Bookerite Investment Company specializing in real estate and insurance during the 1910s and 20s. In 1916, he opened the Booker T. Washington Building at 10th Street and Central Avenue. With several other community leaders, Dones founded the all-black resort town of Val Verde in the Santa Clarita Valley in response to the limited recreational opportunities at restricted beaches and public swimming pools. While he was a successful businessman, he was a perennial loser in political campaigns, which unfortunately tarnished his reputation. He also acted, directed, and wrote a few all-black silent films including *Reformation* (1920) and *The Ten Thousand Dollar Trail* (1921). According to the 1930 Negro Directory, he lived at 905 E. Jefferson Boulevard, but had moved to a new home at 861 E. 32nd Street by 1941.

Edmonds, Jefferson L. (1845-1914) Civic Affairs – Born a slave in Virginia, Edmonds was the editor of the *Liberator*, an early race paper. He boasted in his paper that California offered the best opportunities for African Americans in the country, while scorning discrimination. He was also a co-founder of the Forum, one of the most important black organizations in turn of the century Los Angeles.

Gordon, Dexter (1923-1990) Music – The foremost tenor saxophonist of the bebop era, Gordon was born and raised in Los Angeles. His father was one of the first African American physicians in Los Angeles. Gordon studied music with Samuel Browne at Jefferson High School, but dropped out his senior year to join Lionel Hampton's orchestra. During his career he moved back and forth between Los Angeles and New York. He is the only musician ever nominated for an Academy Award for Best Actor for his role in *Round Midnight* (1986). The 1942-43 Negro Directory identifies his address as 904 E. 43rd Street. The house still stands, but has been altered.

Green, Louis (0000-0000) Civic Affairs – The Greens were one of the pioneering black families to settle in Los Angeles during the late 19th century. Los Angeles prevented African Americans

from registering to vote until Louis Green led a successful battle resulting in immediate registration for the 1870 election by the twenty-five African American men eligible to vote.

Griffith Jr., Thomas (1902-0000) Civic Affairs – Son of Thomas Griffith Sr. the minister of the Second Baptist Church, Griffith Jr. was the controversial president of the Los Angeles branch of the NAACP from 1935 to 1950. During this time period, the African American population of Los Angeles was rapidly expanding, and during the initial period of Griffith's tenure membership in the branch followed suit. Complaints soon were heard that Griffith had done little to advance the African American cause in the city. Membership in the branch began to decrease from a high of 14,000 members in 1946 to only 6,000 members in 1948. There was a sharp division among those who had been in Los Angeles for a longer period of time and newer arrivals. The chapter did make gains during this period. The NAACP won lawsuits allowing African Americans and Mexican Americans to swim in Pasadena city pools, against the City of Los Angeles for employment discrimination, and a Supreme Court decision invalidating real estate covenants. He attended USC and Southwestern University. In 1931, he was the first black admitted to the Los Angeles Bar Association. In 1953, he was appointed to the Municipal Court by Gov. Warren. In 1960, he became the first black elected to the Municipal Court. As late as the 1960s, he lived at 5000 Wall Street, but the house no longer stands

Hahn, Kenneth (1920-1997) Politics – Hahn was a member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors from 1952 to 1992, and previously a Los Angeles City Councilmember. He represented the south central community of Los Angeles, and lived in the area for his entire life. Although white, he was deeply respected in the black community for supporting civil rights and affirmative action.

Hairston, Jester (1901-2000) Music – Hairston was a multi-talented man who composed and arranged more than 300 gospel spirituals for film, but also worked as an actor. For thirteen years we was the assistant conductor for the Hall Johnson Negro Choir. He moved to Los Angeles in 1935 with the choir, which had been hired to create the choral music for the films *Green Pastures* and *Lost Horizon*. Because of his talent as an arranger, Dimitri Tiomkin hired him as his choral arranger for the next twenty years. In 1943, he formed his own professional choir, the Jester Hairston Metropolitan Choir, which performed in numerous films such as *Carmen Jones* (1954) and *Lilies of the Field* (1963). He spent fifteen years on radio and television on the *Amos n' Andy* show despite the fact that the other black characters were played by whites. The 1942-43 Negro Directory identifies his address as 4432 Stanford. The house still stands, but has been altered. According to 1953 City Directory, Jester lived at 3959 S. La Salle Avenue.

Hamilton, Chico (1921-Living) Music – Born and raised in Los Angeles, Chico Hamilton played drums with numerous jazz greats including Lionel Hampton, T-Bone Walker, Lester Young, and Nat King Cole before striking out on his own as a bandleader in 1955. His original quintet included other Angelenos Eric Dolphy and Buddy Collette.

Hawes, Hampton (1928-1977) Music – The highly regarded bebop pianist Hamilton Hawes was born and raised in Los Angeles. His father was the minister of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, and his mother was the church pianist. Entirely self-taught, by his teens he was playing with some of the best jazz musicians on the West Coast. Hawes fell victim to drug addiction and was arrested in 1958, but was granted a presidential pardon by Kennedy in 1963. According to the 1942-43 Negro City Directory, he lived at 1228 W. 35th Street. The house still stands, but has been altered. According to 1953 City Directory, Hawes lived at 1634 E. 46th Street.

Hawkins, Augustus (1907-2007) Politics – In 1935, Hawkins was elected to the California Assembly where he served for twenty-eight years. He introduced a fair housing act, a fair employment act, and workmen's compensation provisions for domestic workers. His election to Congress in 1962 made him the first black representative from the West. One of his most notable accomplishments was the establishment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. According to the 1930 City Directory, Hawkins lived at 1336 E. 40th Street. The house still stands, but has been altered. The 1942-43 Negro Directory identifies his address as 220 E. 46th Street.

Hightower, Alma (1888-1970) Music – Hightower was one of several prominent music teachers in Los Angeles. During the Depression, she ran a music program at a playground. Through this program that was funded by the WPA, she taught theory and harmony and formed a youth band called "Miss Hightower and the Melodic Dots." She directed the School for the Performing Arts from the 1930s through the 1960s. Her Hightower Youth Orchestra frequently performed in city parades, on street corners, and in churches.

Himes, Chester (1909-1984) Literature – The famous African American writer Chester Himes spent time in Los Angeles during the 1940s working as a screenwriter, but also producing two novels, *If He Hollers Let Him Go* (1945) and *The Lonely Crusade* (1947). Both books deal with the experiences of the wave of black immigrants drawn by the city's defense industries, and their dealings with the established black community, unions, and management. He also provided an analysis of the Zoot Suit Riots for *Crisis*, the magazine of the NAACP. By the 1950s Himes decided to move to France permanently along with his fellow writers Richard Wright and James Baldwin.

Houston, Norman (1893-1989) Business – Houston was co-founder of the Golden State Mutual Insurance Company, the largest black-owned insurance company in the West. He was born in San Jose, California, and studied business administration at the University of California at Berkeley before being drafted into the U.S. Army. He served as a regimental personnel adjutant, the only black to hold that position in the entire Army. He returned to UC Berkeley but left before graduation to sell insurance to black waiters and cooks at the railroad commissary in Los Angeles. He then became the first California employee of William Nickerson's American Mutual Insurance Company where he soon became superintendent of agents. In 1925, he, along with Nickerson and George Allen Beavers, Jr., founded the Golden State Mutual Insurance Company. The company grew rapidly and within three years, they built a two-story office building using all African American designers and laborers at 4261 S. Central Avenue in Los Angeles. Houston was also co-founder and chairman of the board of Broadway Federal Savings and Loan Association, in 1980 the largest black-owned savings and loan in California. He helped found the National Bank of Los Angeles, and was elected to the California State Athletic Association, the first black to be appointed. He also served as president of the Los Angles Branch of the NAACP and was a member of Los Angeles' first Human Rights Commission. The 1930 City Directory identifies his address as 950 E. 41st Street. The house still stands but has been altered. The building at 4261 S. Central Avenue is listed in the National Register and is designated Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #580. According to 1953 City Directory, Houston lived at 4230 Parva Avenue in Los Feliz.

Hudson, H. Claude (1887-1989) Business & Civic Affairs – While working as a dentist, Hudson attended Loyola Law School at night, graduating in 1931. He studied law to provide services to the NAACP in bring about justice and fighting for inequality. He was instrumental in desegregating Los Angeles beaches and establishing Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital. Hudson founded Broadway Federal Savings and Loan, the nation's second largest black-owned saving

and loan. He had Paul Williams design a commercial building at 4226 S. Central Avenue where he kept his dentist office, but it has been demolished. According to the 1921 City Directory he lived at 759 E. 31st Street. The residences he occupied in the 1930s and 40s have been altered or demolished. According to 1953 City Directory, Claude lived at 1230 S. Van Ness Avenue.

Jeffries, Herb (1911-Living) Film & Music – A jazz musician of Ethiopian-French Canadian and Italian-Irish descent, Jeffries is noted for his singing cowboy roles in several all-black Western films in which he sang his own compositions. Jeffries got the financing for the first black Western film and hired Spencer Williams to appear with him. In addition to starring in the film, Jeffries sang and performed his own stunts as the cowboy character "Bob Blake." Through his series of low-budget westerns, he soon became known as the "Bronze Buckaroo."

Johnson, Noble (1881-1978) Film – Johnson was an actor who founded the Lincoln Motion Picture Company in 1916. It was the first motion picture company controlled by black filmmakers. The first film produced by Lincoln was *The Realization of a Negro's Ambition* (1916). Johnson was also an ambitious actor and appeared in major sound era films including *Moby Dick* (1930) and *King Kong* (1933). According to the 1930 Negro Directory, he lived at 1212 W. 37th Street. The house still stands and is in fair condition.

Lindsay, Gilbert (1900-1990) Civic Affairs – During the 1940s, Lindsay was the manager/owner of Bilbrew and Lindsay Productions, which produced the pioneering broadcasts of the "Bronze Hour" on KGFJ Radio. The program's announcer, Mrs. A.C. Bilbrew was prominent in Los Angeles choral music circles. Lindsay later became the first black Los Angeles City Councilman in the modern era, a post he held until his death at age 90. The 1941 City Directory identifies his address as 750 E. 51st Street. The house still stands and is in fair condition.

MacBeth, Hugh (1884-1956) Civic Affairs – MacBeth was a Harvard-educated lawyer who participated in many early civil rights campaigns in Los Angeles, including the pool desegregation. He was also a leader in the UNIA and general counsel to the Utopian Society, a left-leaning bi-racial group. He was also a booster of the "back-to-the-soil" movement of all-black agricultural communities in the U.S. and Mexico. During WWI, he established the short-lived All-American League to steer the patriotism and national discussion about democracy towards addressing voting rights and racism

Mason, Biddy (1818-1891) Civic Affairs – Mason was considered a pillar in the African American community during the late 19th century. Born a slave in Georgia, she became one of the wealthiest women in Los Angeles. Upon gaining her freedom, Mason found work as a nurse and midwife. From an income of $2.50 per day, she saved $250 in ten years. She then purchased land on the block bounded by Broadway, Spring Street, 3rd Street, and 4th Street. Over the years her real estate deals enabled her to build an estate worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. She used her newfound wealth to assist the less fortunate. In 1871, she provided funding to establish the First AME Church. Her home has long since been demolished, however, a public art project commemorates the site.

McDaniel, Hattie (1895-1952) Radio, Film & Television – McDaniel was a famous character actress who started her career as a vaudeville performer. After moving to Los Angeles, she found work in radio, the medium that became the underpinning of her career. Her film debut was in 1932 singing a duet with Will Rogers in the film *Judge Priest*. In 1939, McDaniel won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for her performance as "Mammy" in *Gone with the Wind*. The 1941 City Directory identifies her address as 2177 W. 31st Street. The house still stands and is in fair condition.

McKinney, Nina (1912-1967) Film – McKinney was the first black actress to make her name in American film. At the age of sixteen, she was cast in King Vidor's *Hallelujah* (1929). Based upon the strength of that performance she was given a five-year contract with MGM. But there were no roles for black leading ladies, so she only appeared in two films before her contract expired. She appeared in many independent films and toured with her own jazz band.

Miller, Loren (1903-1967) Civic Affairs – Miller was a municipal court judge and an advocate against housing discrimination. He moved to Los Angeles in 1929 and worked for the *California News* until 1933 when he was admitted to the California bar. During the 1940s, he represented plaintiffs seeking to invalidate housing covenants that prevented blacks from purchasing or renting housing in certain areas. He became the editor and owner of the *California Eagle* in 1951. He eventually sold the paper in 1964 when he was appointed a municipal court judge. The 1941 City Directory identifies his law office at1105 E. Vernon Avenue, but the building has been demolished. His residence the same year, 207 E. 45 Street, has been altered. His residence according to the 1930 City Directory, 1385 E. 22nd Street, has been demolished.

Mingus, Charlie (1922-1979) Music – Mingus was a virtuoso bass player, accomplished pianist, bandleader, and composer. Although born in Arizona, he was raised in Watts and attended Jordan High School, along with Buddy Collette. His earliest professional experience in the 1940s found him playing with Louis Armstrong, Kid Ory, Les Hite, and Lester and Lee Young. Eventually he settled in New York where he played and recorded with the leading musicians of the 1950s. He formed his own publishing and recording company to protect and document his original music. His childhood residence was 1621 E. 108th Street (1930 Negro Directory).

Morton, Ferdinand 'Jelly Roll' (1890-1941) Music – Morton was a pianist, bandleader, and composer whom some call the first composer of jazz music. He moved to Los Angeles around 1917, stayed until 1922, and returned off and on until his death in 1941 at Los Angeles County Hospital. He is buried at Calvary Cemetery. The recordings by Jelly Roll Morton & His Redhot Peppers are considered classics of 1920s jazz.

Muse, Clarence (1889-1979) Film – Clarence Muse was a lawyer, screenwriter, director, composer, and actor. In 1911, he received an international law degree from Dickenson College, but disgusted with his lack of opportunities as an attorney he pursued a career in show business. By the 1920s he was acting in New York with two Harlem theatres, Lincoln Players and Lafayette Players. Muse moved to Chicago for a while, and then to Hollywood and performed in *Hearts in Dixie* (1929), the first all-black movie. For the next fifty years, he worked regularly in minor and major roles. Muse appeared as an opera singer, minstrel show performer, vaudeville and Broadway actor; he also wrote songs, plays, and sketches. From 1955 to 1956, Muse was a regular on the weekly television version of *Casablanca*, playing Sam the pianist, and in 1959, he appeared in the film *Porgy and Bess*, with Sidney Poitier, Dorothy Dandridge and Sammy Davis, Jr.

Neimore, John (1865-1912) Civic Affairs – Neimore was a newspaper publisher who founded the *Advocate*, later renamed the *California Eagle*, in 1879. He functioned as the editor and mentored Charlotta Bass until his death in 1912.

Nickerson, William (1879-1945) Business – With two partners Nickerson opened what was to become the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company. Through a mortgage loan service, the company helped African Americans to buy homes, provided employment opportunities for white-collar jobs, and adequate life insurance coverage. His residence according to the 1930 City Directory, 1214 E. 20th Street, has been altered.

Ory, Edward 'Kid' (1886-1973) Music – Ory was one of several musicians credited with bringing Dixieland jazz to Los Angeles at the beginning of the 20th century. Arriving in 1919 from New Orleans, he formed a band called Ory's Sunshine Orchestra. He was a multi-talented musician best known as a trombonist, but also played drums, clarinet, alto saxophone, string base, and sang. Ory moved to Chicago in 1925 and played with King Oliver's Dixie Syncopators.

Owens, Robert (1806-0000) Civic Affairs – Owens was one of the earliest leaders of the black community in Los Angeles. He was born a slave in Maryland in 1806 and gained his freedom in Texas, prior to arriving in Los Angeles with this family in 1852. He supported his family by securing a series of lumber and livery contracts with the United States Army from 1854 to 1865, while his wife, Winnie took in laundry and worked as a housekeeper. As the family prospered they began to purchase property along San Pedro Street. Their home became one of the centers of the black community. Early religious meetings and business gatherings transpired there. Owens' son Charles married Biddy Mason's daughter Ellen. Charles continued the family businesses by operating the Owens Family Stables and purchasing land all over the city. In 1891, Robert and Henry Owens built a business block on land they inherited from their grandmother, Biddy Mason, on Broadway between Third and Forth Streets called the Owens Brothers Block. None of the buildings associated with the Owens' family survive.

Reese, Lloyd (0000-0000) Music – Reese played a significant role as an educator in L.A.'s jazz scene. He was a fine trumpet player and prominent member of the Les Hite Band, but early on changed his career path from performing to teaching. His emphasis on music composition, theory, and fundamentals had a major influence on the careers of Charles Mingus, Buddy Colette, and Dexter Gordon. He ran a conservatory out of his house on McKinley Avenue.

Roberts, Frederick (1879-1952) Politics – Roberts was a successfully mortician and newspaper man before being elected to the California Assembly in 1918. He was the first African American to hold statewide office and represented his district until 1934. He was editor of the *New Age Dispatch*. Its first location was at 8th Street and San Pedro, next to the Colored YMCA. Then it moved to 1203 S. Central Avenue by the late 1910s, just down the block from the *Eagle*. Neither structure has survived. Roberts was also a co-founder of the L.A. Forum, one of the most important black organizations in turn of the century Los Angeles. According to the 1921 City Directory his funeral home was located at 1203 S. Central Avenue, while his home was at 1415 S. Central Avenue. Apparently, he later turned his home into a funeral parlor and moved to 350 E. Jefferson Boulevard. All of these buildings are gone. Politically, Roberts represented the old guard, "Lincoln" Republicans who viewed Democrats as synonymous with racism and the South. Roberts was unseated by Augustus Hawkins, a liberal Democrat. Roberts represented the old guard, "Lincoln" Republicans who viewed Democrats as synonymous with racism and the South.

Robinson, Louis G. (1876-0000) Civic Affairs – Born in Georgia into a large family, Robinson left home at the age of twelve and was not literate until his early twenties. Determined to get an education, he eventually graduated from Payne College. Robinson arrived in Los Angeles around 1910 and eventually became the president of Angelus Funeral Parlors. He was active in civic affairs, most notably as director of the Liberty Building and Loan Association, vice-president of the local chapter of the NAACP as well as a board member of the 28th Street YMCA. He lived at 1135 E. Adams Boulevard according to the 1930 Negro Directory, however the house has been altered.

Russell, Clayton D. (1910-1981) Civic Affairs – Russell was an important religious and political leader in the African American community of Los Angeles in the middle of the 20th century. For much of his life Russell was associated with the People's Independent Church of Christ, one of

the largest congregations in Los Angeles. He was ordained at the church in 1929, a year after he graduated from Jefferson High School. The twenty-five-year-old Russell became the church's pastor in 1935. In 1941 he organized the Negro Victory Committee, which sponsored mass meetings and demonstrations to protest discrimination against African American workers. Russell and his church, whose membership peaked at 4,000, were also the driving force behind the Victory Markets, a chain of cooperative grocery stores that served the rapidly expanding African American community during the war. In addition to leading the struggle against employment discrimination, Russell worked to elect African Americans to political offices. In 1946 he was a candidate for a seat on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, and in 1959 he ran for a seat on the Los Angeles City Council. His home identified in the 1941 City Directory, 736 E. 18th Street, has been demolished. His home is listed as 1194 W. 36th Place in the 1953 City Directory.

Scott, Margaret Johnson (1862-1969) Civic Affairs – Scott and her husband erected Scott Hall at 6th Street and Central Avenue and were active members of the community. They were also pioneer members of the First AME Church. Another of Margaret's memorable accomplishments was the co-founding of the Sojourner Truth Industrial Club in 1904. According to the 1930 Negro Directory, they lived at 1251 E. 21st Street. The house has been demolished.

Seymour, William (1870-1922) Religion – Born the son of freed slaves in Louisiana, he learned the tenets of the Holiness movement at a bible school founded by Charles Parham in Texas. Later he formed a mission on Azuza Street in downtown Los Angeles where he preached his beliefs in glossolalia (speaking in tongues) as a confirmation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The current worldwide Pentecostal and charismatic movements are generally agreed to have been in part outgrowths of Seymour's ministry and the Azuza Street Revival. The church on Azusa Street (312) has been demolished. The site that is recognized by Pentecostals as the first incident of speaking in tongues, a house at 216 N. Bonnie Brae Street, still stands and is in good condition.

Sommerville, John (1881-1973) Sommerville, Vada (1885-1972) – John enrolled at USC and became the first black to graduate from the school. He continued his studies at USC's Dental School, and again was the first black to graduate (1907). Vada also attended USC's Dental School and was the first black woman to graduate in 1918. They practiced dentistry together until 1922 when Vada retired. In 1913, the local chapter of the NAACP was organized in their home. Together they built the Sommerville Hotel, which was later renamed the Dunbar Hotel. John was the first black delegate to the California Democratic National Convention (1936) and the first black appointed to the Los Angeles Police Commission (1949). The 1941 City Directory identifies their residence as 334 E. Jefferson Boulevard. The house has been demolished. According to the 1921 City Directory as well as the 1930 Negro Directory, their office was at 1800 S. San Pedro Street.

Spikes, Benjamin (1890-1982) Music - The first real pioneers of the record industry for blacks in Los Angeles were the Spike Bros., Johnny and Benjamin "Reb". Their first records were recorded in 1922. They wrote *Someday Sweetheart* for Sunshine Records, the label they owned. In 1921, the Spikes Bros. Band played over KFI Radio. They were the first black band to play for records, which were used by Warner Bros. to produce sound for motion pictures. Spikes Bros. Music Store was located at 1203 S. Central Avenue. The building has been demolished. The 1930 Negro Directory identifies his address as 1488 W. 35th Place. The house still stands, but has been altered. The 1953 City Directory lists his residence at 2419 4th Avenue.

Spiller, Bill (1913-1988) Sports – A professional golfer who helped successfully advocate the inclusion of blacks in PGA Tour events, Spiller did not learn to golf until the age of thirty. However, he quickly learned the game and turned pro in 1947. At the 1948 Los Angeles Open,

Spiller was tied with Ben Hogan after the first round before eventually faltering. At the time, only a handful of PGA events were open to blacks because of the PGA's Caucasian-only clause. Spiller and other black golfers tenaciously fought the exclusionary clause over the years and eventually had it revoked. According to the 1941 City Directory, he lived at 1674½ E. 33rd Street. The building has been either altered or demolished.

Stewart, Nick (1910-2000) Television & Theater – Steward was famous for his role as "Lighthin" in the *Amos 'n' Andy* television series. He had a full career in vaudeville, radio, film, and theater. He created the role of the "Br'er Bear" in Disney's *Song of the South* (1946). Stewart and his wife Edna founded the Ebony Showcase Theater in 1950 as a beacon for black artists and audiences of the period. It gave blacks a chance to play non-stereotypical roles and showcase them as actors. Sometimes the shows featured all-black casts, other times they were integrated. The theater closed in 1996 and was demolished in 1998 to make way for the Nate Holden Performing Arts Center.

Still, William Grant (1895-1978) Music – A classical composer who wrote more than 150 compositions, Still is often referred to as the dean of African American composers. Still was the first African American to conduct a major American symphony orchestra, the first to have a symphony of his own performed by a leading orchestra, the first to have an opera performed by a major company, and the first to have an opera performed on national television. His house at 1262 Victoria Avenue is designated Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #169.

Stovall, Leonard (1887-1956) Health and Medicine – Stovall was the first black graduate from the University of California Medical School and the first to join the staff of the Los Angeles County General Hospital. He conducted a study of tuberculosis on the eastside of Los Angeles and established a clinic providing low-cost medical services to the community. Realizing the need for health education, Stovall founded Outdoor Life and Health Association in 1933. The organization grew and opened a sanatorium in Duarte in 1940. The organization was renamed the Stovall Foundation. According to the 1921 City Directory his home was at 1300 Fleming and his office at 963 E. 12th Street. By 1941 he had moved his residence to 753 E. 33rd Street and his office to 1413 S. Central Avenue. The house has been altered and the office building demolished. The 1953 City Directory lists his residence at 1927 Victoria.

Sul-Te-Wan, Madame (1873-1959) Film – Madame Sul-Te-Wan was the stage name on an early African American actress. Born Nellie Crawford, she began her film career in un-credited roles in D.W. Griffith's controversial drama *Birth of a Nation* (1915) and epic *Intolerance* (1916). Throughout the 1910 and 20s she would establish herself as a recognizable character actress, mostly in "Mammy" roles. While she was limited to minor stereotypical characters, she worked consistently through the 1930s and 40s. Her most memorable role during this period was in the film *Maid of Salem* (1937).

Talbert, Florence Cole (1890-1961) Music – A critically acclaimed soprano, Talbert moved to Los Angeles with her family in 1910 and was the first African American to attend Los Angeles High School. She studied music at USC and the Chicago School of Music and began singing in New York City in 1918. It is believed that she is the first black artist to sing the title role in *Aida* in a fully staged European production. After she retired from singing, she became a singing teacher in Los Angeles and was an active member of the National Association of Negro Musicians.

Terry, Jessie (1885-1979) Civic Affairs – Terry helped found several civic organizations including the African American branch of the YMCA, the first PTA at Jefferson High School,

and the Los Angeles Chapter of the National Council of Negro Women. Terry was appointed the first African American member of the City of Los Angeles Housing Authority Commission in 1939 and became the first woman manager of a city housing project.

Thompson, Noah (1878-0000) Civic Affairs – After rising to prominence in Los Angeles as a dedicated journalist and real estate investor, Thompson utilized his social, political, and economic gains to promote the improvement of black Angelenos. He arrived in Los Angeles in 1911 and began investing in apartment complexes and office space. In addition, he developed a successful career as a journalist and wrote for the *Evening Press, Morning Tribune of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Times,* and *Liberator*. He urged blacks to flee Southern and Northern states for the economic opportunities awaiting them in Los Angeles. Dedicated to the development of a successful black Los Angeles, Thompson helped direct the Commercial Council of Los Angeles, where he and other prominent African Americans encouraged the development black enterprises. The organization even offered monetary support to black entrepreneurs migrating to Los Angeles. Seeking to bring the ideologies of black progress westward, Thompson abandoned Marcus Garvey's UNIA and set up the Pacific Coast Negro Improvement Association (PCNIA) to support blacks in the West. Additionally, his community service led local government officials to endorse Thompson for a position as U.S. Minister to Liberia. Although the date of his death is unclear, it is evident that Thompson dedicated much of his life to Los Angeles' African American community. He lived at 1711 E. 55th Street according to the 1921 City Directory. By 1930, he had moved to 1627 W. 35th Place. The house still stands, but has been altered.

Washington, Fredi (1903-1994) Film – Washington was an actor, writer, dancer, and singer. She was one of the first African Americans to find work in film, but struggled to find suitable roles because she didn't look black enough. Her first film performance was with Duke Ellington in a musical short, *Black and Tan* (1929). In 1933 she appeared opposite Paul Robeson in *The Emperor Jones.* She is best known for a portrayal of a mulatto girl who tried to pass for white in *Imitation of Life* (1934). She was one of the founders of the Negro Actors Guild and later was an editor and columnist for *The People's Voice*. She was inducted into the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame in 1975. The 1942-43 Negro Directory identified her address as 1515 E. 33rd Place.

Washington, Leon (1907-1974) Civic Affairs – Washington was one of several publishers in the black community who used their newspapers as platforms to fight racial discrimination. After working for the *California Eagle* for a number of years, he founded the *East Side Shopper* in 1933. The name was changed to the *Los Angeles Sentinel* the following year. He is best known for taking on the Central Avenue merchants with his "Don't Spend Where You Can't Work" campaign. The *Sentinel* first opened an office on Vernon Avenue, then moved to a small space at 1050 E. 43rd Place, which was also his home. In 1949, it moved to its own building at 1112 E. 43rd St., just off Central Avenue. The 1930 Negro Directory identifies his address as 1385 E. 22nd Street.

Wilkins, William (0000-0000) Music – Wilkins was a pioneer music teacher and gifted pianist. Raised in Los Angeles and mainly self-taught, he opened the Wilkins School of Music on Central Avenue and 14th Street in 1912. The Wilkins Piano Academy numbered over 250 pupils at the main school and had additional students at five branches.

Williams, Paul (1894-1980) Architecture – One of the most successful and talented architects to practice in Los Angeles during the middle of the 20th century, Williams worked his way through the University of California by teaching art until he became a certified architect in 1915. He was the only African American licensed west of the Mississippi as early as the 1920s. Much of his work was residential and included mansions for film stars including Lon Chaney, Lucille Ball,

and Tyrone Power. He also designed a number of important landmarks associated with the African American community including the Second Baptist Church, the 28th Street YMCA, and the Angelus Funeral Home. His house at 1690 Victoria Avenue is designated Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #170.

Woodward, Beulah (1895-1955) Art – An artist who specialized in sculpture, Woodward was the first black artist to be honored with a one-person show at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1935. She was an important organizer of both the Los Angeles Negro Art Association in 1937, and Eleven Associated Artist Gallery in 1950. She lived at 1521 E. 50th Street according to the 1930 City Directory, however the house has been altered.

Young, Lee (1914-Living) Music – Young broke into the music business when he was still a teenager as a singer and dancer at the Apex Club, which later changed its name to the Club Alabam. Later, he and his brother Lester formed the Lee and Lester Young Band. As a drummer, Young was the first black staff musician at Columbia Pictures in 1945. Later, he held a number of executive positions with recording companies. The Young family lived next to the Musicians Union at 1706 S. Central Avenue, but the house has been demolished. The 1941 City Directory identifies his address as 760 10th Place, however that house is gone as well.

Young, Lester (1909-1959) Music – Young is remembered as one of the finest and most influential players of the tenor saxophone. He also became a jazz legend, inventing or establishing much of the hipster ethos, which came to be associated with the music. Young was the oldest son in a large musical family from New Orleans that moved to Los Angeles in 1929. He settled in Kansas City, and rose to prominence in the Count Bassie Orchestra. He and his brother Lee, a drummer, played in the jazz clubs along Central Avenue during the 1940s. The 1953 City Directory lists his residence at 1233 E. 50th. No designation of avenue, street, or place was given.