

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



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

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

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

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



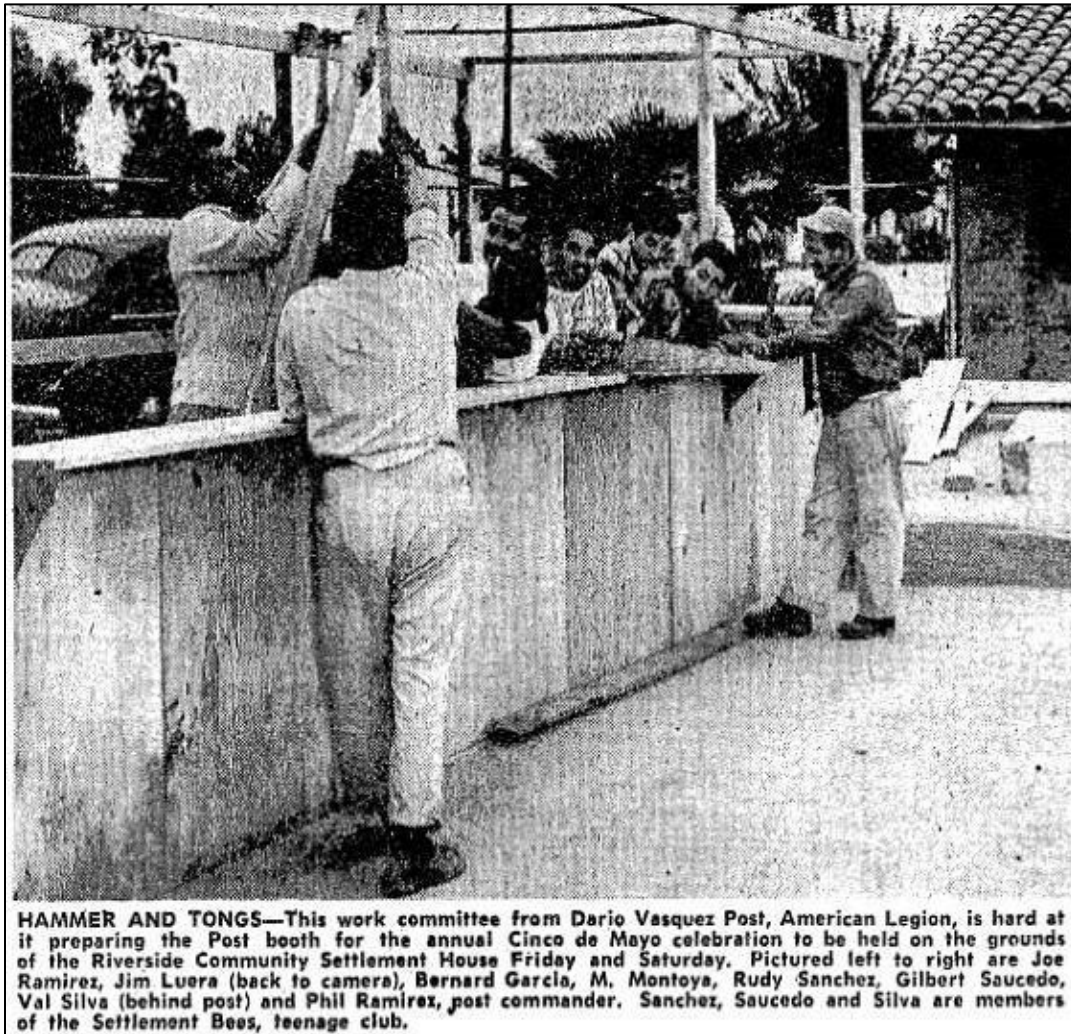
Source: Riverside Independent Enterprise, 7 May 1950

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



Source: Riverside Independent Enterprise, 7 May 1950

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



Source: *Riverside Independent Press*, 30 April 1952

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



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

### *Musicians*

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

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

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

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

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

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



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

### ABBIE CHAVEZ AND HIS ORCHESTRA

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

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



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

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



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

### **RAUL SANCHEZ**

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

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

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

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

### Murals and Mural Artists

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

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

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

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

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



Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., 2018

## ROY DUARTE, MURALIST

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

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

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

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

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

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

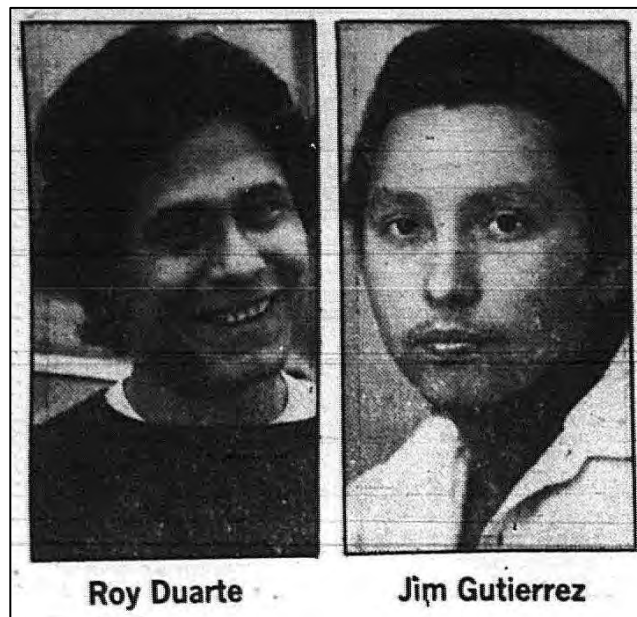


Figure 121 The murals of Roy Duarte and Jim Gutierrez, 1981



Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 1 March 1981

Figure 122 Riverside muralists Roy Duarte and Jim Gutierrez, 1981



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

### **JIM GUTIERREZ, MURALIST**

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

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

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

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

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



Source: Fuentes, 2011

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



Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., 2018

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



Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 1 March 1981

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



Source: Rincon Consultants, Inc., 2018

### DANIEL “CHANO” GONZALES, MURALIST

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

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

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

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

In later years, Dr. Phillip Gonzales, the nephew of Chano and professor in the Department of Chicano and Latin American Studies at Fresno State University, explored and presented the work of his uncle in lectures throughout Californian universities.

**Figure 127 Daniel “Chano” Gonzales, UC Riverside Chicano Student Programs mural, 1975**



Source: University of California, Riverside, Chicano Student Programs

Figure 128 Muralist Daniel “Chano” Gonzalez and collaborator, 1975



Mural takes shape above Campesinos Unidos, Inc.

Staff photo by Greg Schneider

## *‘Chican arte’ is a message to the people of the barrio*

By STEVE COOPER

Sun-Telegram Staff Writer

SAN BERNARDINO — Someday Daniel “Chano” Gonzales may have time to paint landscapes or portraits, but for now he is too busy trying to get his messages across.

His messages take the form of sized murals which have become an integral part of life in Southern California barrios. Recently, Gonzales has been experimenting with 100-foot canvases as well.

“What I’m doing is nothing new,” said the artist dressed in paint-splattered denim overalls. “I’m continuing a tradition we now call ‘chican arte.’ The whole purpose is to promote a message to the common people in the barrio.”

The paintings are bold, colorful and filled with readily understood symbolism directed at inspiring Chicano cultural pride.

“I think this work is not only necessary, I feel it’s an obligation,”

part of his mural. The past and present meet in the mural and the Chicano’s stern determination for a better future is depicted in the face of the man.

“Four or five years ago, a picture of Zapata or Villa with their

The experiment was not entirely successful. He did graduate from high school and learn to paint in prison and, after his release, he married and became a carpenter.

“I even bought a house and a new car and a color television. I got into that whole trip,” he said, speaking softly as he rubbed his

cause of something wrong in himself. But suddenly he realized it was also a problem of environment and training.

“I always felt I was dumb or stupid. But when I realized I wasn’t the only one to blame I could live with myself. After that the pieces of the puzzle just started falling together.

“The first thing I had to do was accept myself. You have to feel good about yourself before you can do anything,” he said.

When he was released from jail, he used his newly acquired confidence counseling drug addicts and ex-convicts in halfway houses. While working for the County of Los Angeles, he began attending Chaffey College.

Two years ago he graduated from Johnston College in Redlands

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*“Four or five years ago, a picture of Zapata or Villa with their guns would have been up there . . . But this is getting more subtle. You see more of the family and portrayals of today’s problems. We’re growing, I think.”*

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Source: *The Sun-Telegram*, 27 November 1975

### **FLORINDA LEIGHTON, “BRIDGE OF UNDERSTANDING” MURAL, UC RIVERSIDE**

Riverside native Florinda Leighton is a well-known Southern California muralist who specializes in works fashioned from enamel copper. In 1966, Leighton designed one of her best-known works at UC Riverside. Called “Bridge of Understanding,” the 10’ by 30’ foot mural consists of enameled copper tiles, forming a mosaic, to honor the life and work of Thomas E. Gore, founder of UC Riverside’s International Students Lounge. The mural was commissioned the year of Gore’s death. Currently in storage at UC Riverside, the mural features multiple ethnicities in traditional garments and artifacts.

#### *Chicano Art Association*

In the 1960s, the Chicano Civil Rights Movement brought a flowering of artistic expression, including murals, paintings, literature, and music. While little research has been conducted on the topic in Riverside, one group that gained renown in the early 1970s in Riverside was the Chicano Art Association. In 1973, the Chicano Art Association sponsored an exhibit on Chicano art in collaboration with the Riverside Art Center. Including 75 paintings, photographs, sculpture, and jewelry, the exhibit was shown in three locations in Riverside in 1973: at the Casa Blanca Community Center at Villegas Park, the International Lounge in UC Riverside, and on the Riverside Plaza. David Guerrero served as chair of the group in 1973. Describing the exhibit, Guerrero said: “As chicanos, we’ve got a lot of experiences behind us and the only one that can really show this is the chicano artist. We have to come up with a whole new pattern, a style that is chicano.”<sup>305</sup>

### **ESAU QUIROZ, CHICANO ARTIST, UC RIVERSIDE**

One of the local artists participating in the Chicano Art Association was Esau Quiroz. A native of Mexico, Quiroz had been painting since he was a boy. In circa 1970, he moved to Riverside to study art at UC Riverside. Quiroz captured the essence of his work, and Chicano art in general, this way:

“I paint because I want to express the feelings of our people – anger, happiness and pride,” says Quiroz. As one of few chicano artists in Riverside, Quiroz says, “It’s up to me to help our people to express what we are going through. As I became aware of the chicano movement and got involved in it, I realized I had to tell the story of my people. ...

“There’s something about our culture, our people, that we’ve always had good artists... We have to get the message across of how the chicano artist, having all this background, plays on of the most important roles in the chicano movement. There are many individual chicano artists, but you hardly hear of them because of lack of communication. Once we know who they are, and where they’re at, we can show that our art potential is as good as anyone else’s.”<sup>306</sup>

In addition to painting, his ambition was to teach art to fellow Chicanos: “If you have one Chicano teaching another, he’s teaching same blood, same color and same background. He feels an obligation, like if I’m teaching another chicano, I make sure he knows everything I know, and give him all the help he needs.” As of 1973, Quiroz had shown his work in art shows at Santa Ana College and Golden State College in Westminster, among other venues. At the age of 19, he painted a mural for the United Farm Workers headquarters in Blythe; the mural, created as a removable artwork, was later displayed at various California colleges before being obtained by a private collector in Los Angeles. In addition to his studies at UC Riverside, Quiroz served as the staff artist for the *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán* (Chicano Student Movement of Aztlán, or MECHA).

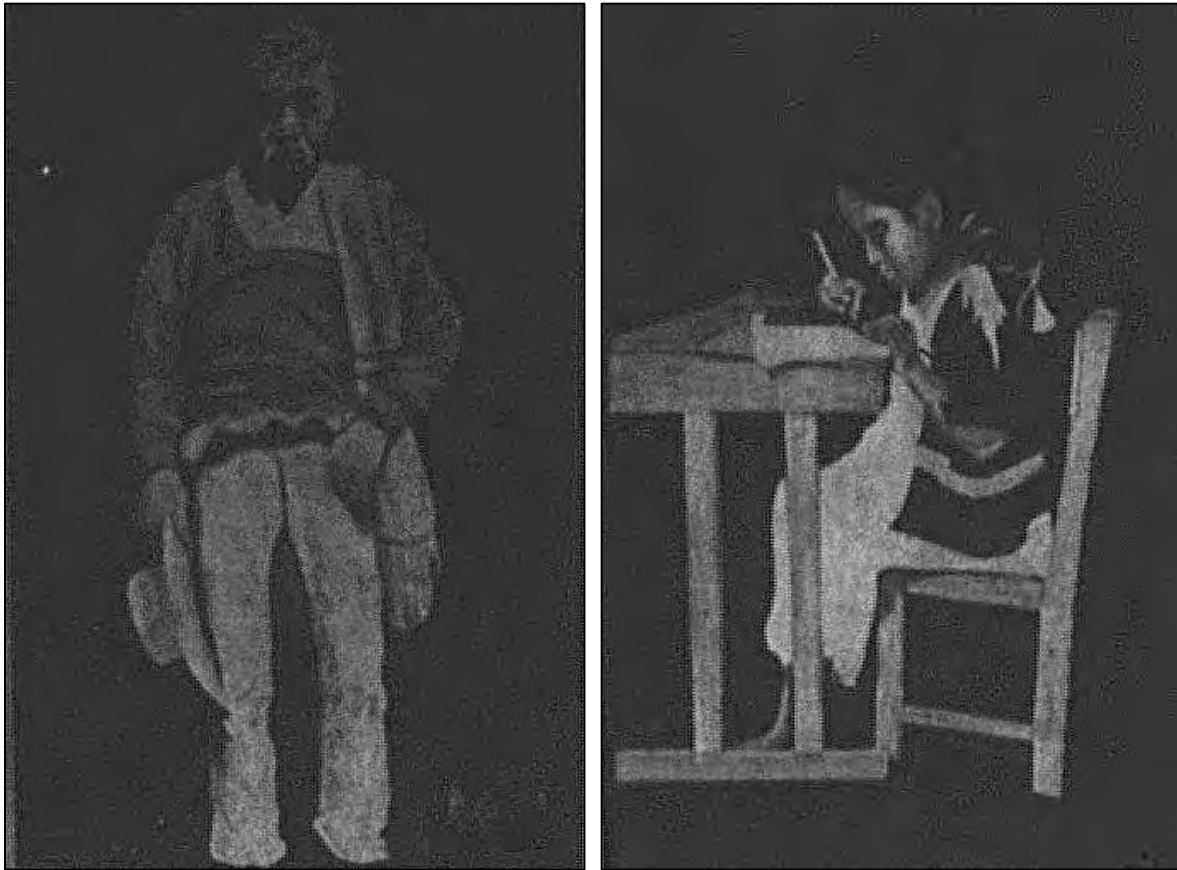
**Latino Historic Context Statement**

In the 1972 *Riverside Press Enterprise* article, Quiroz emphasized the need to express the Mexican-American experience in his work:

‘The Chicano artist has to put the feeling of the people first... He has to have empathy into how it is, being poor, working in the sun, making tortillas.’

In his own work, Quiroz says, he tries to capture this sense of Chicanismo, the Mexican experience. ‘I get ideas for paintings from myself, or photographs, and develop them to have something to relate to our people. Something that our people could say, Hey, that’s us.’

**Figure 129 “Don Juan” (left) and “Angela” (right), by Esau Quiroz**



Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 3 April 1972

**Figure 130 Esau Quiroz and Alfredo Castaneda, UCR Chicano Studies Department Chair (left); Quiroz artwork and logos (right)**



Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 3 April 1972

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

“We looked through the wire fence at white kids swimming at Fairmount Park, and we couldn’t get in. In the theater, the Mexicans were segregated in the balcony, and we wondered, ‘Why the hell can’t I sit down there?’”  
—Augustine Flores, Co-founder, American GI Forum<sup>307</sup>

### Subtheme #1: Community Responses to Segregation and Discrimination

Through the first half of the twentieth century, separate and unequal were the basic themes for the Latino community in Riverside (and beyond). Although the Hispanic presence pre-dated Anglo-American settlement, and although Riverside’s economy and growth had always depended on their labor, the Mexican-American population was openly regarded as a “problem” in need of solving. This discourse was evident well before the Great Depression triggered an economic and employment crisis. Even in polite society, openly racist discussions of the “Mexican problem” were considered appropriate. At its core, these discussions reflected a nativist fear that “the United States has reached the stage where it is necessary to choose just who shall make up the people of America.”<sup>308</sup>

From the founding years, the challenges faced by Riverside’s Latino community were shared by Latinos throughout California:

While Latinos made significant contributions to the growth and development of California, and while they could lay claim to deep historical roots in the state, they nonetheless endured widespread discrimination and segregation in the twentieth century. This inequity drove a long, unyielding fight for full equality and inclusion in American society.<sup>309</sup>

Figure 131 “We Serve Whites Only,” restaurant in the American Southwest (left); Riverside Woman’s Club talk on the City’s “Mexican Problem,” 1928 (right)



Source: Russell Lee Photography Collection, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin and *Riverside Daily Press*, 6 December 1928

The struggle for social and political inclusion intensified after 1900. As the Spanish and Mexican eras ended, and California joined the United States, Anglo-American society asserted its “power in social, political, and economic life, [and] Mexicans experienced downward mobility and marginalization in all of these realms.”<sup>310</sup> As well established in recent scholarship, this change in status was linked to race. Mexicans and Mexican-Americans were defined as inferior “as a means of justifying their social and economic subjugation. ...This process, in turn, justified the creation of a dual labor market in which Mexican workers were paid less and relegated to inferior jobs because of their perceived ethnic inferiority.”<sup>311</sup>

### *Separate and Unequal: Riverside’s Latino Community in the 1920s and 1930s*

In the pre-1945 era, even as Riverside’s Mexican-American and ethnic communities continued to contribute and grow, they faced discrimination and segregation—as either stated or unofficial policy. This segregation and exclusion included employment opportunities, housing options, as well as public places such as parks and pools, theaters and schools, restaurants and restrooms. Basic rights, including voting and attending public school, were often not accessible for migrant families.<sup>312</sup>

In addition, racially restrictive deed covenants, as well as unspoken agreements among neighbors and real estate agents, fueled housing segregation. Unable to purchase homes in the neighborhood of their choice, many residents purchased homes or rented in the only neighborhoods that would let them in. Taken together, discrimination on many different fronts impacted the lives of Latinos in Riverside and kept them from enjoying the same access to opportunities and upward mobility experienced by their Anglo-American counterparts.

As Riverside grew into a thriving metropolis, with new, modern amenities and institutions offered to its citizens, this discrimination only came into sharper relief. For example, if a Mexican-American or African-American family wanted to take their children swimming in the summer, they could only visit certain pools on days reserved for them, usually the day before the pool was emptied and cleaned. These demeaning policies were in place at the Fairmount Park pool and Arlington Park pool. Life-long Eastside resident John Sotelo recalled trying to visit the Fairmount Pool when he was a boy. Sotelo would sit by the gate, waiting. “Every time [the attendant] opened the gate for the white boys to go in swimming, I would stick my dime out and the attendant would say, ‘Sorry, but I can’t.’ So then I’d sit down back on the ground next to the gate [and await another opportunity.]”<sup>313</sup> At the same time, Japanese and Italian children did not experience such restrictions. One Japanese-American resident of Arlington, Etsuo Ogawa, recalled “learning to swim at Arlington Park and ‘roaming the streets, stealing watermelons’ with his Caucasian friends.”<sup>314</sup>

Official policies of segregation also were in place in Riverside movie theatres. For example, if a Latino family wanted to visit the Fox Theatre or Golden State Theatre, they would be directed to sit in the balcony. In the 1930s, Phillip Diaz Castro enjoyed going to the movies at the Golden State Theatre. One day, after purchasing his ticket, Philip

snuck into the main floor and took a seat. An usher came and tapped him on his shoulder and told him he had to go up to the balcony. Philip stood his ground and stated, ‘I pay the same price for my ticket as everyone else, and I want to sit here.’ Philip was taken to the lobby, given his money back and escorted out the door.”<sup>315</sup>

Such stories from Riverside’s Latino families abound. In restaurants, for example, signs might be posted outside, excluding residents of color, or the wait staff might simply ignore patrons until they gave up and left. Phyllis Salinas, the daughter of John Sotelo, recalled one visit to a restaurant with

her family; after waiting for a long period of time, Sotelo patiently asked the waitress why she hadn't come over to serve them. Sotelo reasoned with the waitress that "I'm the same as everyone else, my blood is also red, I'm just a little more tan." The waitress refused to serve them, and the family departed.<sup>316</sup>

One of the earliest legal challenges to discrimination in Riverside was brought by Frank M. Johnson, an African-American resident of Eastside. In the early 1920s, outraged over the City's refusal to allow his daughter to swim in the Fairmount Park plunge, Johnson sued the City for discrimination under California Civil Code, Sections 51 and 52. The suit was resolved by the construction of a new park and pool, known as Lincoln Park, on the Eastside. As noted above, with the formal opening taking place in August 1924, Lincoln Park was established along Park Avenue between Twelfth and Thirteenth Streets.<sup>317</sup> By this time, the Eastside was a neighborhood comprised primarily of African-Americans and Mexican-Americans. When it opened, the park was welcomed by neighborhood residents and children.

However, Lincoln Park reflected the ongoing discrimination and separate-and-unequal approach applied to communities of color. In a reflection of the lesser importance placed on parks in minority communities, in the fiscal years 1939/1940 and 1940/1941, the City's annual budget for Fairmount Park was approximately five-times greater than that of Lincoln Park. At the same time, calls had begun in the late 1930s for a small, \$1,500 expenditure to purchase land in Casa Blanca for a park. Residents of that community would have to wait several years before \$1,500 was allocated to construct a park. The priority placed on parks in Anglo-American neighborhoods was just one example of the discriminatory treatment and demeaning policies faced by the City's Mexican-American and communities of color.

There were other small victories along the way, in particular in the postwar years. In 2006, Sotelo recalled returning home from World War II and seeing a sign in a Riverside bar that read "White Trade Only." Sotelo and several other Latino veterans of World War II complained to the owner; the owner, who had recently purchased the bar and inherited the sign, "promptly tore the sign down and threw it away."<sup>318</sup> Through multi-ethnic collaboration, and a long-term effort involving many community members and organizations, Riverside's communities of color slowly rolled back discrimination and segregation.

While the postwar period brought the greatest surge in political activism for Riverside's Latino community, some earlier efforts and advances also took place. In 1944, Casa Blanca residents successfully lobbied the City's Planning Commission to halt a rezoning plan that would have brought new factories and warehouses within the Casa Blanca residential neighborhood:

Refusing the let the matter rest, over forty barrio residents, led by Sophia Arciniega, protested before the city council. They argued that they had homes in the area and did not want their children to grow up in an industrial area. Faced with this unexpected protest, the council, in a historical turnabout, rejected the planning commission's rezoning proposal.<sup>319</sup>

### *El Espectador*

As the community came together to respond to and address discrimination, some publications emerged in these early years. One early regional Latino publication that had wide reaching influence in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties was *El Espectador* (The Spectator). Published by Ignacio Lopez, a UC Berkeley graduate with Master of Arts degrees in History and Spanish, the newspaper was said to be California's largest reaching Spanish-language weekly publication.<sup>320</sup> The newspaper was active in 1939—in 1939, in nearby Ontario, Lopez rallied the community, "both Mexican

American and Anglo-American, to protest racial discrimination against Pedro Tucker, who had been prohibited from sitting in the middle aisle of a movie theatre. After a boycott of the theatre and many angry meetings, the owner signed a no-discrimination pledge. Throughout the war years, Lopez, with his newspaper and the Unity Clubs—precursors of the Unity Leagues—also organized boycotts and protests against discrimination in public facilities and restaurants.”<sup>321</sup>

### *Postwar Era of Empowerment and Engagement*

In American history, the year 1945 is often presented as a significant turning point between the old ways and a new contemporary era. This was certainly true for the Latino community. In the 1940s and 1950s, “the Latino struggle for equality expanded rapidly and took multiple forms—from grassroots organizing to litigation.”<sup>322</sup> For Latinos throughout the United States, the war years had brought a wealth of opportunities to participate in and support war efforts, whether through military service or defense-related employment. Latinos also had enjoyed new opportunities to branch out beyond the agricultural work to which previous generations of Latinos had been confined.

Advances made during World War II brought a new sense of empowerment. Efforts to organize and advocate for civil rights, equal access and opportunities gained momentum. This shift ended up affecting all areas of life for Latinos in the postwar era. In California, Latino activism

gathered the strongest momentum after World War II, reflecting a maturing of the broader Latino civil rights movement. As Latinos gained political rights, they built a formidable base of political power through institution building, voter mobilization, and the electoral successes of Latino candidates.<sup>323</sup>

There was a realization and active assertion that, as Corona-based activist and community leader Frances Martinez wrote,

‘these so-called ‘Mexicans’ are one hundred and one percent Americans—second and third generation Corona born Americans—many of whose ancestors were on the American continent before any Anglo had set foot on United States soil.’ [Martinez] appealed to both Anglo and Mexican American groups to take a crash course on US and Mexican history to better understand the problems facing Chicanos, because ‘these young people are strictly a United States product.’<sup>324</sup>

Martinez’s description of Corona certainly applied to Riverside, as well, with one of California’s oldest Latino communities. Understanding this, Latinos in Riverside began to organize and to assert their rights more forcefully. They had ready-made means for doing so. In his 2006 book *Making Lemonade Out of Lemons*, José Alamillo shows how, in nearby Corona, “Mexican American men and women transformed two relatively autonomous leisure spaces—baseball clubs and Cinco de Mayo festivals—into venues for incipient political activism aimed at improving conditions” in the Latino community.<sup>325</sup> With these same social and recreational networks in place, Latinos in Riverside also organized through their church communities and jamaicas, patriotic festivals and Cinco de Mayo events, and baseball leagues and teams. Community-based groups, as well as local branches of statewide civil rights organizations, proliferated in the postwar period.

These stirrings of the civil rights movement brought a growing sense of empowerment to assert the right for equal treatment. While a generational divide existed, with young people more open to and comfortable with vocal activism and, when necessary, proactive engagement and confrontation, a broader sense of empowerment took hold. As Simona Valero said in 1972, working at the time with

the Office of Economic Development as an anti-poverty worker, “Only lately have we felt that we have the right to say what we feel and do what we want.”<sup>326</sup>

All members of the community got involved. At a 1952 board meeting of the Community Settlement Association, for example, teenager Manuel Villalpando, a student at Polytechnic High School in Riverside, shared with Board members that “a sense of exclusion” and “discrimination against minorities in employment and in other fields gives rise to social difficulties which otherwise probably would not develop.”<sup>327</sup>

In addition, World War II veterans took the lead in responding to and addressing discrimination. After serving their country in war, as veteran Raul Morin observed,

‘How could we have played such a prominent role as Americans over there and now have to go back living as outsiders again? How long had we been missing out on benefits derived as an American citizen? We never had any voice. Here now as veterans who had risked their lives for the US was the opportunity to do something about it.’<sup>328</sup>

For Riverside veteran and community leader John Sotelo, World War II served as a catalyzing experience. After serving in the US Navy, Sotelo’s political activism began in earnest after he returned from the war. In those years, a group of Mexican-American veterans from Riverside wanted to join their fellow veterans in the American Legion Veterans Post in Fairmount Park. Their request to join was denied:

Despite having fought for the same democratic principles and shared the same misery and toil associated with military service, white members of an American Legion outpost in Riverside, California, felt compelled to maintain an exclusionary policy toward Chicano veterans. ‘When we...were ready to join the American Legion here in Riverside, we probably had 150 to 200 veterans that wanted to be a part of it, and, at that time they told us...that we had different cultures so why don’t we form an American Legion [outpost] of [our] own.’<sup>329</sup>

Sotelo, Juan Acevedo, Augustine Flores, and other fellow veterans did just that, establishing a Riverside chapter of the American GI Forum in 1951 (a topic described in more detail below).

Along with the rise in activism and the emerging civil rights movement, in the 1940s and 1950s, landmark legislation and US Supreme Court rulings shifted the legal terrain and provided a stronger foundation for fighting discrimination and segregation. Court cases included *Mendez v. Westminster*, a California-based lawsuit through which racial segregation of schools was found unconstitutional (1947), and *Shelley v. Kraemer*, through which the US Supreme Court found exclusionary deed restrictions unenforceable. (It would take another two decades for the practice to be determined illegal.)

In 1954, the landmark US Supreme Court ruling, *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*, finally overturned nearly a century of policies based on the premise that “separate but equal” as a legal doctrine was constitutional. Reversing this practice, the US Supreme Court found such policies in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution. This unanimous Supreme Court decision provided the foundation for the gradual dismantling of public school segregation (though it did not provide an accompanying blueprint for carrying this out). This ruling also helped catalyze the Civil Rights Movement and Chicano Rights Movement by the 1960s.

Although advances were significant, they were also incremental. Setbacks were also experienced along the way. In the 1950s, for example, the US program of “Operation Wetback” fanned anti-

Latino sentiment and resulted in widespread abuse and deportation. But, in general, the terrain was ready for a major shift.

These shifts slowly started to be reflected in how Mexican-Americans were portrayed by the English-language media in Riverside. Almost 30 years after the *Riverside Daily Press* pondered the “Mexican problem” and who should be allowed to live in the United States in 1928, the same newspaper ran a six-part series exploring the entrenched discrimination faced by Latinos and African-Americans in the City. Written by *Riverside Daily Press* journalist Harry Lawton, the series addressed discrimination faced by Riverside’s ethnic communities, as well as commonly held prejudices against them, in articles entitled “Minority Housing Needs Pose Social Challenge to Riverside,” “Bad Houses Don’t Reflect Characters of Inhabitants,” “Minorities Face Barriers,” and white flight in “‘Transition’ Neighborhoods Show How Problem Spreads.” In addition, the series celebrated the work of John Sotelo (“The Story of Johnny Sotelo”). In this way, the civil rights work and organizing on the part of Latinos, and a growing recognition of racial discrimination on the part of Anglo-Americans, began to change the tide in the postwar period.

**Figure 132** Lozano family, from left, Chona, Chavela, Josephine, Lily, Lucy, and Manuela. In front, Mr. and Mrs. Marcos Lozano, with son John. ca. 1940



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Figure 133 Josephine Lozano, pioneering activist and community leader (b. 1912, d. 1983)

## Josephine Lozano, Hispanic rights activist in Riverside, dies at age 70

By EMANUEL E. PARKER  
Press-Enterprise Staff Writer

Mrs. Josephine Lozano, a pioneer in the struggle for equal rights for Hispanics in Riverside, died yesterday. She was 70 years old.

Mrs. Lozano, who came to Riverside in 1913 at age 1, was a former county Democratic Central Committee member, a charter member of the statewide Mexican-American Political Association and instrumental in forming the local Mary O'Keefe Democratic Club. She was also a member of the Citizens Committee for Justice, the Community Service Organization and other charitable organizations.

Visitation will be from 2 until 9 p.m. tomorrow at the Garden of Prayer Mortuary, 7944 Magnolia Ave., Riverside. Mass will be said at 10 a.m. Monday at St. Catherine's Catholic Church, 7050 Brockton Ave.

Mrs. Lozano attended Longfellow Elementary, University Junior High and Poly High schools. During the Depression she worked to desegregate public restrooms in Riverside, and after World War II encouraged Hispanic women to register and vote.

During the early 1950s, Mrs. Lozano worked for the Riverside Community Settlement House under the direction of Juan Acevedo.

She became active in Democratic politics in the mid-1930s and was a delegate to the 1960 Democratic convention in Los Angeles that nominated John F. Kennedy for president. She also campaigned for former Riverside Councilman Johnny Sotelo, former Govs. Edmund G. "Pat" Brown and Edmund G. "Jerry" Brown Jr., former U.S. Sen. John V. Tunney, Rep. George E. Brown, former Assemblyman Walter Ingalls, State Sen. Robert B. Presley and others.

During the administration of President Lyndon Johnson, Mrs. Lozano used her own money to travel to Washington, D.C., to lobby for poverty funds for the Riverside area.

Mrs. Lozano is survived by her husband, John R. Lozano; five daughters, Delores Sevilla, Sylvia Martinez, Lidia Padilla, Anna Chavez and Rosalee Acevedo, all of Riverside; two sons, Alfred and Ralph Rodriguez, both of Riverside; two sisters, Virginia Webster and Eleanor Deaton, both of Riverside; and one brother, Arthur Dennis of Riverside. She also leaves 16 grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren.



**Josephine Lozano**

Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 8 April 1983

*Spotlight On: Josephine Lozano*

“I led the first race riot in Riverside by refusing to use a toilet labeled ‘colored.’  
I’ve been fighting for my rights and for the Mexican-American ever since.”  
—Josephine Lozano, Civil Rights Activist and Charter Member of MAPA<sup>330</sup>

One early pioneer in Latino civil rights in Riverside was Josephine Lozano. Born in 1912, Lozano lived in Riverside’s Eastside neighborhood since the age of 1. She attended Longfellow Elementary School, University Junior High, and Polytechnic High School, graduating from high school in the early years of the Great Depression. She recalled Riverside of the 1910s as “small and segregated,” with the Mexican community living in separate neighborhoods.

After graduating from high school, Lozano began working as a seamstress in 1933 for a Works Progress Administration project in downtown Riverside. She recalled the moment at work when signs segregating the bathrooms were put up, with one door marked “Colored” and the other marked “White.” Lozano refused to use the segregated bathrooms. With this, her supervisor threatened to fire her unless she used the “Colored” bathroom. After Lozano held her ground, a regional supervisor from the San Bernardino Works Progress Administration office was called in. Lozano recalled a tense stand-off among workers, as the supervisor arrived. Upon hearing what had happened, the Works Progress Administration regional supervisor told the women gathered that, because this was a federally funded project, the bathrooms “were to be shared together regardless of race, creed or color and any white woman who objected was fired.”<sup>331</sup> For her part, Lozano, instead of being fired herself, was promoted as one of the supervisors.

These experiences, including the creation of a “Mexican” church in Eastside, launched Lozano into political action and activism. She became involved in democratic politics in the mid-1930s and served as a delegate to the 1960 Democratic convention (which ultimately launched John F. Kennedy to the presidency). Lozano also actively campaigned for John Sotelo, Riverside’s first Latino City councilperson, as well as governors Pat Brown and Jerry Brown, Jr. Among her many activities, Lozano served as a County Democratic Central Committee member, a charter member of the Mexican-American Political Association (MAPA), and as a founder of the local Mary O’Keefe Democratic Club. During the early 1950s, Lozano worked for the Riverside Community Settlement House under the direction of Juan Acevedo.

“The salvation of the Mexican-American is to be involved politically,” she said in 1970. “We must support a candidate or have a Mexican-American candidate ourselves.”<sup>332</sup> In the postwar period, Lozano organized a group of Mexican-American mothers, to form the *Programa de Madres Mexicanas* (Program of Mexican Mothers), a “Chicano equivalent of the PTA.”<sup>333</sup>

In 1962, she was honored by the East Los Angeles-Belvedere Democratic Club at a presentation for women who had made outstanding contributions to community and political work. In 1963, based on Lozano’s recommendation, California Governor Edmund G. Brown reappointed Riverside Mexican-American Juan Acevedo to serve on the California Youth Authority Board, as the only Mexican-American appointee on the board.

A life-long resident of Riverside, Lozano passed away in 1983 at the age of 70.

## Subtheme #2: Housing

“I really do want to rent the house to you. But I’ve thought it over and I don’t want a long fight with my neighbors.”  
—Riverside property owner to Major Sergeant “R” and his wife, 1956<sup>334</sup>

From the earliest years, housing represented one of the front lines in the battle for equal access for the Latino community in Riverside and California. As in other areas of life, separate and unequal was the rule, through discriminatory real estate and housing practices and racially restrictive covenants. (The one exception, as a holdover from the Spanish and Mexican eras, was the group of Latinos with real or presumed Spanish heritage, as well as wealth, social status, and sufficiently light complexions.)

This discrimination affected Latinos throughout California during the first half of the twentieth century. During this time,

a powerful set of legally sanctioned tools created this segregation, including race restrictive covenants, homeowner associations, real estate practices, and ultimately federal policy that rewarded segregated neighborhoods. ...these tools of exclusion essentially protected white neighborhoods from minority incursion, and helped create separate Mexican neighborhoods.<sup>335</sup>

The way forward to gaining access was often through the courts, in particular with challenges to racially restrictive covenants. But this entailed expensive and lengthy legal processes that most people opted to avoid. Faced with this discrimination, many people focused their attention on their own neighborhoods. As Riverside business owner Pauline de la Hoya said, “you just knew you weren’t accepted and you didn’t push yourself.”<sup>336</sup> Echoing the sentiment of Ms. de la Hoya, scholars have illustrated “the twin forces that created the barrio—both Anglo exclusionary practices and the Mexican desire for cultural autonomy” as a way of explaining the factors that created Latino neighborhoods.<sup>337</sup>

In Riverside, in terms of housing condition and infrastructure improvements, ethnic neighborhoods lagged well behind their Anglo-American counterparts. During the roaring 1920s, for example, as Riverside became a modern city, majority Latino neighborhoods like Casa Blanca lacked underground sewer systems or paved streets. Most residents of Casa Blanca would have to wait another three decades before seeing major infrastructure improvements, such as sewage services and paved streets. (A greatly increased political profile and presence in the postwar period helped the Latino community successfully lobby for municipal investment.)

In the opening decades of the early twentieth century, housing demand among Latinos greatly expanded. Between 1920 and 1930 alone, Riverside’s Mexican and Mexican-American community increased nearly fourfold. By the end of the 1930s, the Latino community comprised approximately 13.3 percent of the City’s total population.<sup>338</sup> Even as the population grew in Casa Blanca, the City did little to provide services or improve infrastructure. Similarly, other neighborhoods in Riverside that were home to the City’s ethnic populations were underserved. If Latino or ethnic residents wished to leave these neighborhoods, though, their options for purchasing or renting housing were severely limited by restrictive housing covenants.

In 1919, conditions in predominantly Latino neighborhoods had deteriorated enough that the state legislature ordered a survey of living conditions in the City of Riverside. “Under the direction of 10 men and two women a census is being taken of the city of Riverside,” the *Riverside Daily Press*

reported in 1919; the survey's focus was the Mile Square area, as well as Eastside, Casa Blanca, and Arlington neighborhoods.<sup>339</sup> While the survey results showed neighborhoods and residents suffering from a profound lack of investment, infrastructure, and opportunities, the City continued to encourage de facto segregation, thereby confining Mexican and Mexican-American residents to neighborhoods deemed substandard.

Indeed, a year later, in 1920, Riverside Mayor Sam Evans praised the use of racial restrictions, in a statement that demonstrated the degree of the problem and the challenge faced by Riverside's residents of color:

Here in Riverside we are inserting these racial restrictions in our Deeds, which they say is all wrong. Now I can go as far as the next man in giving the Negro his vote, his education, and his rights, but I can't agree on his 'social equality' status & his right and his desirability to settle all through the City in white neighborhoods – it is not good for him, it engages strife and is out of place... Several committees of citizens have called to protest the purchase by Negro people of property in white sections and now, a large section of the City is petitioning to have all the property deed to the Title Co. & then re-deed with a racial restriction.<sup>340</sup>

Given this open embrace of racist views and policies at the highest levels of city government, it comes as little surprise that the Ku Klux Klan developed a branch in Riverside. In 1924, the Klan "gathered a crowd of between 5,000 and 10,000" in Riverside; even more telling, the gathering was held in the stadium of Polytechnic High School, with the permission of the school district.<sup>341</sup>

Historian Catherine Gudis notes that much Klan activity throughout the United States subsided with passage of the 1924 Immigration Restriction Act. In contrast, voters in Riverside "instead voted into office in January 1928 Edward Dighton, thought to be a Klan member, supported by the '100% American League.' In this climate, it is no wonder that racial minorities in Riverside tended to create their communities where they were welcomed."<sup>342</sup>

The onset of the Great Depression worsened not only discrimination but also the physical condition of ethnic neighborhoods. During this time, the City had fewer funds available to make municipal improvements, and Latino neighborhoods and citizens suffered. The lack of sewers and infrastructure had triggered health crises, as neighborhoods expanded but infrastructure did not. In Casa Blanca, for example, "One of the most tragic consequences of the city's denial of sewer facilities was the periodic outbreak of typhoid and tuberculosis epidemics that frequently ravaged the barrios. One such epidemic occurred in 1915, another in 1933."<sup>343</sup> In 1933, the City's health officer, Dr. W.B. Wells, "admonished the city council" that "'Casa Blanca is a pesthole... As far as typhoid fever is concerned, it is a menace owing to inadequate storm drainage facilities,'" Wells stated.<sup>344</sup> Historian Paul Viafora recounted the City Council's disinterested response as additional cases of typhoid fever emerged in Casa Blanca and Eastside:

Again, Dr. Wells and Dr. Zwahlenberg went before the city council to emphasize the urgency of the situation, 'since in sections of the city where these typhoid cases are appearing, there are no sewers.' In response, the council politely assures the two doctors that the matter would be considered in making up the budget for the following year.<sup>345</sup>

Even so, between 1936 and 1939, the City earmarked a mere \$180 for aid to Casa Blanca, from the "Unemployment Relief Fund for the continuation of a children's rest class at Casa Blanca Elementary School."<sup>346</sup>

On the Eastside, one interesting glimpse of resident demographics is provided in the 1943 survey of the Eastside neighborhood conducted by the Community Settlement House.<sup>347</sup> As noted previously, between June and September 1943, the Community Settlement House sent out a total of 50 women

to survey over 300 homes in Eastside. The 1943 survey is one example of the World War II housing boom in Riverside. Surveyors found that, as of 1943, approximately one-third of Eastside families had moved to Riverside since 1940.<sup>348</sup> Along with this increased demand, however, some landlords started raising rents from 20 to 25 percent, “even though no improvements had been made” to the homes.<sup>349</sup>

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

### *Exclusionary Housing Practices and Early Legal Challenges and Victories*

During the Great Depression, a New Deal program helped increase new residential construction as well as levels of home ownership, but further restricted the housing options of homeowners of color. Established through the National Housing Act in 1934, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) offered home mortgages that were long-term, low interest, and within the reach of the average American family. In addition to offering funding for homes, the FHA also developed designs for the ideal home and for the neighborhood itself. The so-called Minimum House served as the prototype used by the FHA in its efforts to codify and manufacture “a standard, low-cost, minimum house that the majority of American wage earners could afford.”<sup>350</sup> The resulting residential construction boom in Southern California was significant enough that it had helped the construction industry recover by the late 1930s. With GIs returning from World War II, FHA funding programs accelerated in the postwar years.

Even as the FHA made home ownership a reality for many Americans, it encouraged practices that actively excluded non-Caucasians. Several factors came together in this respect. Prior to the establishment of the FHA, in the early twentieth century, restrictive covenants had been used in property deeds that dictated terms for present and future ownership. In the case of restrictive housing practices, deeds would specify which “races” could own a property, and which could not. Covenants could last for decades and cover individual properties or entire neighborhoods. In 1919, at a time when the Mexican and Mexican-American community in Riverside was growing rapidly, the California and US Supreme Courts upheld the use of racially restrictive covenants, which “unleashed their widespread use.”<sup>351</sup>

This greatly limited not only housing options for Riverside’s residents of color but also their options for recourse. In addition, during this period, few attempts were made to disguise such housing discrimination; it was the open preference of many real estate professionals.

In the 1930s, exclusionary housing practices were encouraged and furthered by another New Deal program, the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) program. The HOLC offered refinancing and low-interest loans for homeowners during the Great Depression.<sup>352</sup> In order to offset the risk, the HOLC established an appraisal system for ranking neighborhoods and assigning a “security risk” level for each neighborhood. A number of factors went into assigning risk, including housing age, condition, and value, as well as demographics of the residents, proximity to services and amenities (or hazards).

What made the program infamous, however, was its focus on the race of neighborhood residents to assign risk and the subsequent refusal to offer loans to non-Caucasian homeowners. Security levels were color-coded from green (least risk), blue, yellow, and red (highest level of risk). Owners living

in neighborhoods with higher levels of risk generally could not qualify for loans or federal funding. Prepared for cities throughout the United States, the HOLC Security Maps offer an illuminating if troubling look into housing discrimination and the federally sanctioned practice of “red-lining.” The FHA supported the use of restrictive covenants until 1948, a practice that impacted neighborhoods throughout Riverside, Southern California, and the United States.

Such exclusionary housing practices were dismantled in small steps through the courts beginning in the 1940s. A half-century of use of such practices, however, had resulted in entrenched segregation in communities throughout Southern California and Riverside. The gradual reversal of these practices contributed to early success in challenging housing discrimination.

One early, successful challenge was filed by the Bernal family of Fullerton, Orange County. In 1943, Alex Bernal, a native Californian and son of Mexican immigrants, his wife Esther, and their family moved into a neighborhood called Sunnyside Addition. The neighborhood’s racially restrictive covenants barred “any Mexicans or persons other than of the Caucasian race” from living in the neighborhood.<sup>353</sup> When neighbors hoping to drive the Bernals out of the neighborhood filed suit in the Orange County Superior Court, the Bernals’ attorney argued that racially restrictive covenants were a violation of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments of the US Constitution. The judge agreed, “marking the first successful use of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments in a housing restriction case.”<sup>354</sup>

Similarly, in a 1943 case, *A.T. Collison and R.L. Wood v. Nellie Garcia*, a Los Angeles superior court judge ruled in favor of a Mexican-American woman, Nellie Garcia, who had purchased property near El Monte in Southern California. The judge ruled that the racially restrictive covenant itself was invalid, since “there was no such thing as a ‘Mexican race.’”<sup>355</sup> The 1948 US Supreme Court decision in *Shelley v. Kraemer* found racially restrictive covenants unenforceable on a national level. As a result of the landmark 1948 ruling, the Federal Housing Administration, which had tacitly encouraged the use of racially restrictive covenants through its lending and redlining practices, cut off federal mortgage funding for sales involving restrictive deeds.

Although it would take another 20 years for such covenants to be ruled illegal, these court decisions “enabled a small Mexican-American middle class to begin moving into formerly all-white suburbs by the 1950s.”<sup>356</sup>

### *Postwar Progress toward Equal Housing*

In the postwar period, even as many new housing tracts were constructed throughout Riverside, housing options continued to be tightly restricted for Latino families and families of color. In Riverside and beyond, official and unofficial discrimination remained the norm and “gaining open access to housing became a key civil rights goal.”<sup>357</sup> At the same time, the Latino community in Riverside “entered a new, activist era” after World War II,<sup>358</sup> and the activism of this era would prove transformative for the community in all areas of life, including housing access. Riverside real estate agents of color, such as Eddie Streeter and Leo and Mela Lueras, helped home owners and renters to find housing.

Even as Latinos were limited in their housing choices, many new neighborhoods appeared throughout Riverside, as agricultural lands were gradually replaced with housing tracts and development. By the mid-20th century, “the increasing diversification of Riverside’s economic livelihood saw the destruction of much of Riverside’s once vast citrus acreage”:

As the dependence on agriculture lessened and population pressures increased, the groves and fields that dotted Riverside gave way to urban expansion, as elsewhere in southern

California. By the late 1950s, the post-WWII boom and the accompanying suburbanization movement in American history had redefined the residential landscape throughout Riverside.<sup>359</sup>

Although Latinos benefited from legal victories in the pre- and post-war period, the practice of “steering” people of color away from certain neighborhoods remained intact in California and in Riverside. The *Riverside Daily Press* noted the practice in 1956, claiming that most of Riverside’s neighborhoods at the time were “closely fenced in by ‘Gentlemen’s Agreements’ that aimed to keep people of color out of primarily Anglo neighborhoods.”<sup>360</sup>

A 1956 series in the *Riverside Daily Press* explored the topic of housing discrimination. In the articles, countless similar stories were recounted. Overall, for minority renters and owners in Riverside, options were severely limited. With the rental market largely off limits, due to “steering” practices by real estate agents, Latinos or African-Americans could build their own home or find housing in a neighborhood with an existing minority presence.

In this way, the much-celebrated postwar housing boom was all but closed to families of color. Between 1950 and 1956, more than 210 new housing subdivisions had been constructed in Riverside. Among these, only three “catered exclusively to minority group needs.”<sup>361</sup> Those three neighborhoods were the Streeter Tract off Pennsylvania Avenue in Eastside, Los Ranchitos tract by Critchlow-Austin in Casa Blanca, and the Wood Subdivision east of Kansas Avenue in the Eastside “fringe” area.

Although legal remedies to housing discrimination were available, filing suit entailed an arduous and expensive path, and one that most people chose to avoid. For example, in the 13 August 1956 article “Discrimination Mars an All-American Community,” the article opens with a young World War II veteran and his wife, house hunting in Riverside. Recently stationed at March Air Force Base, the sergeant and his wife visited many open rentals throughout the City, only to be told repeatedly that the home had just been rented. Through the course of the day, one sympathetic real estate agent said more candidly, “I really do want to rent the house to you. But I don’t want a long fight with my neighbors,” the reporter recounted. Finally, the young couple, who were African-American, were directed to a dilapidated cottage that was well below their price range and in dire need of repairs and remodeling. They opted to buy a home in Eastside instead, since “it would be almost impossible for him to buy a home in a new subdivision without a long court battle.”<sup>362</sup>

Even as their housing choices were limited, the Latino community was growing rapidly in Riverside. As of 1956, an estimated 5,000 to 6,000 Mexican-Americans called Riverside home.<sup>363</sup> This community consisted primarily of second- and third-generation Mexican-American families. As of 1958, this total was estimated to have grown by more than 70 percent, with first-generation groups constituting a minority among Riverside’s Mexican-American population.<sup>364</sup>

## **LOS RANCHITOS, CASA BLANCA**

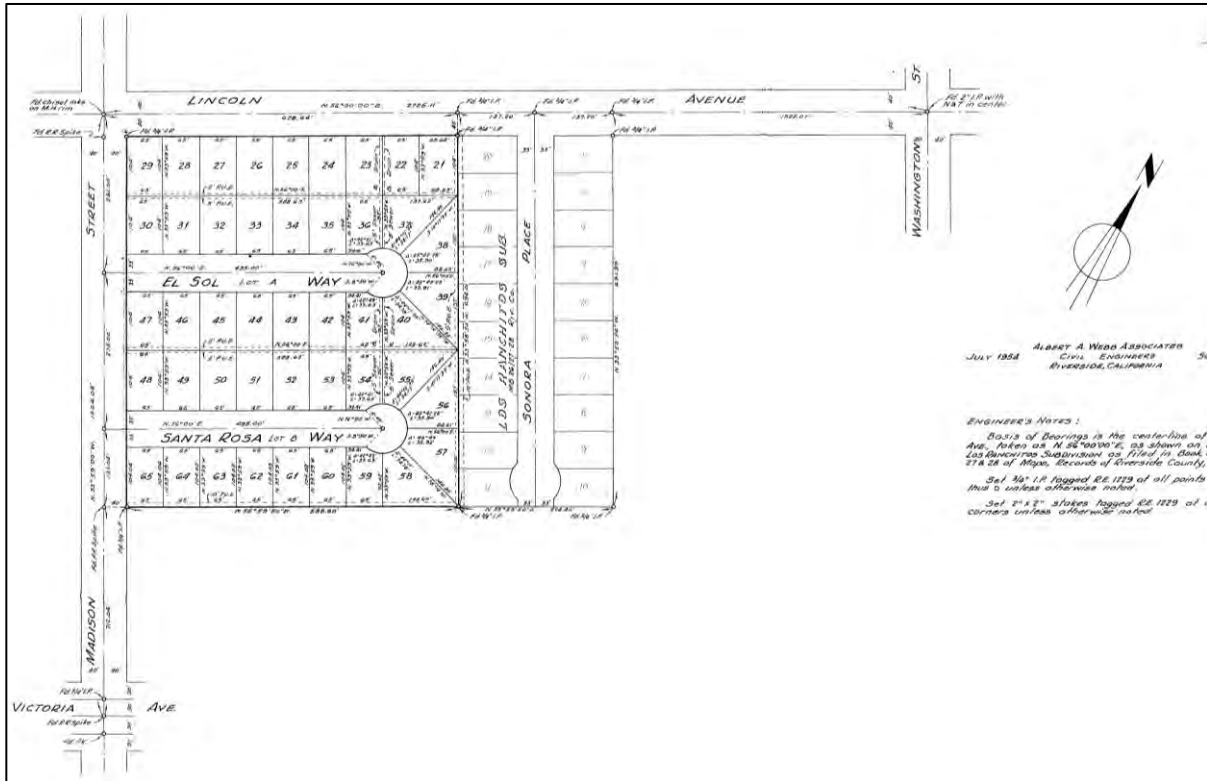
Subdivided in 1954 by the Critchlow-Austin Company, Los Ranchitos is located in the southwestern corner of Casa Blanca. A classic postwar suburb of single-family homes, Los Ranchitos features the Ranch Style homes that were popular during the era, with generous setbacks and lawns, arranged on landscaped streets with cul de sacs. The neighborhood was one of the neighborhoods featured in *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1956, as an example of improvements throughout Casa Blanca. As of 2018, the neighborhood appears largely as it did in the 1950s.

**Figure 134 Los Ranchitos, Casa Blanca's postwar suburb, 1956**



Source: *The Saturday Evening Post*, 21 April 1956

**Figure 135 Los Ranchitos, original tract map, 1954**



Source: Riverside County Maps and Land Records, RICT

## THE STREETER TRACT AND EDDIE STREETER

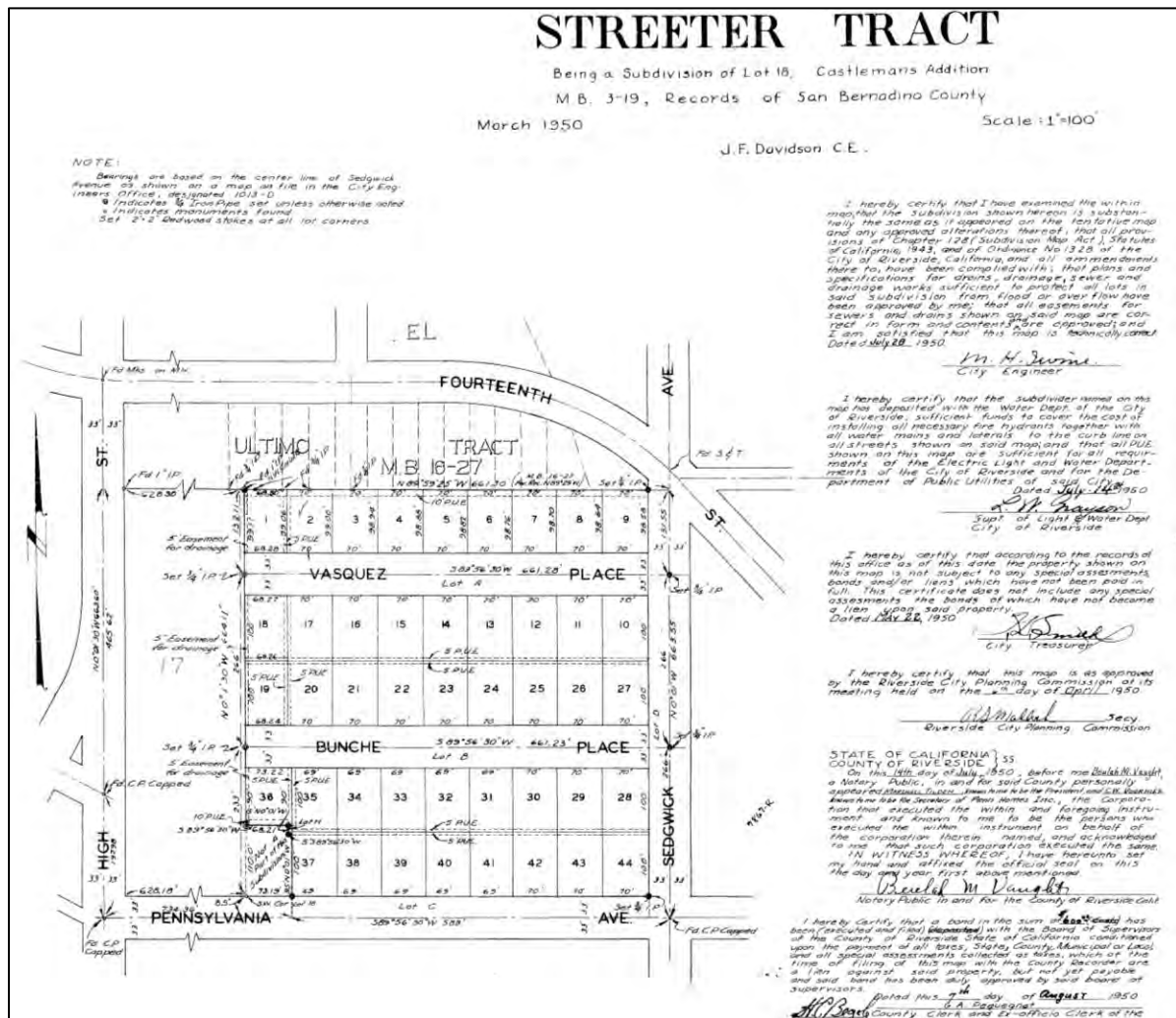
One of the earliest integrated postwar housing tracts in Riverside was the Streeter Tract. With the original subdivision map filed in 1950, the development hit the market just two years after racially restrictive covenants were legally unenforceable.

From 1950 to 1972, John Sotelo and his family lived in the Ranch House-lined Streeter Tract.<sup>365</sup> The story of Sotelo's acquisition of the property was a common one for families of color in the postwar period. In the late 1940s, back from the war and working at Rubidoux Cadillac, Johnny Sotelo started looking for a new home in a new tract on Pennsylvania Avenue. He visited the main sales office but was told that no vacancies were available. Back at work, Sotelo relayed this news to a coworker (who happened to be Anglo-American). The coworker, upon visiting the same housing tract, was told there were plenty of vacancies and was presented with a map showing the available homes. No stranger to discrimination, Sotelo did return to the sales offices and asked why they insisted they had no vacancies for him, but plenty for his white coworker. (Over a decade later, when Sotelo was serving on the City Council, the salesman who had refused to sell him a home came before City Council with a land development project. Although Sotelo opposed the project, favoring conservation of the land, he recused himself in the vote, wishing to avoid the appearance of bias.)

Sotelo gave up on that tract, though, and enlisted the help of local African-American realtor and land developer, Eddie Streeter, who was well known among families of color experiencing entrenched housing discrimination. Streeter had an office on the Eastside, located at 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Park Avenue (Streeter's wife Peggie, a successful caterer in Riverside, shared a space with her husband, with "Peg's Party Shop"). Streeter told Sotelo about a tract he was planning on Sedgwick and Pennsylvania Avenues, called Streeter Tract. With the tract owned by Penn Homes, Streeter worked with the American Legion and NAACP in establishing the subdivision.

In 1950, Sotelo purchased one of the first homes constructed in the tract, at 2427 Pennsylvania Avenue. The family lived there from 1950 to 1972. Given Johnny's profession and skills, he requested a double-garage door, which is still there today (one of the few in the neighborhood). Sotelo's daughter Phyllis recalls that, while the neighborhood was initially multicultural, with almost all the families either veterans or active service in the military, white flight began to take hold as an increasing number of families of color moved in.

Figure 136 Streeter Tract, 1950, one of three new housing tracts open to residents of color



Source: Riverside County Land Records, RCIT

In the 1950s, after decades of neglect and substandard infrastructure, municipal improvements finally arrived in earnest in Casa Blanca. One of the earliest campaigns by Casa Blanca residents involved requesting a sewer system for the neighborhood. In accordance with local law, the addition of a sewer line in the neighborhood brought with it a city-level fee. Given this extra cost to homeowners, more than 50 percent of owners had to approve the request.

One of the leaders in these initiatives was Casa Blanca resident Joseph Park, the son of Korean-American and Mexican-American parents. Led by Park and other community members, sewer petitions were circulated throughout the neighborhood in the summer of 1950. The *Riverside Independent Press* reported on the petition drive in Casa Blanca: "Park said he hoped to have the petitions ready for the City Council by the middle of the next week. Council will hold a public hearing on the sewer request, and order the work started if owners of more than 50 percent of the affected property favor the sewer installation."<sup>366</sup> Because of the importance of the upgrade, residents of Casa Blanca banded together to ensure that all families could afford to pay the city fee:

Realizing that sewer and street improvements would cost more than most barrio Chicanos could afford, a group of Casa Blancans convinced two banks to make low-interest home

improvement loans to barrio residents. Assured of the necessary funding for the renovation campaign, neighbors began to unite to help each other remodel and repaint their homes.<sup>367</sup>

Figure 137 "Tangible Example of Civic Pride at Work" in Casa Blanca, *Riverside Daily Press* series

## Casa Blanca - Tangible Example of Civic Pride at Work

(This is the seventh in a series of articles on minority group housing problems in the city of Riverside.)

By HARRY LAWTON

Over a year ago, Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Aguilar lived in a cramped, four-room cottage at 7347 Peters St., Casa Blanca. Although their home could not properly be considered a slum-type dwelling, it was badly deteriorated and an eyesore.

Recently a friend—who had not visited the Aguilars in a long time—dropped by the same address and stared in wonder at their spacious, trimly attractive home.

"When did you build a new home?" he asked.

Gloria Aguilar laughed.

"We didn't," she said. "We remodeled. Isn't our new house nice?"

In remodeling, the Aguilar family expanded the house into a six room residence, enlarging the building to such an extent the house was completely unrecognizable.

Remodeling of the Aguilar home is typical of the face-lifting the minority group community of Casa Blanca has undergone in recent years.

Casa Blanca is a rapidly changing community. One can't drive through it today without sensing the spirit of accomplishment which permeates its citizenry.

Almost every street reveals the growing sense of civic pride in Casa Blanca residents. New homes are going up, shacks are being razed, old homes are being remodeled and yards are being landscaped.

This is not to imply all of the dilapidated houses have vanished. They are, however, fast disappearing and the few slum type houses still existing will probably be gone in a few years.

**40 Years Old**

Casa Blanca is a community of about 400 homes, established almost 40 years ago as a Mexican-American colony. It is still primarily a Mexican-American community, but scattered throughout the district are Negro, Korean, Japanese, Indian and a few Anglo families.

Although almost 90 per cent of residents own their

homes, there was little incentive for improvement prior to the end of World War II.

Apathy of Casa Blancans was largely due to the fact that Casa Blanca was a forgotten community. It had never received a fair share of community services. It had no street lights, no sewers, no curbs and gutters, and loans for improvement were practically impossible to get because of lack of civic improvements.

Also operating against improvement was the fact that most residents were employed in agricultural work, where incomes were marginal and unstable. They spent a large portion of each year following crop harvests across the state.

**Better Jobs**

During the war, many Casa Blancans found better job opportunities. And veterans returning home had a new sense of pride in their Mexican-American heritage. They were aware it was not just prejudice, but also defeatist attitudes and feelings of restriction and helplessness which kept Mexican-American communities in a backward state.

The rest of Riverside also took notice of Casa Blanca when a Congressional Medal of Honor was posthumously awarded to the community's Sgt. Ysmael Villegas, who was killed in 1945 leading his unit in a direct frontal attack on six Japanese fox holes. In 1952, Villegas Park was dedicated by the city in his honor.

The changes which occurred in Casa Blanca can not be attributed to any one person's leadership or any one group. They represent combined efforts of a community, which has acquired a firm sense of civic responsibility.

**Drive Failures**

Improvement drives have failed in Riverside's crowded Eastside section because half of the homes are rental units and landlords have been backward in razing sub-standard housing and making repairs.

The single residential zoning of Casa Blanca favored the neighborhood improvement program method. The community lacked the mass of back-lot shacks blighting the Eastside, which is zoned for two family residences.

(Turn to HOUSING, Page B-3)



(Staff Photos by Fred Bauman)

This tiny shack is typical of slum-type dwellings which are rapidly disappearing in Casa Blanca as residents voluntarily participate in neighborhood improvement programs.



The Sylvester Aguilar home, 7347 Peters St., is one of many Casa Blanca residences, which have been attractively remodelled in recent years.

Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 18 August 1956

Historian Paul Viafora noted the catalyzing effect of these improvements and efforts neighborhood-wide:

The success of the renovation campaign and the enthusiasm which it sparked within the Chicano community led to the development of a series of barrio organizations, which focused their sights on improving the community. ...The Casa Blanca Welfare Association was formed to investigate the neglect of barrio citizens by various welfare agencies. ... The Casa Blanca Health Council was founded to 'educate community residents on health and sanitation needs.'<sup>368</sup>

The directorship of the Casa Blanca Welfare Association included representatives from Saint Anthony's Church, the Ysmael Villegas American Legion Post No. 838, American Legion Auxiliary, Home of Neighborly Service, Arlington Heights Citrus Company, and the Victoria Avenue Citrus Association. In addition, by-laws for the association were drafted by long-time Casa Blanca elementary School Principal Mabra Madden, along with Augustine Flores and Joseph Park. By the 1970s, all community services in Casa Blanca, including water, electricity, sewage and solid waste disposal, fire protection services and police services, were provided by the City.

Discrimination continued to take many forms. In addressing an enduring perception that the working poor were somehow to blame for their own lack of material resources, one article featured a photo of an immaculate home interior, with a Mexican-American mother reading to her three children. The photo caption read, “A deteriorating dwelling is not an accurate index of the character of its habitants. The interior of the building shown was neatly kept despite its shabby exterior.”<sup>369</sup>

Such enduring prejudice contributed to the waves of “white flight” or “panic buying” that took place as residents of color made in-roads into predominantly Anglo-American neighborhoods. One such area was in Eastside, along Angelo Street and Michael Street. Termed a “panic” neighborhood, after minority families arrived, these blocks displayed a total 14 for sale signs in one week in 1956.<sup>370</sup>

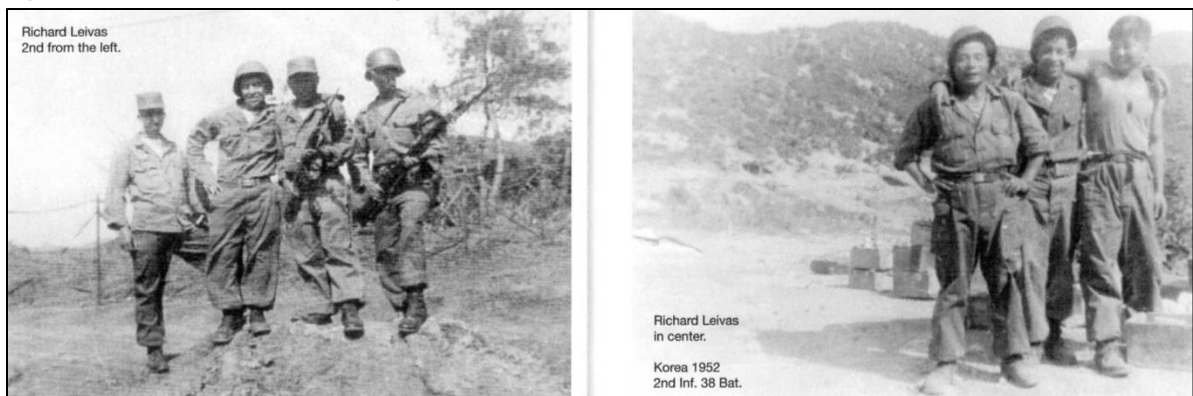
Toward the end of the same article, Lawton interviews several Anglo homeowners in another “transition” zone, on Prospect Street, south of Eastside. In these neighborhoods,

For Sale signs are beginning to disappear on many of these streets. Non-minority families have become adjusted over a period of several years to their new neighbors. ‘The fact that there were Negro and Mexican-American neighbors didn’t factor into our choice,’ stated one homeowner. ‘We wanted a home with a nice backyard and this was it.’

In 1966 and 1968, the Civil Rights Act and Federal Fair Housing Act prohibited discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability. With the 1968 Federal Fair Housing Act, passed just four days after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., the practice of redlining and racially restrictive covenants that had defined racial lines in Riverside’s neighborhoods was declared illegal.

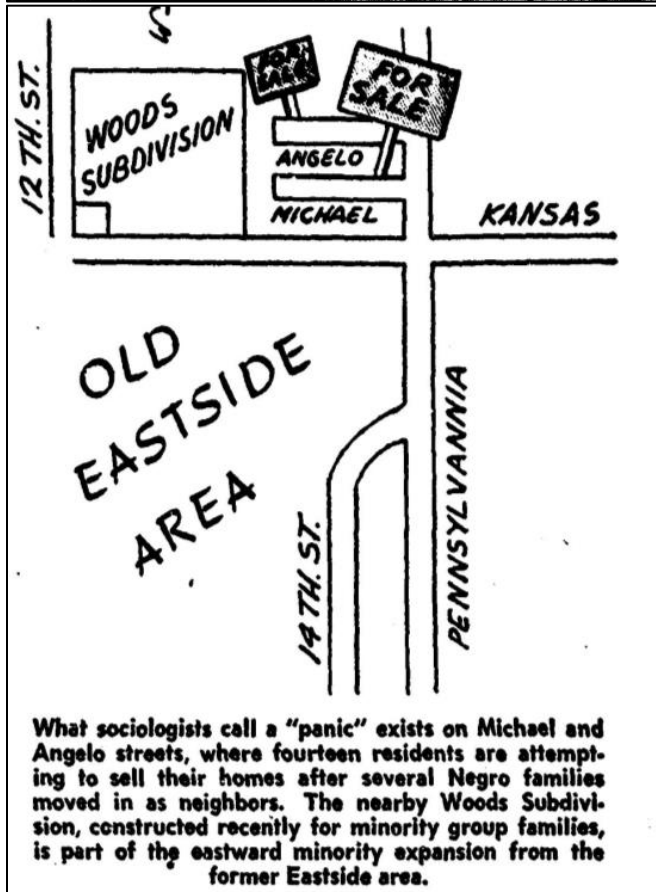
In the 1960s, minority home owners and residents started to experience greater openness and flexibility in where they could live. Such an experience was recounted by Richard Leivas, who, in 1967, moved with his family to a neighborhood he had always loved, Magnolia Center. At the time, Leivas recalls that his family members were the first Mexican-American residents in Magnolia Center. Leivas recalled having had reservations about how the family would be received by the mostly Anglo-American neighbors. His fears were eased, though, as the family was well received in the neighborhood. After 50 years, Leivas still owns his long-time family home on Luther Street in Magnolia Center.<sup>371</sup>

**Figure 138 Richard Leivas, during his service in the Korean War, 1952**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Figure 139 The inviting interior of an Eastside home (top); “White flight” in Eastside, 1956 (bottom)



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 14 August and 12 August 1956

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### Subtheme #3: Education

“Leer es poder.” (Reading is power.)

—Motto of Mrs. Grace Bailón, Casa Blanca Branch, Riverside Public Library

In Riverside and beyond, access to education represented one of the front lines in the civil rights struggle. The focus of these efforts was on equal access to facilities and educational opportunities, and on the curriculum itself. The struggle for educational access grew out of “severe segregation of California’s school and early Americanization campaigns...that required acculturation and left little room for acknowledging Latino contributions to California society and history.”<sup>372</sup>

From the Latino community’s earliest years in California, educational segregation was the norm: “As towns gained ethnic Mexican inhabitants, Anglos typically called for separate public schools ‘on the theory that the Mexican is a menace to the health and morals of the rest of the community.’”<sup>373</sup> The practice was so widespread throughout California that, by 1928, a total of “64 schools in eight California counties had enrollments between 90 to 100 percent Mexican American,” making Mexican-Americans “by far the most segregated group in California public education by the end of the 1920s.”<sup>374</sup> Apart from segregation and unequal facilities and access, the curricula in schools focused on “Americanization” and demeaned and downplayed Latino contributions and culture.

For Latino parents, securing access to quality schools for their children was of critical importance. The movement to eliminate segregated schools gained momentum in the postwar period, as a multi-ethnic coalition came together to apply pressure to the school district.

#### *The Founding Years and “Americanization” Movement*

In the early twentieth century, one factor that shaped the curriculum offered to Latino pupils was the Americanization movement, an outgrowth of the Progressive Era. The official goal of Americanization was assisting immigrants in acculturation, including a wide range of classes in English and job skills. Often run out of churches and schools, such programs were designed to teach immigrant women “English, thrift, time discipline, hygiene, and low-level work skills” intended to prepare them for “the bottom segment of the American work force as low paid, yet loyal workers.”<sup>375</sup>

Some of the earliest Americanization efforts in Riverside focused on the Native-American population. In 1902, a boarding school for Native-American children—the Sherman Institute—opened on Magnolia Avenue.<sup>376</sup>

Among Mexican natives and Mexican-Americans, Americanization classes were often met with distrust. With a focus often on assimilation rather than acculturation, there was a perception that Americanization showed “contempt for the Mexican peasant.”<sup>377</sup>

In 1915, Americanization initiatives were taken a step further with passage of the California Home Teacher Act. The law encouraged assimilation and Americanization through placing a “teacher” in the homes of foreign-born residents: “The home teacher was to work in the homes of the pupils, instructing children and adults in matters relating to school attendance and preparation, sanitation, and in the English language, in household duties such as purchase, preparation and use of food and of clothing and in the fundamental principles of the American system of government and the rights and duties of citizenship” among other things.<sup>378</sup> By the 1920s, in Riverside as elsewhere, this movement helped justify creation of separate “Mexican schools,” as evidenced in the 1924 construction of Independiente School in Arlington Heights.<sup>379</sup>

**Figure 140 Sherman Institute “Indian School,” Magnolia Avenue, Riverside, 1902**



Source: Sherman Institute Museum

**Figure 141 Sherman Institute students at Sunkist Oranges packing plant, ca. 1945 (left); Robert F. Kennedy and staff visiting Sherman Institute, ca. 1965 (right)**



Source: Riverside Public Library and Los Angeles Public Library

In the late 1910s, efforts at “Americanization” for foreign-born adults included free English lessons, offered three times a week. Reporting on the program in 1919, the *Riverside Independent Enterprise* noted that “practical work on a good-sized scale is being done at Casa Blanca in Americanizing Mexican residents of that section of the city. ...The attendance is not only large, but is constantly increasing.”<sup>380</sup> At the time, Ira Landis served as principal of the program, with Eliza Penney, Vera Marti, and Ethel Johnson serving as teachers. In addition, as Independiente School opened in 1924, the campus offered a venue for night-classes in English and other aspects of American “citizenship.”

Figure 142 Americanization work at Independiente Night School, 1928

**SECTION TWO**  
**EDITORIAL**

# RIVERSIDE DAILY PRESS

VOL. XLIII Single Copy Three Cents RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA, FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 27, 1928 NO. 101

**SPORTS**  
**CLASSIFIED**

## Americanization Work Conducted at Independiente Night School

### JAPANESE AND MEXICAN WORK

**School Proves God-Send To Foreigners—Examples of Work**

By MILDRED AYERHILL

Independence is a Mexican and Japanese settlement in Riverside, located on Indian avenue and extending from Jackson street beyond Van Buren.

Last year a desire was expressed by members of this community for the opportunity of education as afforded in night school. The matter was considered by those in authority, but it was not until this year that steps were taken to hold regular sessions of night school in the Independiente school house on Indian avenue.

Credit is due to Mrs. Len P. Jennings, principal of the Independiente grade school, to A. N. Whelan, city superintendent of schools, and to Ira C. Landis, for their kindly and interested cooperation in starting and supporting the work.

The conducting of the night school was placed in charge of Miss Zeala Wetters, one of Riverside city teachers, employed in the third and fourth grades at the Independiente grade school. Wetters is adequately and efficiently prepared for Americanization work, having received courses in that line at the summer session of the University of California at Los Angeles.

On the night of January 19, 1928, the doors of the Independiente school house were opened to the foreigners of the Mexican and Japanese village. A cordial invitation and welcome were extended to those who wished to enter the halls of learning.

Mrs. Jennings and Miss Wetters, if they were present, enthusiastic and eager to assist in a truly American spirit all who were seeking to take advantage of the opportunity freely and generously offered to acquire knowledge.

Thirty-one presented themselves the first night, the majority of them were Mexican laborers; there were a few Japanese working men. They all wanted to learn to use English, to speak in the new tongue, and to be able to write it. The desire was earnest and urgent.

The good news spread that the

### County Schools Scattered Over Extensive Area

**Supt. E. E. Smith Travels Thousands of Miles Each Year**

By ARLOFF CONAWAY

"Riverside county is so large in area as Rhode Island and Connecticut combined, and one is bound to find a great variety of conditions here," declared E. E. Smith, county superintendent of schools, to a Polytechnic journalism student recently. "One school," he continued, "is in the mountains, one mile above sea level, and in one district the pupils' nearest neighbor is 20 miles distant."

**Official Travels Far**

It is necessary for this official to travel from six to seven thousand miles yearly to keep in touch with all parts of the county. He believes the office is getting to be "one month of hell," but that, in too much time is spent on budgets and office work, and not enough devoted to actual contact with schools.

In this county there are 166 school buildings, with 673 teachers, and housing 16,400 students. The 17 kindergarten have an average daily attendance of 115; 25 teachers with a payroll of \$22,345.

Total expenditures for the elementary schools is \$1,189,441. About 128 eighth grade pupils graduate each spring.

In this county are three regular junior highs with an average attendance of 667, and a staff of 45 teachers.

"The county is proud of its ten academies," he said, "located in Riverside, Banning, Beaumont, Hlythe, Camarillo, Corona, Elmore, Hemet, San Jacinto and Perris. In these the average attendance is 1674 plus 189 who attend part time day, or evening schools. One hundred thirty-four teachers are in charge of these schools."

**Certificates on File**

In a large filing cabinet are the certificates, or records of such, of every teacher in the county. These have been obtained either from the county superintendent or from the state examinations given twice a year by the board.

All school money must be O.K.

### Vocational Training Outstanding Feature in Riverside City Schools

By KENNETH HOTTELLING

Riverside's Poly High Vocational department, under the supervision of W. C. Wiley, is doing wonderful work in training students for the future. The department is doing a splendid job of training students for the future. The department is doing a splendid job of training students for the future.

**Auto Shop**

Students of the Auto Shop are accomplishing much with the help of their instructor, Clifford Furkert. The boys have the privilege of using the shop to work on their own cars and thereby reducing repair costs considerably.

Every day of every section are repaired and rebuilt here.

When a machine of the type it becomes very evident that more attention is needed for better machinery there are so many cars and trucks being repaired that the boys are greatly handicapped.

**Machine Shop**

J. W. Hinton, Machine Shop instructor, has made a list of twenty boys. Some of the things they have made are: three wheel tractor, metal for parts for the Franklin Printing Press, a drill press for the Boy's Junior High school and equipment for use in the shop this year.

**Bill Cabinet**

Boys of the Bill Cabinet Shop have been making articles of furniture for the high school and for the city. The equipment in the Bill Cabinet Shop, and the Junior Cabinet Shop, is the best in the city.

The various departments of Poly High appreciate the fact that the school has a cabinet shop and that the boys are given such an opportunity when they with a hurried job and looks put in place.

A fine eight-room house on Inland Empire has been built by boys in carpentry, under the guidance of their instructor. The house was inspected by the state inspector. It was found to contain only one error and that was removed.

The drawings are sent in by the students. These drawings are divided into the Upper and Lower divisions. The drawings are sent in by the students. These drawings are divided into the Upper and Lower divisions.

From the sixth grade to the eighth grade pupils are compelled to take drawing; after that they may elect.

From Detroit, Mr. Price was connected with the Detroit School system for many years. Then coming to California, he took his place as principal of the Manual Training school.

In the same building with the Manual Training is Great Elements (Continued on Page Two)

Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 27 April 1928

## Segregation and "Mexican" Schools, 1920s

As the Latino community grew and established its presence as a permanent part of the community, segregation and discrimination in many areas of public life became the norm. This extended to the realm of public education. While the official formation of "Mexican schools" in Riverside arrived in the 1920s, de facto segregation had been the norm from the earliest years.

As early as 1874, the Riverside City School District established a separate district—the Trujillo School District—for residents of La Placita, an action that excluded the early Spanish-speaking and Mexican community from Riverside schools.<sup>381</sup> In 1906, this decision was reaffirmed by the Riverside City School Board, as the board determined that school attendance must be tied to residential location, thereby guaranteeing the de facto segregation that would remain in place until the postwar period: "Born in the political, economic, and social conflicts between Mexicanos and Anglos in the post-Mexican-American War period, the policy and tradition of racial segregation of Riverside schools continued until 1965."<sup>382</sup>

In addition, prior to physical segregation and the construction of "Mexican" schools, Latino children throughout the Inland Empire were separated into special "Spanish" and vocational classes. Housed in the same facilities as Anglo-American students, these courses included a "very different curriculum than the other classes in the schools. According to author Philippa Strum, the boys in the classes often studied 'gardening, bootmaking, blacksmithing, and carpentry,' which were considered appropriate trades for the boys. The girls would be educated in sewing and homemaking."<sup>383</sup>

As the Mexican-American population grew in the 1920s, school segregation and unequal treatment grew more pronounced. By 1927, for example, “about ten percent of California’s public-school population was of Mexican descent. In Southern California counties the percentage of students of Mexican descent ranged from 17 to 36 percent.”<sup>384</sup> In Riverside, in addition to the nativism and discrimination faced by Latino students, some ranchers were reticent to allow their workers’ children to obtain an education: “Education, they believed, would lead the students to become dissatisfied with the idea of working in the fields and result in a less subservient attitude.”<sup>385</sup>

In addition to gerrymandering and other policies, the Riverside City School District adopted the “poll tax” for students. As a tactic ordinarily employed in politics, the poll tax assessed an attendance fee for the children of migrant workers. An \$8.00 fee per semester, per child, was assessed for attending Riverside High School, and \$4.00 fee per semester assessed for elementary school. The fee proved prohibitive for many low-wage agricultural workers.

Another approach that encouraged segregation during the tenure of Arthur Wheelock as Riverside City School District superintendent was granting school transfers to Anglo-American parents, while restricting (or disallowing) transfers for parents of color. One example involved the boundary lines between Lowell Elementary School, which served a predominantly Anglo-American population, and Irving Elementary School, which served minority populations. Anglo students who wished to transfer out of Irving Elementary School were typically allowed to do so, whereas requests for transfers by Mexican-American and African-American students were generally denied. In contrast, by the 1930s, Italian-Americans from Riverside’s ethnic neighborhoods such as Eastside and Casa Blanca had an easier time transferring into Anglo-American schools if they so wished. At the same time, Japanese and Italian children and families had more success in moving out of segregated schools.

In this period, as historian Steven Moreno-Terrill has shown, the practice of separate and unequal became the policy for Riverside’s public schools:

For each designated Mexican school in Riverside, there was a corresponding white school. Irving’s was the Lowell school, Casa Blanca’s was Palm, and Liberty for Independiente. Lowell was built less than two miles away in 1911 at the behest of white parents when Irving’s population of African American and Mexican American pupils grew too numerous for their tastes. Near Casa Blanca, the Palm School was maintained white primarily through rigid district boundary lines.

In Arlington, the Liberty School P.T.A. mothers requested segregation to supposedly relieve overcrowding, resulting in the construction of the Independiente School, the only intentionally created Mexican school of the three. Irving and Casa Blanca had slightly mixed enrollment, though Mexican Americans were the majority.

In all cases, with the complicity of superintendent Arthur Wheelock, district boundary lines were drawn and consistently adjusted to maintain segregation. This functioned to preserve superior educational spaces for whites while containing the Mexican American population.<sup>386</sup>

As segregation became the norm, there were some noteworthy initiatives in the 1930s to bridge the cultural gap. Beginning in 1932, the Spanish department of Riverside Junior College presented an annual program of songs, stories, and entertainment to children at Casa Blanca and Independiente Elementary Schools.<sup>387</sup> Separate programs were prepared for younger and older children, with selections including a mix of traditional Mexican and Anglo-American songs and stories.

## CASA BLANCA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 1913 - 1967

According to the State Office of Historic Preservation, Casa Blanca Elementary School is one of three known extant “Mexican Schools” remaining in California. The school’s origins go back to 1911, when two mothers of Mexican ancestry journeyed to a meeting of the Riverside School District Board of Education. The mothers brought a petition and a request to the board.<sup>388</sup> As historian Frances J. Vasquez noted, “the women’s names were not noted in the minutes, nor in the newspaper report the next day. Yet, these two nameless women are heroes. They—and the 80 signatories on the petition—served as Casa Blanca’s culture bearers in pursuit of their children’s education.”<sup>389</sup>

The issue raised by the two women was described in the Board of Education meeting minutes: “A petition was presented signed by eighty residents of Casa Blanca asking for the erection of a public school in that locality. It appears that more than seventy children of school age reside in Casa Blanca...[and] forty children in primary grades now go to Victoria School,”<sup>390</sup> a school located nearly four miles away from Casa Blanca.

As a result of this effort, a facility for kindergarten and first-grade instruction was established in 1913 in “makeshift classrooms in an abandoned warehouse on Prenda Street,” near the Prenda Packinghouse.<sup>391</sup> While far from state-of-the-art, the facility was more accessible for families and children. In 1918, with the population of Casa Blanca growing rapidly, a repurposed wood-frame facility was relocated to Madison Street. Finally, in the early 1920s, after a fire damaged the original school, a permanent, poured-concrete facility was commissioned by the district at 3020 Madison Street, where it still stands. Classes commenced at Casa Blanca Elementary School in 1923.

The building was designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style by Riverside architect G. Stanley Wilson. For over 40 years, Casa Blanca Elementary School served the neighborhood’s primarily Mexican-American and ethnic communities. The school epitomized the “de facto segregated, separate, and unequal education of Chicano and other ethnic minority children in California.”<sup>392</sup> At the same time, the school provided an important neighborhood center, for cultural and recreational events, community meetings and political organizing. In this way, while reflective of the era of segregation, Casa Blanca Elementary School also represented “the coordinated, successful struggle of ethnic minority communities to fight against racism and unequal education.”<sup>393</sup>

From 1923 until 1965, the principal of Casa Blanca School was Mr. Mabra Madden. Under Madden’s leadership, Casa Blanca School “became famous as more than an educational facility. It became a community social center.”<sup>394</sup> Madden established the Casa Blanca Welfare Fund, which provided economic and material assistance to students and families in need. Under Madden’s leadership, a number of teachers of color were hired, including Hazel Russell, Leo Baca, and Gloria Elizarraraz, all of whom became well respected, important figures in the community. One student at Casa Blanca in the late 1920s and 1930s was Simona Valero. Reflecting on Principal Madden, Ms. Valero recalled that “We couldn’t have asked for a better principal. He was like a grandfather in the community.”<sup>395</sup>

In September 1967, following district-wide desegregation, Casa Blanca students were transferred to other schools within the district. After its closure in 1967, Casa Blanca School was purchased by the Catholic Diocese of San Diego in the 1970s.

Given how central the school had become to the community, some residents felt that Casa Blanca lost part of its identity when the school closed: “That’s a thing I feel is a negative. We were forced to integrate,” said neighborhood activist Morris Mendoza in 2016. “It wasn’t a choice of having two way busing. We no longer had our history. We no longer had our identity. We no longer had a centralized place where parents and community could gather.”<sup>396</sup>

As of 2018, it has been over a century since the two Casa Blanca mothers visited the Riverside Board of Education to lobby for a school. Research conducted to date has still not identified their names. As Roberto “Tex” Murrillo, a community historian and founder of the organization *Tesoros de Casa Blanca* (Treasures of Casa Blanca), said ““Can you imagine the courage those ladies had? ...You’re talking about 1911, this when you would find signs in Riverside saying, ‘No Mexicans Allowed.’ ...It was a very tough period. Those are heroes to me.”<sup>397</sup>

**Figure 143 Casa Blanca Elementary School, 1923**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Metropolitan Museum

**Figure 144 Casa Blanca Elementary School, 1925**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Metropolitan Museum

**Figure 145** Casa Blanca School principal Mabra Madden, known as “Maestro,” 1935 (left); Casa Blanca School photo, ca. 1935 (right)



Source: *Maestro*, M. Stowe Colvin, 1935 and *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 11 May 2017, Roberto Murrillo

**Figure 146** Casa Blanca Elementary School, circa 1953



Source: Riverside Public Library, *Shades of Casa Blanca*

**Figure 147 Teacher Leo Baca and his fifth-grade class, Casa Blanca Elementary School, 1957**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society

## INDEPENDIENTE SCHOOL, ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, 1924 - 1948

Constructed in 1924, Independiente School was located at 9170 Indiana Avenue in Arlington Heights; the parcel is now occupied by Hawthorne Elementary School. Referred to as a “Mexican school” (though a good number of Japanese and Japanese-American pupils attended as well), Independiente School was established by the Riverside City School Board following pressure from Anglo-American parents of nearby Liberty School, in the Arlington neighborhood. Up until 1924, Liberty School had been largely integrated, though Mexican and Mexican-American children were often separated into special “Spanish” classes.

As in Casa Blanca in 1911, it was a group of Liberty School mothers who presented their case to the Riverside Board of Education:

On May 16, 1922, a delegation of mothers from the Liberty School’s Parent Teacher Association requested of the Riverside School Board that ‘there might be segregation of the Mexican Element now attending Liberty.’<sup>398</sup>

The request was ostensibly based on increasing enrollment numbers at Liberty Elementary School. The pressing issue, however, was a presumption on the part of Anglo-American parents that their children could not receive a quality education in an integrated school. Based on this request, the Riverside School Board constructed Independiente School, just east of the Santa Fe Railroad tracks in Arlington Heights. The school was specifically intended for Mexican native and Mexican-American pupils, though Japanese and Japanese-American students also attended. In arguing for the new school, “white parents made a distinction between the ‘special’ needs of their own children versus those of Mexican pupils.”<sup>399</sup>

In newspaper coverage of the school through the 1920s and 1930s, the “special needs” of Mexican-American pupils was emphasized. In 1933, for example, the *Riverside Daily Press* published an article explaining what the Independiente School was, since “many people have confused Casa Blanca and Independiente schools.”<sup>400</sup> As noted in the article, Independiente School was constructed so that “the needs of the Mexican children could be given special attention” (though it is worth noting that, by 1933, a good number of children with Mexican heritage were American born in Riverside).<sup>401</sup>

As reported in the 10 March 1933 *Riverside Daily Press*, the school had been constructed on a small lot, occupied by a “small four-room cottage and a ‘tin barn,’ so named because it was surfaced with tin. Two portable buildings were placed on the front of the lot beside the little green cottage, and thus Independiente school had its beginning.”<sup>402</sup> With the new facility in place by December 1924, “the Mexican children in the first four grades at Liberty school were transferred to Independiente school,” with Mrs. Lou P. Jennings serving as principal in the early years. In 1927, a classroom building was relocated from Palm Elementary School for use at Independiente.

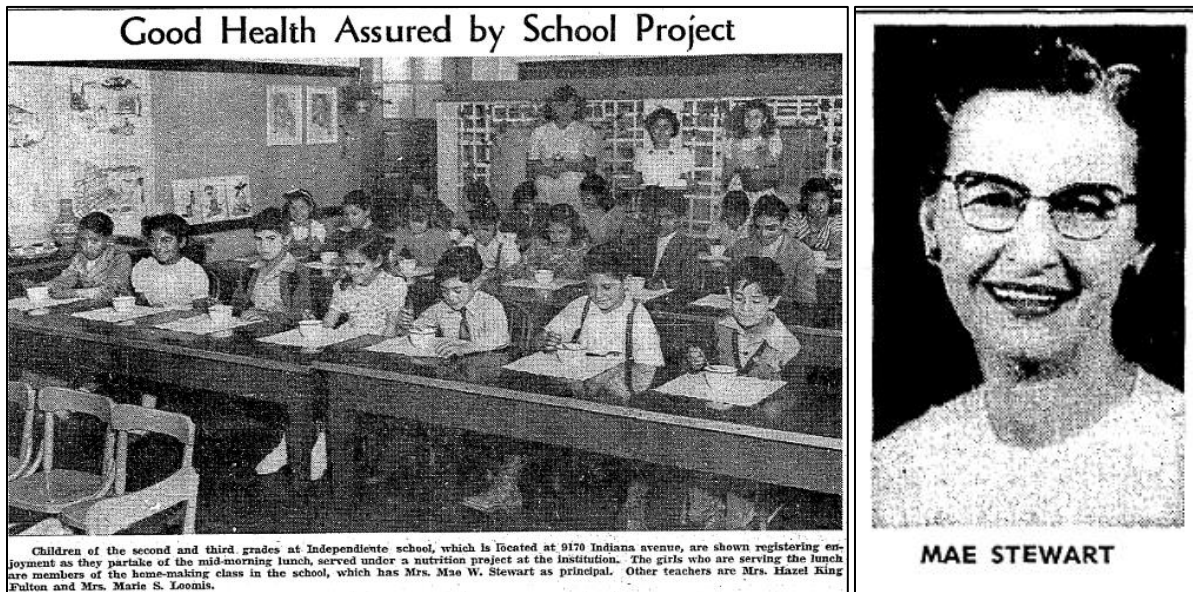
For over two decades, the segregated school served the children “of orange pickers residing in three camps or clusters of small homes – Campos de Pasqual, Campos de Leonardo, and Campos Modesto.”<sup>403</sup> During the Great Depression, the City’s Kiwanis Club donated milk to school children of Independiente School. By 1938, enrollment stood at just over 70 students.

From 1928 to 1948, Mrs. Mae W. Stewart served as principal of Independiente School. A graduate of University of California, Santa Barbara, Stewart served as “the business manager, bookkeeper and contact person for my families for many years... I translated for them, called lawyers, doctors and welfare people. As the years passed, however, this group became more and more a part of the community.”<sup>404</sup> When Independiente School closed, Mrs. Stewart became principal of Jefferson School before joining the district until her 1959 retirement.

During World War II, Principal Stewart launched a nutrition program, wherein students in homemaking would prepare nutritious meals for the students and serve them each day at 10am. Offerings ranged from “hot chocolate to soup, beans, hot cereal and fruit.”<sup>405</sup> The school also offered night classes for adults in the community. Beginning in 1941 and through the war years, Independiente School began Victory Gardens, tended to by students and teachers.

Other programs put in place by Principal Stewart included an annual Christmas and Cinco de Mayo spring festivals, attended by parents. As enrollment dropped after World War II, the “Mexican school” closed and re-opened as Hawthorne, a standard elementary school in the district.

**Figure 148 Independiente School nutrition program, 1943 (left) and principal Mrs. Mae Stewart, 1959 (right)**



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 14 April 1943 and *Riverside Independent Enterprise*, 26 June 1959

### **IRVING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

Constructed in 1940, Irving Elementary School primarily served Latino and African-American families and students. Irving Elementary School featured a late Moderne-style Administrative and Classroom building, with an auditorium, and a small kindergarten classroom housing in a wood-frame Craftsman bungalow. Prior to desegregation, most African-American and Mexican-American students in the Eastside area attended Irving Elementary School (which had been Thirteenth Street Public School prior to 1940) and University Heights Junior High School before attending Riverside High School.

University Heights Junior High School was constructed in 1928 at 2060 University Avenue. Now serving as the Cesar Chavez Community Center, the building is a designated local and national landmark.

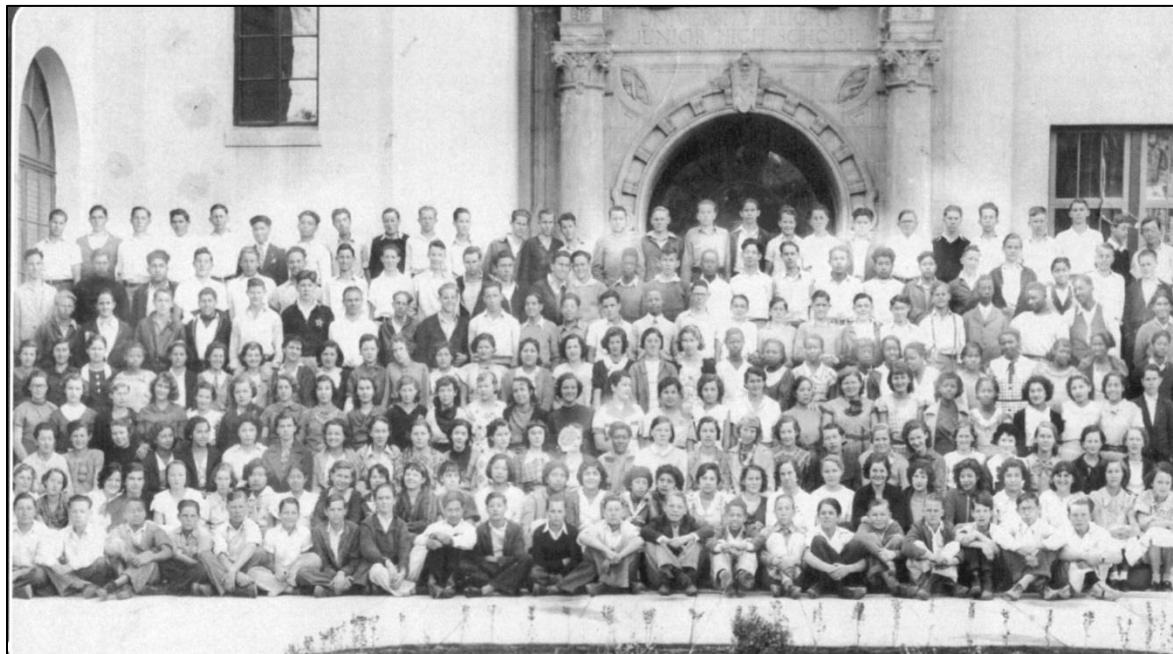
**Figure 149 Irving Elementary School, 1951 kindergarten class**



Irving Elementary School: Ms. Carson's Kindergarten Class, 1951-1952.  
Photo/Story Courtesy of Richard Romero

Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

**Figure 150 University Heights Junior High School, 1935**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

Figure 151 Mendez v. Westminster, 1946 (left); Casa Blanca Elementary School, ca. 1955



Source: *Los Angeles Times*, 19 February 1946 and Riverside Public Library, Shades of Casa Blanca

### *Postwar Desegregation and Integration of Riverside City Schools*

With increasing levels of political activism, Latinos and African-Americans, often working together, made important progress in ending segregation in postwar Riverside. The struggle for equal educational access received a boost with the 1946 court case, *Mendez v. Westminster School District of Orange County*. Brought by five Latino parents against schools in Orange County, the court found segregation unconstitutional under the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. This affected at least 5,000 students at the time. Throughout the United States, *Mendez v. Westminster School District* was nationally "significant as a critical test case that successfully used the Fourteenth Amendment equal protection clause in a school desegregation case, setting an important precedent for *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which ended de jure segregation in American schools."<sup>406</sup>

By 1960, most of Riverside's ethnic minorities, which comprised approximately 14 percent of the City's population, lived in highly segregated neighborhoods (resulting in highly segregated schools). Where de facto segregation did not produce racially homogenous schools, gerrymandered attendance boundaries achieved this result instead. In 1961, for example, the Riverside City School District constructed a new campus, Alcott School, and simultaneously redrew attendance boundaries in such a way that Lowell Elementary School would remain highly segregated.<sup>407</sup> An alternative option for parents in the postwar period was the parochial school founded at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church.

In Riverside, coalitions of parents and community groups came together, across neighborhoods and ethnic lines, to protest the new Lowell Elementary School attendance boundaries and to advocate for improved educational facilities and curricula. Among the many groups formed at the time was a study committee for Lowell Elementary School, which included John Sotelo, Jesse Ybarra, Alice Key, president of VOICE (Victory Over Inequities, Civic and Economic), Robert Bland, NAACP Education Committee, Etienne Caroline, staff at the Riverside Police Department; and Jesse Wall, an African-American teacher at Ramona High School.<sup>408</sup> Similarly, in 1952, "multiracial bloc" came together to advocate for improved conditions at Irving Elementary School; the group included Mrs. Lucille Taylor, president of the Irving PTA, Jesse M. Carlos, owner of Carlos Market and president of the Latin American Club; Jess Martinez, Eastside Neighborhood Council, and L.B. Moss, president of the

NAACP. By 1956, the original facility of Irving Elementary School had been demolished and new facilities constructed.<sup>409</sup>

One outstanding and well-respected Latino educator during this era was Dr. Robert Flores. A native of Riverside, Flores attended the City's public schools, including Polytechnic High School, from which he graduated. Dr. Flores received his doctorate in education from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Early in his career, he served as principal of Arlington High School, becoming one of the first Latino administrators in the City's school system. Flores later worked for the district as an administrator and served as coordinator of the Riverside Urban Coalition Task Force, a group that brought together civil rights leaders and activists in Latino and African-American communities to address a range of issues, including education. In later years, Flores and his family moved north to Alisal, near San Jose, California, where he served as Superintendent of the Alisal Union School District until retiring in 1994. Dr. Flores passed away in 2013.<sup>410</sup>

In 1965 a multi-ethnic coalition called the Advisory Committee for Integrated Schools began working toward citywide school integration. One committee member was Richard Roa, a long-time community leader in Casa Blanca who worked at the City and was an active member of the Community Action Group. Other members included Augustine Flores, Mrs. Belen Reyes, Jesus "Jess" Carlos, Percy Baugh, MD, Robert Bland, Mrs. Richard Boylan, Jr., William H. Davis, Truman Johnson, Patricia Kennington, Joseph Palaia, and Donald Renfro.

Overall, Latino parents were divided on the issue of desegregation. Although all would welcome improvements in facilities and classes, the idea of closing convenient neighborhood schools, or allowing their children to be bussed to Anglo-American schools, was viewed with consternation. Nevertheless, in September 1965, a group of parents presented a petition with over 300 signatures to the Riverside City School district, with a "simple and direct" request:

We, the undersigned parents of the Riverside school district, do hereby petition the Riverside School Board to take affirmative steps to improve the educational opportunities for minorities and to eliminate segregation in city schools by closing Lowell and Irving Schools and by reassigning these students to other schools in the area which have previously had less than 10% minority group students.<sup>411</sup>

In addition, "Freedom Schools" opened in September 1965 for students and parents boycotting segregated schools. On the first day of school, approximately 250 students participated in a boycott of Riverside Unified Schools, enrolling instead at the "Freedom School" headquarters at the Masonic Hall, 2943 Twelfth Street. Another 200 students did not attend school.<sup>412</sup>

In October 1965, after many years of lobbying and pressure, Riverside Unified School District announced its intention and plan to desegregate its schools. With this, Riverside

became the first city of its size in the nation to voluntarily and totally desegregate its elementary schools. The desegregation campaign of Riverside schools was developed by Eastside Blacks and Chicanos.

While city government leaders viewed integration with slight support, some opposition, and considerable caution, circumstances prompted them to develop and implement plans for integration with Black and Chicano community groups. ...The evening the petition was presented to the school board, less than three weeks after the Watts riots in Los Angeles, the Lowell School in Riverside went up in flames. Integration leaders pressed the issue, instituted a boycott of segregated schools, and began to organize freedom schools.

The school board acted with unprecedented haste. Working closely with Chicanos and Blacks, the board developed a plan for closing the city's three racially segregated schools and for total desegregation through busing of Riverside's elementary schools by 1967.<sup>413</sup>

Although Freedom Schools were short lived, approximately 250 students participated when classes began in September 1965. Offered in churches and community halls, Freedom Schools were staffed by certified teachers, volunteers, local artist Lee Larkin, who offered instruction in arts and crafts, and "professors of math and psychology from near-by colleges."<sup>414</sup> The Freedom Schools relied on close coordination with University of California, Riverside, which offered a tutorial service and other instruction. Initially the program was provided to students from closed schools at Lowell and Irving, though those outside attendance boundaries were allowed to register. Registration was conducted door-to-door.

**Figure 152 Press-Enterprise coverage of Lowell Elementary School arson and Freedom Schools**



Source: Riverside Press-Enterprise, 8 September 1965 and 14 September 1965

**Figure 153 Application for Freedom Schools, for 1965 boycott of segregated schools in Eastside**

FREEDOM SCHOOL APPLICATION, SEPTEMBER, 1965

Freedom School will be in operation Monday in many churches and halls which have offered their facilities. The many certified teachers who have volunteered their services will be on hand to insure that the students get first-class instruction. Included in the staff are professors of education, math and psychology from near-by colleges. Tutorial service will be available from many of the UCR students who participated in last year's tutorial project at Irving and Lowell. Well-known local artist Lee Larkin will be on hand to provide instruction in arts and crafts. Volunteer parents will assist teachers and supervise recreation.

Registration for the freedom schools will be conducted on a door-to-door basis Sunday afternoon.

People outside of the Lowell-Irving attendance district and those not contacted by volunteers from boycott headquarters should register by calling 682-5466.

Source: Hendrick, 1968, p. 254.

On 18 October 1965, Superintendent Bruce Miller described the district's new approach, and a plan was drafted to end segregation by the Board of Education and Advisory Committee:

In the present instance, we are experiencing a gigantic civil rights movement which is engulfing the entire nation. Overnight communities all across the country are having to re-think through their responsibilities to people. Riverside is not alone in this great social revolution, nor can it hope to turn its head and pretend that change will not take place here.

As every thinking individual knows, schools have changed enormously within the last few years. With great suddenness an educational revolution has and is taking place. We are constantly seeking better answers in raising the level of educational opportunities for all boys and girls in response to the new and ever increasing demands on the educational process.<sup>415</sup>

In order to follow through on this promise, the district had their work cut out for them. As of 1964/1965, no school in Riverside exhibited balance in the ethnicity of its students. Most of the District's Mexican-American students—a total of approximately 1,400—attended just three schools, all of which had minority enrollment levels between 95 to 100 percent (Casa Blanca, 99.8, Irving, 100, and Lowell, 97.2). On the other hand, in half of Riverside's 28 schools in Riverside, minority enrollment was less than 10 percent.<sup>416</sup> With this, these three schools, serving minority populations in their own neighborhoods, were slated for immediate closure.

This integration plan awakened controversy and debate within the affected communities. Many additional petitions were submitted to the school district expressing agreement or asking for variations on these plans or exemptions from closures (including a petition signed by 138 Casa Blanca residents asking that, “under no circumstances” should Casa Blanca School be closed).<sup>417</sup> Although the idea of improved facilities and an enhanced curriculum was positive, Latino students who had attended neighborhood schools were suddenly faced with the prospect of busing and attending school far from home, in an unfamiliar (and not always welcoming) environment:

A Hispanic mother from Casa Blanca also spoke of the worry that the children “are going so far away” and “what happens when they get sick?” But a concern of Casa Blanca parents and their children was more than the problem of transportation... It concerned facing a different culture; minor activities became major, such as what to pack in lunches for their children who were “used to going home for lunch.”

For Casa Blanca children, being bused meant that parents now had to buy lunch boxes and “they wouldn't dare send tacos to school.” This also meant an added expense for people [who] did not have it and whose children had always come home for a hot lunch.<sup>418</sup>

Despite these protests, Lowell and Irving closed in 1966, and Casa Blanca closed in 1967, with their 650 students sent to other schools throughout the City.

In Casa Blanca, one parent involved in improving the quality and access for education was Mary Ayala. Wife of Glen Ayala, Mary was the Casa Blanca PTA president and school district employee for many years. Although “she had only completed a seventh grade education and considered herself very shy,” Ayala went on to become a vocal proponent of equal educational rights. In addition to her work with the Community Service Organization in Riverside, Ayala spent many years working for the Riverside School District as a district aide. Following desegregation in the mid-1960s, Ayala participated in Title I and Title IV projects to forward educational equality. She assisted in compiling the study, “Teaching Mexican Culture” used by Riverside Unified School District teachers.<sup>419</sup>

*Riverside Unified School District's "Mexican-American History and Culture"*

Ending school segregation was just the beginning. As celebrated *Los Angeles Times* reporter Rubén Salazar noted in 1970, Latino students had always been made to feel ashamed of their culture and language. "Schools have not given us any reason to be proud" of being Mexican, Salazar wrote: "'It has been inculcated' in the minds of grammar school children that the Mexican 'is no good' by means of, for instance, overly and distortedly emphasizing the Battle of the Alamo and ignoring all contributions made by Mexicans in the Southwest."<sup>420</sup>

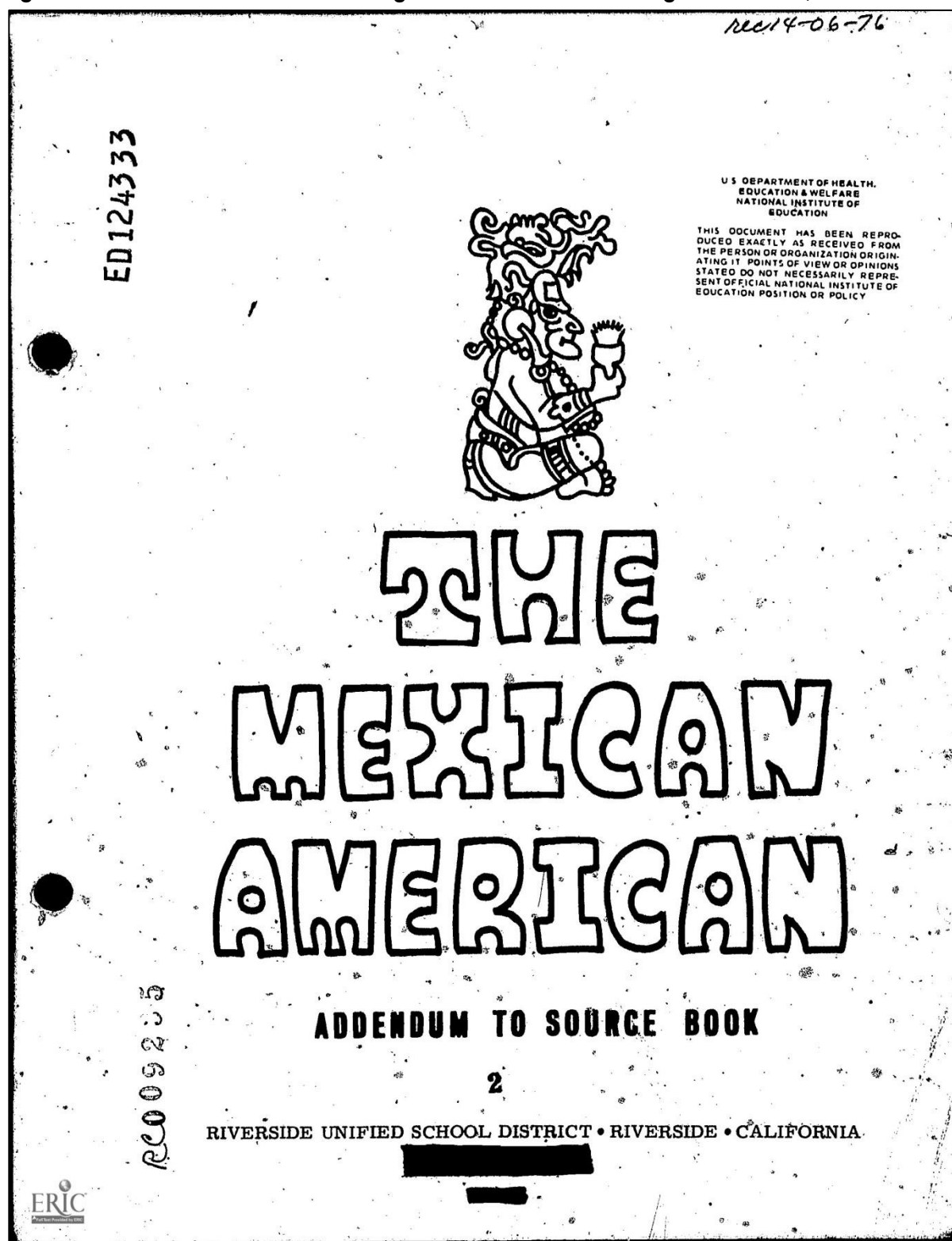
With federal funding through Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Riverside Unified School District launched an initiative to raise awareness and educate both educators and students in Mexican-American history and culture as well as the Mexican-American experience in the United States. (Nationally, Title I funding assisted in the development of "compensatory" teaching materials for underprivileged students.) In 1970 and 1971, with the co-sponsorship of the US Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education, the District commissioned preparation of *A Study Guideline of Mexican American History and Culture*.<sup>421</sup> Written and compiled by Nicholas C. Rodillas, Morris W. Eaton, and Mary Ayala, the book provided a primer for Riverside school teachers in Mexican-American heritage, in order to provide students with "the opportunity to develop an appreciation for and understanding of the Mexican American's role in the development of the United States." In 1971, Rodillas, Eaton, and Ayala followed up with the publication, *The Mexican American: Addendum to Source Book*, which offered supplemental materials for the course.<sup>422</sup>

The publications included a detailed timeline of milestones in the history of Mexico and the United States, which a focus on events that affected Mexican natives and Mexican-American residents. The primer also included an outline of topics for instruction. These topics included "The Sociology of Mexican Americans" and issues such as "The Myth of Mexican American Complacency and Docility," "The Family—An Extended, Pronounced Institution," and "The Mexican American Experience in World War II." Issues explored ranged from Mexican Independence to modern-day Chicano civil rights and the "strides toward social, political, and economic justice." A primer on how to celebrate Mexican holidays, such as Cinco de Mayo, was presented. In addition, readings were presented at elementary, middle, and high school levels, introducing children to figures such as Sor Juana Ines, Benito Juárez, Padre Hidalgo, and Pancho Villa.

This era signaled a change in the level of awareness and activism for Mexican-American students. In 1968, thousands of Mexican-American students in Los Angeles staged walkouts, also known as the "Blowouts," to protest unequal access to a quality education and the lack of instruction in Mexican and Mexican-American history.

For its part, the Riverside Unified School District stated that the "need is obvious" for supplemental instructional materials in Mexican-American history: "In the state of California...there are more Mexican Americans than in any other state. ...In Riverside, during the school year of 1970-1971, there were 3,403 Mexican American students or 13% of the total school population."<sup>423</sup> For this reason, RUSD stated, the "District is committed by both its Superintendent and the Board of Education to include in our courses of study the history and culture of the Mexican American."

Figure 154 RUSD sourcebook for teaching Mexican-American heritage and culture, 1971



Source: Hendrick, 1968

Figure 155 RUSD sourcebook for teaching Mexican-American heritage and culture, 1971

THE MEXICAN AMERICAN -- ADDITIONAL TEACHING MATERIAL

In the summer of 1970, the writing team of Rodillas and Eaton completed a sourcebook entitled A Study Guideline of Mexican American History and Culture. This summer, 1971, this team has attempted to do some additional things that will assist the classroom teacher in better understanding and teaching about the largest minority in the Southwest. We feel that additional background is necessary before the right amount of emphasis can be placed on teaching about Mexican history and culture. The teacher not having this background might ask, "What is the difference between September 16 and Cinco de Mayo?" "Why does Mexico celebrate two independence holidays instead of one like some countries?" There might even be those who would say that Mexican Americans should forget about these two holidays and concentrate only on the Fourth of July. For those who want to know more about Mexican American History and for those who lack sufficient informal background and/or empathy, it is hoped these additional materials will be helpful.

Once this first question is answered, the next question the teacher might ask is, "How does one go about observing and creating an understanding and an appreciation for these Mexican American holidays?" The writing team has tried to fill this vacuum, where it exists, by some suggestions and samples of materials beginning with a P.A. announcement to start the day and continuing with some suggestions as to what various classes might do to carry out these observations.

An additional category that we think will be helpful are suggestions for field trips in our community and near-by areas. For the teacher who wants to take his class to La Placita and/or Agua Mansa Cemetery, he will find a map to assist in his planning. Or, another class might want to see the San Bernardino Asistencia in near-by Redlands. How do you get there? This question is answered in these materials as well as suggestions made for visiting other locations in the surrounding area.

For the history teacher who has majored while in school in the more traditional Anglo American History or European History, it is sometimes difficult to "catch-up" with the new demands in Black History, Mexican American History, and Oriental American History, etc. This obviously takes a tremendous amount of independent study. We hope the "Timeline on the United States and Mexican American History" will serve as a temporary supplement to teaching an integrated course in American History.

Other additional materials to help the teacher include an annotated list of some ten new films on Mexican Americans. These films are available to all teachers in the district. There are additional new books to supplement the bibliography of the Study Guideline of 1970. The readings of Ruben Salazar should serve to help create some dynamic learning sessions in the secondary schools. The suggestions for plays and satires you will find both humorous and useful in dispelling stereotypes about the Mexican American. It is hoped the teacher will study these materials and select those which he can relate to and feel comfortable with.

*Spotlight on: Ernest Z. Robles, Teacher and Administrator*

As the era of civil rights and desegregation began, one important teacher, advocate, and administrator in Riverside was Ernest Z. Robles. A native of Riverside and former student at Independiente School, Robles was an “educator, war hero and principal founder of the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund,” which left “an indelible mark on both his community and his profession.”<sup>424</sup>

At the age of 19, Robles joined the US Marine Corp and was dispatched to Korea as a rifleman. He received the Purple Heart for bravery in action. Upon his return to the United States, Robles eventually enrolled in and completed his studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, graduating in 1960. By 1965, Robles served as principal of Casa Blanca Elementary School, after long-time Principal Mabra Madden retired and before the school closed in 1967. After this time, Robles continued working for the District as an equal education specialist. As Robles recalled in 1972,

‘When you measure attainment of a segregated school and an integrated school, you’ll find a difference in education between a barrio school and the rest of the city... And this ties in with the lower socio-economic and class status which can be perpetuated if no desegregation keeps the school segregated. ...

I went to segregated Independiente School, on the site of Hawthorne School today... When you have gone through a segregated school experience, the effects really come after you leave.’<sup>425</sup>

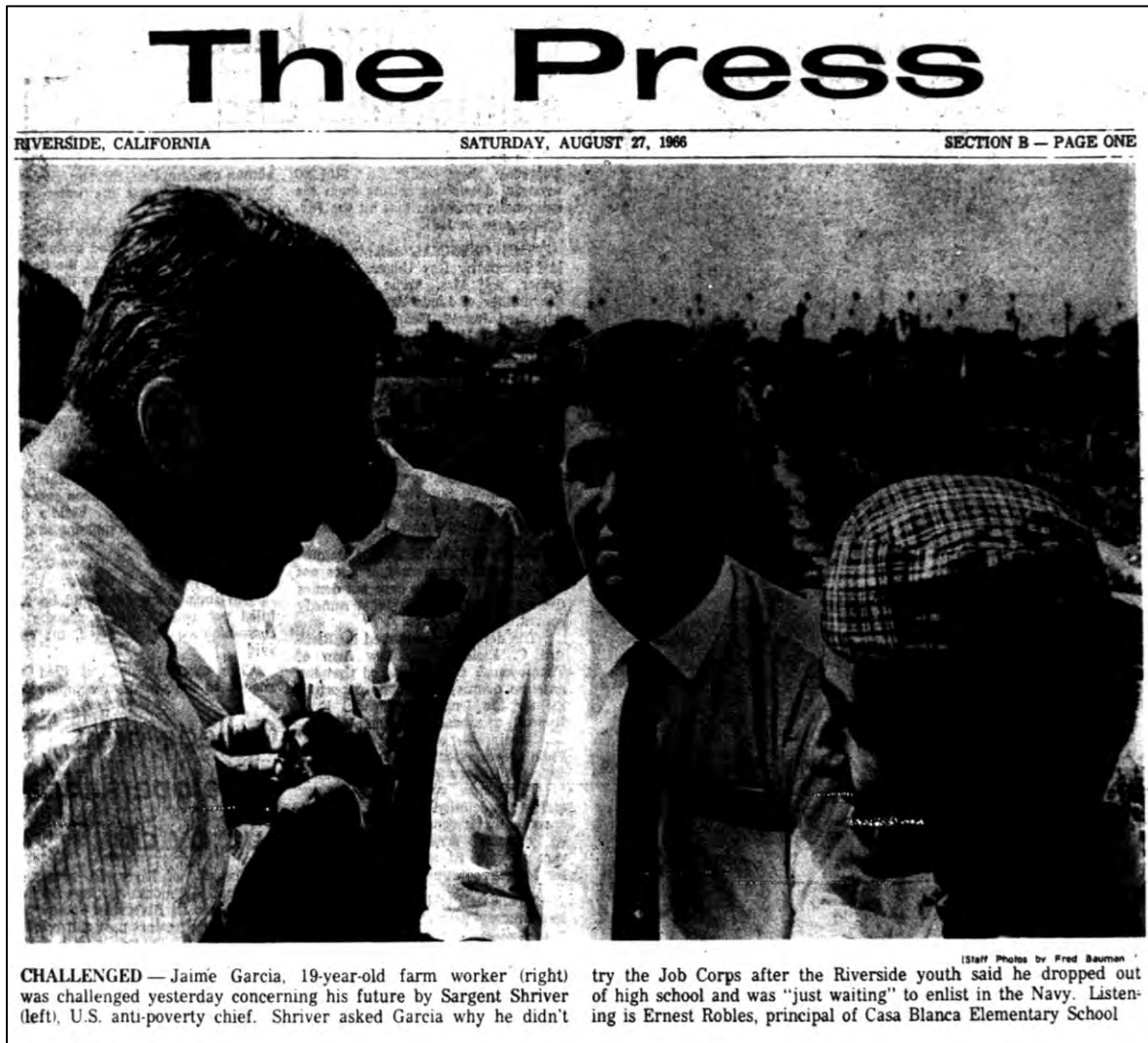
Robles administered school desegregation programs with the US Office of Education. Reflecting on the experience, Robles said integration in Riverside had helped the Mexican-American children “by opening up an opportunity for a better education to some kids who have not have had this opportunity in barrio schools.”<sup>426</sup>

Robles dedicated his career to addressing and correcting such unequal access to education. After leaving Riverside, Robles worked as Assistant Regional Administrator for Equal Educational Opportunities with the Department of Education in San Francisco.

In 2001, Robles was honored with UCLA’s Community Service Award. In bestowing the honor on Robles, the UCLA Alumni Association stated that:

His extraordinary achievement is the formation and development of this remarkable scholarship fund. Starting the effort out of his own home in 1975, he headed the organization for more than 20 years, awarding \$30,000 the first year to a cumulative total of \$31 million awarded to more than 30,000 outstanding college students. ...For his incredible contribution to the Hispanic community and to the general community of California, Robles has been honored at the White House by President Ronald Reagan, George Bush and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton.<sup>427</sup>

Figure 156 Ernest Z. Robles, with Sargent Shriver and Jaime Garcia, 1966



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 27 August 1966

*University of California, Riverside and Early Initiatives in Diversity***CHICANO STUDIES DEPARTMENT AND DR. CARLOS CORTÉS**

A scholar of Brazilian history, Dr. Carlos E. Cortés joined UC Riverside in January of 1968.<sup>428</sup> Born in 1934 to a Mexican-American father and Anglo-American mother, Cortés grew up in Kansas. His grandfather came to the United States in the 1910s to escape the tumult of the Mexican Revolution. During his college career, Cortés completed degrees at the University of California, Berkeley (Bachelor of Arts in Communications and Public Policy, 1956); Columbia University (Master of Science in Journalism, 1957); The American Institute for Foreign Trade (Bachelor's Degree, 1962); and the University of New Mexico (Master of Arts Degree in Portuguese and Spanish, and Doctoral degree in History in the late 1960s). In January 1968, when he accepted the faculty position at UC Riverside, Cortés became one of two Mexican-American faculty members at the university, along with Eugenio Cota-Robles, a microbiologist hired in 1958.

In this era, calls had been increasing for the establishment of an ethnic studies curriculum and department. UC Riverside had become a center for early Chicano student activism, in a movement that gained momentum in the mid-1960s. The UC Riverside chancellor at the time, Ivan Hinderaker, took note of this mounting pressure nationwide and at UC Riverside, as well, as calls for an ethnic studies department had also been made by the local chapter of the United Mexican American Students (UMAS) group. By 1969, the time had arrived to move forward.

Chancellor Hinderaker invited Cortés and Cota-Robles to join a committee tasked with designing a new ethnic studies department. As Dr. Cortés recalls, their first recommendation was dividing the department into separate branches for Mexican-American Studies and African-American Studies. (A name change in the mid-1970s christened the Chicano Studies Department.)

On 1 July 1969, the new Mexican-American Studies program at UC Riverside was officially launched, with classes beginning in the fall semester. With this, UC Riverside became one of the first universities in the United States to establish a Mexican-American Studies program. For the better part of the next three decades, Dr. Cortés served as department chair (beginning in 1972) and faculty member.<sup>429</sup>

When the department began, Cortés recalled, the broader field was still in its infancy. There was no Chicano studies field per se, no classic texts or literature, on which to establish the new curriculum. This tabula rasa presented an opportunity to fashion an original approach. As designed by Cortés and his colleagues, the objective became providing a collaborative, cross-departmental program, with units, courses, and perspectives by a wide range of scholars and specialties, including historians, sociologists, writers, and psychologists. Cortés and other faculty and administrators also looked to other pioneering Chicano studies departments in California (in San Diego, California State University, Los Angeles, and California State University, Northridge). In the early 1970s, Cortés designed UC Riverside's first Ethnic and Area Studies requirement for the College of Arts.

With a student body drawn primarily from the Inland Empire and surrounding desert communities and with Riverside's rich, century-old Mexican-American heritage to draw on, the timing and place for UC Riverside's Chicano Studies Program were ideal. The department at UC Riverside became a hub for Chicano scholarship and activism. Student work and faculty research recuperated the myriad stories of the Latino experience in the region. For his Chicano history course, Cortés assigned a project for students to explore and document their own family histories, including oral histories with family members, photographs, and background research.

Under the leadership of Cortés and other faculty, the output of undergraduate and graduate students in the UC Riverside Chicano Studies Department was as voluminous as it was influential. Where there had been little or no scholarship on topics specific to the Latino experience throughout (and beyond) the Inland Empire, students and faculty of the Chicano Studies, ethnic studies, and other departments explored a range of topics on the Mexican-American experience in the region, not only contributing to but helping define the broader field of Chicano studies.

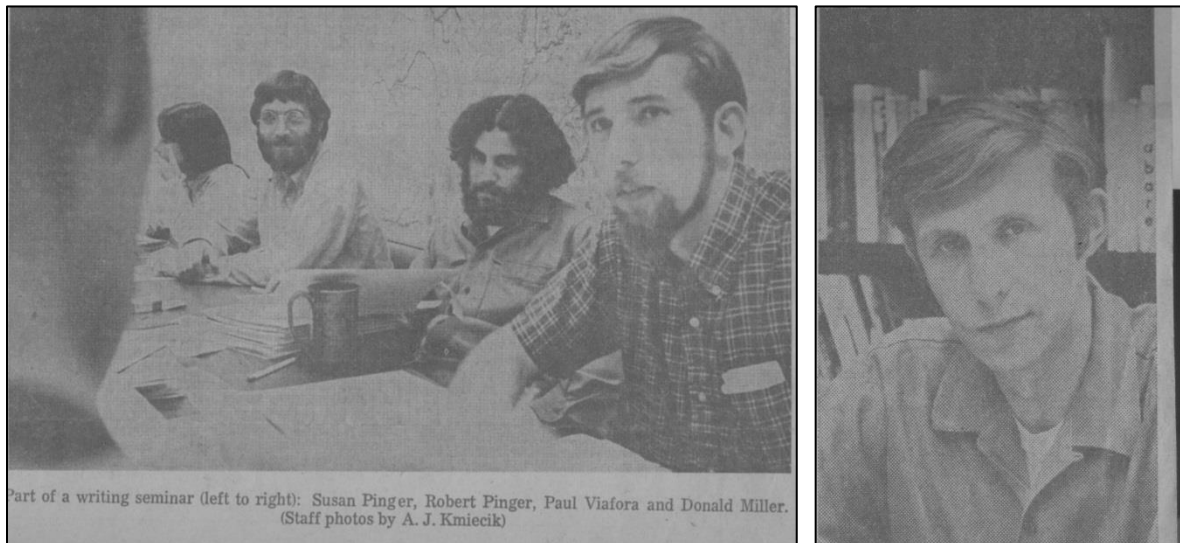
One example is the research of Eastside native, Dr. Raymond Buriel, in the area of “language brokers.” While Buriel was a student at UC Riverside, he worked extensively with Dr. Cortés. Cortés recalled the originality and value of Buriel’s contribution to the field:

What I found most interesting and revealing was [Buriel’s] pioneering research on Language Brokers. Those are young children who, because of their knowledge of both English and their home language, become de facto intermediaries between their non or limited-English-speaking parents and U.S. society. Ray did insightful research on the important roles that these children play, as well as the complexities and stresses of this involuntary role.<sup>430</sup>

The first chair of the department was Dr. Alfred Castaneda. In 1972, Dr. Cortés was named chairperson of the Chicano Studies Department. His goal for the department was to “provide service to students, community at large, not only local; and to the university. We want to prepare students to learn and develop skills to work in the community.”<sup>431</sup> Cortés clarified that “the department is not an ideological builder but that student activism can tie in with their area of study.”<sup>432</sup>

That same year, Dr. Jesse McDade became the new chair of the African-American Studies Department. Dr. McDade’s goals were similar to those of Dr. Cortés, to establish a cross-disciplinary program that would serve the department’s own students as well as the broader university community. Serving African-American students in a similar capacity as the Chicano Student Programs was the Black Student Union. In 1984, the two departments were combined to form UC Riverside’s Ethnic Studies Department.

**Figure 157 Carlos Cortés and UC Riverside graduate students (Paul Viafora, author of a pioneering history of the Mexican-American experience in Riverside, appears second from right), 1971**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside Public Library

## UC RIVERSIDE CHICANO STUDENT PROGRAMS

UC Riverside's Chicano Student Programs department was founded in 1972, at the request of new Chicano Studies Department chair, Dr. Cortés. When Cortés was appointed as department chair, he recalled, his one condition was that a dedicated staff and department be established for an accompanying Chicano student services division.<sup>433</sup> At the time, UC Riverside had 345 Latino students; by 2012, that number had grown to over 6,100 Latino students, or approximately one-third of the total student population.<sup>434</sup>

Chancellor Hinderaker agreed, and UC Riverside Assistant Dean of Students, Alberto Richard Chavez, was selected to establish and run the Chicano Student Programs department. Chavez went on to lead the program, which provided a "home away from home" for Chicano students, for 15 years, until 1986.<sup>435</sup> For nearly 50 years, Chicano Student Programs has sponsored a wide variety of outreach and community building events and houses over 20 student-run organizations.

In addition to his work at UC Riverside, Alberto Chavez advocated for Chicano students and encouraged policies that would facilitate and encourage their transition to college. In 1968, Chavez participated on the Citizens' Advisory Committee for Riverside City College. As part of this committee, Chavez forwarded the following recommendations in 1968-1969: (1) Special classes should be established to prepare Mexican-American youths for GED exams; (2) Counseling should be provided to Mexican-American youth who are "undecided and confused about academic aims and opportunities"; (3) Scholarships to Chicano students should be increased; (4) Tutorial services should be provided to Chicano students, with tutoring provided by Chicano college students on a paid basis by Riverside Community College; (5) A Chicano youth organization should be organized.<sup>436</sup> Chavez also worked closely with community activists Josephine Lozano and Steve Moreno, among others, to advocate for Mexican-American students within the Riverside Unified School District. Before his work as director of Chicano Student Programs, Chavez was the assistant Dean of Students at UC Riverside.

In the early years, the Chicano Studies Department and Chicano Student Programs occupied adjacent office spaces in the second floor Library South Wing of the Tomás Rivera Library. One remnant of the early offices of the Chicano Studies Department and Chicano Student Programs is a 1975 wall-length mural by local artist Chano Gonzalez. Funded through a National Council of Arts grant, the mural is a rare surviving work reflecting the early years of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement in Riverside.

**Figure 158 Alberto Chavez, UC Riverside Chicano Student Programs director, circa 1975 (left); Chicano Student Programs mural (right)**



Source: "Chicano Leaders Seek Probe into City Hiring," n.d. and UC Riverside Chicano Student Programs

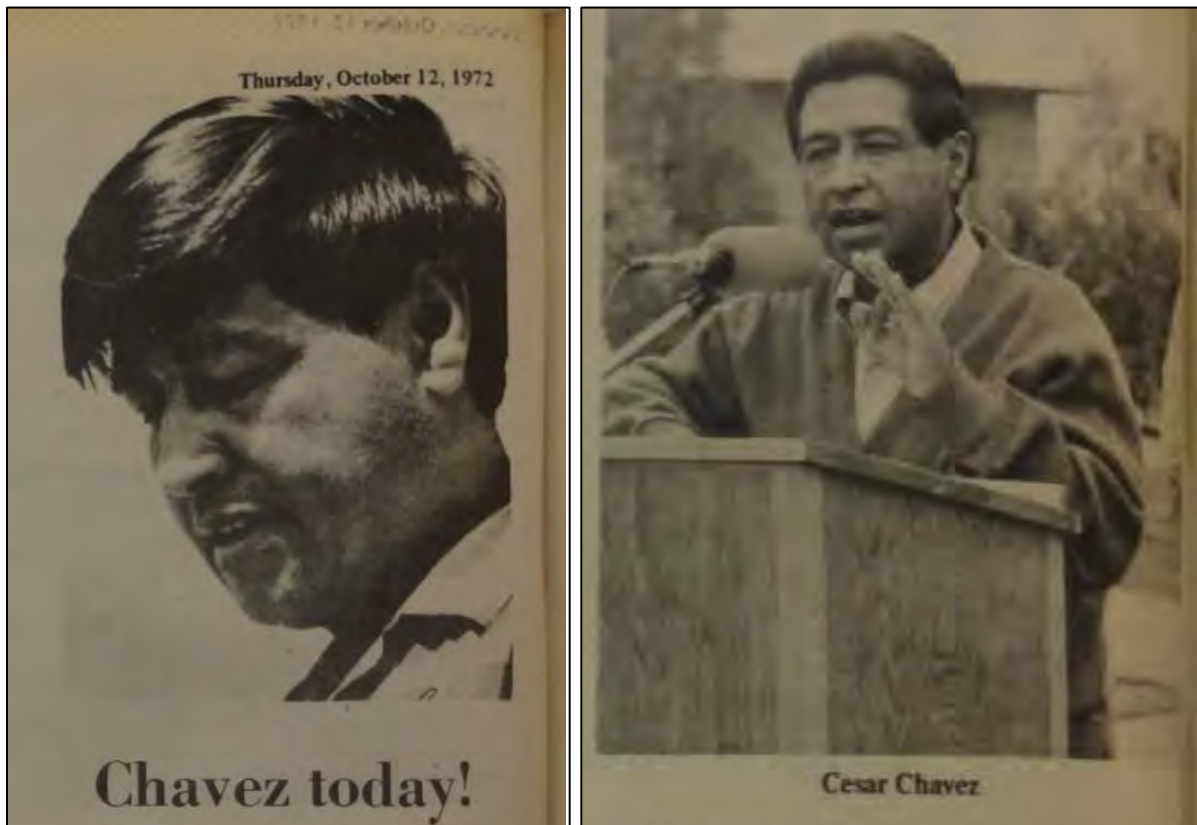
After the Chicano Student Programs office relocated, the mural was preserved, removed, and reinstalled at the current program offices in UC Riverside's Costo Hall. (Costo Hall is named for pioneering Native American scholar and historian Rupert Costo, a national figure in the Native American Civil Rights movement and founder, along with his wife Jeannette, of the American Indian Historical Society. A donation from the Costos established UC Riverside's Costo Library of the American Indian.)

Together, the Chicano Studies Department and Chicano Student Programs have provided an important academic and social network that has supported and nurtured generations of UC Riverside Latino scholars. Other Latino faculty members who participated in these early years were Dr. Cota-Robles and Dr. Marigold Linton. Drs. Cota-Robles and Linton were cofounders of the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science.

Since its founding in 1972, the Chicano Student Programs and affiliated MECHA has produced a student newspaper, *Nuestra Cosa* (Our Thing); newspaper archives are housed in the UCR Tomás Rivera Library. In the late 1980s, Chicano Student Programs founded Radio Aztlán (88.3 FM in Riverside), which broadcasts Chicano music through the greater Inland Empire.

In the 1960s, UC Riverside became a center not just for Chicano scholarship but also Chicano civil rights. In November 1968, Cesar Chavez spoke at UC Riverside. Chavez again visited UC Riverside for a talk on 12 October 1972 on the Tower Mall, in opposition to a proposition on the state ballot at the time to establish restrictions for agricultural workers strikes and boycotting activities.

**Figure 159 Cesar Chavez at UC Riverside's Tower Mall, October 1972, in MECHA-sponsored event**



Source: *The Highlander*, October 12 and October 19, 1972, cited from Ramirez, 2018, pp. 228-229

**TOMÁS RIVERA, CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE, 1979 TO 1984**

UC Riverside was home to another major milestone for the University of California system. In 1979, the University of California system appointed its first non-Anglo-American chancellor, Tomás Rivera, who led UC Riverside until his death (at the age of 49) in 1984. A native of Texas born in 1935, Rivera was the son of Mexican migrant farm workers. He received his education at Southwest Texas State University, where he received his Bachelor of Science and Master's of Science in Education, and at University of Oklahoma, where he received a doctorate in Romance Literatures. The Rivera Library served as the first home to the Chicano Studies Department and Chicano Student Programs office.

**Figure 160 Tomás and Concepción Rivera, ca. 1980 (left); Rivera (second from right), speaking to President Ronald Reagan, Committee on Higher Education, 1983 (right)**



Source: University of California, Riverside, Special Collections and Calisphere

Figure 161 Symposium in honor of Tomás Rivera, UC's first Latino chancellor, 1988

# TOMÁS RIVERA: A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL HUMANIST



*The Searchers*  
*We are searchers and  
we will continue to search  
because our eyes still have the passion of prophecy.*  
Dr. Tomás Rivera,  
1935-1984

## A CONFERENCE ON UCR'S LATE CHICANO CHANCELLOR

April 22, 1988  
University of California, Riverside  
University Club

The Tomás Rivera Conference is FREE for those who wish to attend. The only charge will be for the Tomás Rivera Banquet to be held at the University Club at UCR. The tickets are \$10 dollars per person. FOR MORE INFORMATION: (714) 787-3533, Dr. Kerry Oyerzun, Chairperson or Armando Martinez, Archivist.  
The Tomás Rivera Conference, University of California, P.O. Box 900, Riverside, CA. 92517. Make checks payable to: UC REGENTS

**Keynote Speakers**  
UC Regent Vilma Martínez  
Senator Art Torres

**Distinguished Guests**  
Carlos Monsiváis  
Dr. Luis Leal

**8:00-8:25 am PROGRAM**  
Registration  
Coffee & Donuts, Boyd Lounge

**8:25 am Welcoming Remarks**  
Dr. Van L. Perkins, Acting Executive Vice Chancellor

**8:35-9:00 am Opening Address**  
Carlos Monsiváis, Mexico City Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes

**9:05-10:30 am PANEL I**  
Dr. Gabriel Hernández, Moderator, Mills College, Oakland  
Dr. Tomás Arciniega, President Cal State Bakersfield  
Dr. Michael Olivas, J.D. University of Houston  
Dr. Flora Ortiz, UC Riverside

**10:30-11:55 pm PANEL II**  
Administration  
Mr. Robert Nava, Moderator, UCR  
Dr. Andres Jimenez, UC Berkeley  
Dr. Eugene Cota-Robles, Office of the President, UC System  
Mr. Joe Baca, President San Bernardino Board of Trustees

**12:00 pm Inauguration**  
University Library Lower Patio  
Dr. Rosemary S.J. Schraer, Chancellor  
Ms. Vilma Martínez, UC Regent  
Mr. James Thompson, University Librarian  
Ms. Concepción Rivera, UC Riverside

**1:00-2:00 pm Lunch Break**

**2:05-3:30 pm PANEL III**  
Literature  
Dr. Tomás Ybarra-Fausto, Moderator, Stanford University  
Dr. Luis Leal, UC Santa Barbara  
Dr. Roseaux Sanchez, UC San Diego  
Dr. Juan Bruce-Novoa, Trinity University, TX

**3:30-5:00 pm PANEL IV**  
Civic Leadership  
Mr. Aurelio Aguirre, President Moderator, Riverside Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
Dr. Armando Navarro, President Instituto de Justicia Social  
Dr. Arturo Madrid, President Tomas Rivera Center  
Dr. Bert Corona, Cal State Los Angeles

**5:30-6:30 pm Break**

**6:30-9:30 pm No Host Cocktails Banquet**

**Special Music, University Club Dining Rm.**  
Welcome: Dr. Rosemary S.J. Schraer

**8:30 pm Key Note Address**  
Mr. Art Torres, Senator

**9:15 pm Rivera Documentary Video Clip**

Source: University of California, Riverside, Special Collections

## Subtheme #4: Building the Civil Rights Movement

“Not only are we registering voters and awakening their sense of civil responsibility, but we are [also] awakening others to the fact that these people are loyal Americans.”  
—Cesár Chavez, on the 1960 Casa Blanca voter registration

“The salvation of the Mexican-American is to be involved politically. We must support a candidate or have a Mexican-American candidate ourselves.”  
—Josephine Lozano, ca. 1970<sup>437</sup>

In the face of discrimination, Latinos mobilized throughout California to fight for equal access and inclusion in civic and political life. Previous sections detailed the many community-based groups that provided mutual support, assistance, and advocacy to Latinos in Riverside. Nationwide, as well, early groups founded in the 1920s, such as the League of United Latin American Citizens, or LULAC, saw new chapters open throughout the United States. LULAC is one of the important early groups that still maintains a presence in Riverside, with the 2010 establishment of Chapter 3190. Led by long-time community leader Gilberto Esquivel, LULAC Chapter 3190 advocates for the community through civic and political engagement, community building events, student scholarships, and health fairs and clinics. LULAC recently played a key role in successful efforts to establish the 41<sup>st</sup> Congressional District in California, a redistricting effort with great importance to the Latino community.

In the postwar period, generally speaking, direct political engagement became the focus, either in running for office or getting out the vote. Voter registration helped increase representation among Mexican-Americans throughout the US. On a related front, Latinos led a successful effort to allow Spanish-speakers to take the US citizenship test in Spanish. In Riverside, this change allowed for more than 400 Mexican-Americans to “successfully pass their citizenship test, making them eligible to vote and receive pensions.”<sup>438</sup> In this way, during the early years of the Civil Rights Movement, “electoral politics and voter mobilization assumed greater importance, signifying the accumulating power of Latinos.”<sup>439</sup>

### *American GI Forum*

As scholar Richard Griswold del Castillo observed in his 2008 study, *World War II and Mexican American Civil Rights*, “No other postwar organization typified the new energies being brought to civil rights action more than the American GI Forum, an organization that was formed by returned veterans specifically to gain equal treatment.”<sup>440</sup> The American GI Forum became a key civil rights group advocating for a range of issues in the postwar period, including education, equal opportunities, an end to discrimination and segregation in schools, employment, and civic life.

The American GI Forum was founded in March 1948 in Texas by Dr. Hector Perez Garcia, a Mexican-American physician World War II veteran, and civil rights advocate. Like Sotelo and so many Riverside veterans, Dr. Garcia “returned from World War II proud of his accomplishments and eager to participate in the American Dream. To his dismay, he witnessed and experienced what Hispanic servicemen across the country were encountering in the pursuit of the American Dream—deeply rooted prejudice.”<sup>441</sup>

One catalyzing event for the American GI Forum occurred in 1949, in Texas, when a funeral chapel refused to allow a wake for a decorated Mexican-American veteran of World War II, Felix Longoria.<sup>442</sup> Longoria had been killed in action in the Philippines, and his widow decided to bring his

body home to Three Rivers, Texas. The outrage caused by this act of discrimination against a Gold Star family reverberated throughout the Latino community in the United States.

Garcia contacted Texas Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, who was able to arrange for a burial for Longoria with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. With this, Garcia and the American GI Forum became a powerful advocate for equal rights throughout the United States and a catalyzing force for the Civil Rights Movement.

**Figure 162 American GI Forum founder, Dr. Hector Garcia (left); Felix Z. Longoria, Jr. (right)**



Source: Humanities Texas, [www.humanitiestexas.org](http://www.humanitiestexas.org).

For his work with the American GI Forum, Dr. Garcia was presented with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1984 from President Ronald Reagan. (As of 2018, the American GI Forum remains the largest federally-chartered Hispanic veterans' organization in the United States, with chapters in 40 states.)

A similar act of discrimination catalyzed Riverside veterans of World War II into founding their own branch of the American GI Forum. As noted previously, when Riverside veterans John Martin Sotelo, Juan Acevedo, and Augustine Flores, among others, tried to join the American Legion Veterans Post in Fairmount Park, they were denied entry when "white members of an American Legion outpost in Riverside...felt compelled to maintain an exclusionary policy toward Chicano veterans":

'When we...were ready to join the American Legion here in Riverside, we probably had 150 to 200 veterans that wanted to be a part of it, and, at that time they told us...that we had different cultures so why don't we form an American Legion [outpost] of [our] own.'<sup>443</sup>

With the national American GI Forum already a few years old, Sotelo, Acevedo, Flores, and fellow veterans established the Riverside chapter of the American GI Forum in 1951. In Riverside, the

American GI Forum provided opportunities for local Latino veterans to unite beyond neighborhood lines. Up until that point, neighborhood-based American Legion Posts kept the groups somewhat separate. The Riverside American GI Forum helped veterans to unite and combine forces.

For many years, the group offered broad-based advocacy and support to the community on a variety of fronts. As historian Paul Víafora wrote, though the group was primarily a “civic and social organization,”

The GI Forum also emphasized the need for more and better education, better jobs, and political power for Chicanos. It succeeded in placing a Chicano on the local draft board, backed another, Joseph Aguilar, in his successful bid for election to the Riverside Junior College board, and became involved in Ernest Lopez’s victorious campaign for a seat on the Riverside School Board.

In addition, Augustine Flores, a prominent Chicano businessman who dominated GI Forum for years, was appointed to a seat on the city Planning Commission.<sup>444</sup>

In Riverside, the American GI Forum became a political and civil rights group of considerable influence. The group was active in recruiting and electing Latinos to political office, in supporting a range of community initiatives. In 1965, the American GI Forum led efforts in Riverside to collect and distribute food, clothing, and toys for children of striking grape workers in Delano, California, led by César Chavez. The toy drive delivered much needed resources to striking families during Christmas of 1965.

**Figure 163 Riverside chapter of the American GI Forum, at Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, 1963**



Source: Courtesy of Phyllis Sotelo Salinas

**Figure 164** Riverside chapter of the American GI Forum and group logo, circa 1965



Source: Courtesy of Luana Ybarra Hernandez

*Spotlight on: Augustine A. Flores, American GI Forum (b. 1926, d. 1987)*

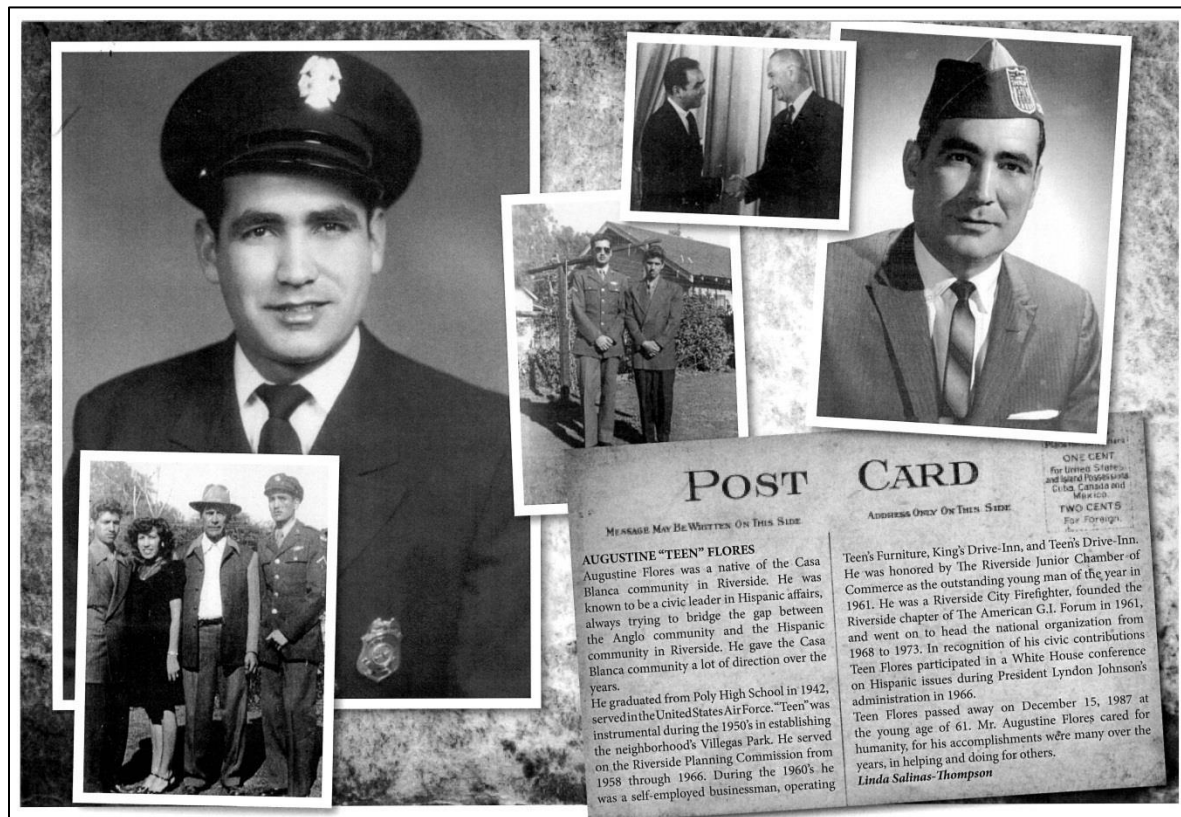
Born in the 1920s in Casa Blanca, Augustine A. Flores was a prominent Mexican-American business leader, World War II veteran, founding member of the American GI Forum, and a civil rights leader.

After graduating from Riverside's Polytechnic High School in 1942, Flores joined the US Air Force and served in World War II. Known as "Teen," Flores became known for a leadership style that sought to "bridge the gap between the Anglo community and the Hispanic community in Riverside."<sup>445</sup> Among his many contributions to the Latino community was worked to establish Villegas Park in Casa Blanca. Between 1958 and 1966, Flores served on the Riverside Planning Commission. With this, along with John Sotelo, Flores became one of the pioneering Latinos to enter political service in Riverside. In 1965, Flores participated on the Advisory Committee for Integrated Schools, a multi-ethnic group of community members working for citywide school integration.

Flores was also a pioneering business owner in the Latino community. By the 1960s, his businesses included Teen's Furniture, King's Drive-Inn, and Teen's Drive-Inn. In 1961, he received an award from the Riverside Junior Chamber of Commerce. In 1966, Flores was invited by US President Lyndon Johnson to participate in a White House conference on national Hispanic affairs.

His experience as a World War II veteran was formative for Flores. For many years, he was a central, powerful presence in the American GI Forum, serving as head of the organization between 1968 and 1973, as well as an active civic leader for the Latino community.

**Figure 165 Augustine Flores, World War II veteran, Latino business owner, and co-founder of American GI Forum**



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

*Community Service Organization and Voter Registration Drive, 1960*

The Community Service Organization (CSO) was formed in 1947 in Los Angeles, “to empower Mexican Americans to secure civil rights through neighborhood-based activism.”<sup>446</sup> In 1960, the CSO’s Los Angeles branch was led by a young César Chavez. That year, the CSO and Chavez focused their efforts on Riverside County and Casa Blanca, in “a massive campaign to register hundreds of Riverside County’s Latin-American citizens” in advance of the November 1960 elections:

According to Cesar Chavez of Los Angeles, a representative of the organization, the Riverside County drive will be concentrated in those areas with a large Latin population, including Riverside, Corona, Perris, Indio, and Coachella. But the main concentration this year is on Casa Blanca, where more than 90 per cent of the population is Latin. This makes it the most heavily Spanish-speaking community in the county.<sup>447</sup>

Helping Chavez was a small army of long-time community leaders and organizers in Riverside’s Latino community. Among them was Simona Valero, CSO chairperson, Mrs. Mary Ayala, CSO county chapter president, John Sotelo, as well as local leaders from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Throughout the spring of 1960, volunteers worked in neighborhoods throughout Riverside to register voters. The main event was a door-to-door campaign. For Riverside, Chavez had “two lines of attack” in Riverside to register voters:

His assistants, who have been made deputy registrars, will be at churches on Sunday, grocery stores, movie houses—places where large groups of people come. And for those missed by this effort a door-to-door canvassing will be undertaken.<sup>448</sup>

**Figure 166 Mrs. Frank Diaz and Mrs. Glen Ayala register a citizen of Casa Blanca to vote, 1960**



Source: Riverside Public Library, Shades of Riverside

The CSO had first attempted to encourage registration in Casa Blanca in 1947, though these efforts were not as successful. As Chavez noted in the 8 August 1960 issue of the *Riverside Independent Enterprise*, “the main problem is apathy. In many cases the people don’t feel they are a real part of the American community.” He continued, saying,

‘It’s a very odd illness, something that started many years ago when these barrios were permitted to set up independently... They were encouraged by the dominant white community. Now, they have these feelings of being ostracized. This we’re trying very desperately to break. ...Not only are we registering voters and awakening their sense of civil responsibility...but we are awakening others to the fact that these people are loyal Americans.’

Their efforts paid off. As of April 12, one week before the registration deadline, the CSO reported having registered more than 1,200 voters. The American GI Forum registered 150 new voters, and the NAACP another 500.<sup>449</sup>

The early 1960s heralded not only a significant increase in Latino and minority voter registration but also the end of the City’s at-large voting system. John Sotelo later described the uphill battle he had in his own City Council campaign:

‘We used to have elections at large in the city of Riverside, and we [Mexican Americans] never had representation... We found out that all the city officials...the mayor and council members were all from within a four block area [of] downtown Riverside...We fought to change the charter...That was the first I ever heard of gerrymandering.’<sup>450</sup>

These efforts to reform electoral policy in Riverside were successful, the City reverted to its former district-based electoral system. With this, seven new wards were established. John Sotelo won a seat on the City Council for Ward 2. “By the time he left office, at least one Mexican American or African American had a place on twenty-eight of the twenty-nine boards and commissions maintained by the city.”<sup>451</sup>

**Figure 167 Community Service Organization, voter registration drive in Casa Blanca, 1960**

## Focus on Casa Blanca

# Drive Under Way to Register Voters of Latin American Descent

By KEN REICH

A massive campaign to register hundreds of Riverside County's Latin-American citizens for the November election is getting under way this week. Its focus is on Casa Blanca.

The effort is being made under the auspices of the non-partisan Community Service Organization, a national group.

According to Cesar Chavez, of Los Angeles, a representative of the organization, the Riverside County drive will be concentrated in those areas with a large Latin

eight hundred more persons are eligible to vote in the area but have never registered.

OBJECTIVE of the Casa Blanca part of the campaign is to register these persons. Assisted by Mrs. Mary Ayala of Casa Blanca, president of the county chapter of the CSO, and eleven deputies, Chavez plans two lines of attack.

His assistants, who have been made deputy registrars, will be at churches on Sunday, grocery stores, movie houses — places

“IT’S A VERY old illness, something that started many years ago when these barrios (Latin - American communities) were permitted to set up independently,” Chavez said. “They were encouraged by the dominant white community. Now, they have these feelings of being ostracized. This we’re trying very desperately to break.”

Chavez believes there remains a great deal of ostracizing and stereotyping of this area’s Latin-Americans by the white population.

trict has made democracy come alive to the minorities, Chavez stated. Saund is of East Indian extraction.

The registration drive will continue to Sept. 15, the legal deadline for registration for the general election, but the CSO hopes to register most of those eligible in Casa Blanca in the next two weeks. The emphasis will then shift to other areas.

In addition to its present activities, the CSO also sets up naturalization classes and basic English courses in coordination

Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 18 August 1960

### *Community Action Group*

The Community Action Group was established in the 1960s as a multifaceted, community-based civil rights and advocacy group. Riverside had at least two chapters, one in Casa Blanca and another in Eastside.

In Casa Blanca, one early leader of the group—and the first president—was Casa Blanca native, Richard Roa. As a young man, Roa attended school in Riverside, then enlisted in the US Army, where he advanced to the position of corporal and served in Japan and Korea as part of the 40<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.<sup>452</sup> Upon returning to Riverside, Roa started working for Helgeson Buick before beginning his career in community service. Roa was appointed Community Relations Coordinator for the City of Riverside and became the first president of the Casa Blanca Community Action Group.

In those early years, one of the frontlines in the struggle for Latino civil rights regarded the community's relationship with the local police department. After a number of high-profile cases involving extreme police abuse and racial profiling, Roa and members of the group, such as community organizer Robert Roman, worked to address these problems. Roa and members of the Community Action Group stayed active in this struggle for many years. In 1992, as vice chair-elect of the Community Action Group, Roa told the *Los Angeles Times* that “the police [in Riverside] take it upon themselves to be judge, jury and executioner. To me, the police are just like another gang.”<sup>453</sup> Roa continued his tireless efforts on behalf of the community for nearly a half century.

Roa passed away in 2004. In a congressional tribute to Roa, US House of Representatives member Joe Baca said that, through Roa's work with the Community Action Group, he had helped to

redress the problems of an area that needed his caring touch. At Casa Blanca, Richard found himself fighting for improved housing, increased business development, and the creation of important neighborhood public services. He always advocated for those in need and was beloved by those around him.<sup>454</sup>

A current, long-time member of the group is Casa Blanca native, Morris Mendoza. Reflecting on nearly 50 years of work by the group, Mendoza said in 2011, “We had to organize to ask for what we thought we needed in the community.”<sup>455</sup> Mendoza began his community involvement after a notorious incident in 1975, when Riverside police used excessive force to break up a party in Casa Blanca. As a result, the police department was found guilty of federal civil rights violations. The event was symptomatic of a long period of police abuses toward Latino and ethnic communities and a resulting lack of trust on the part of the community.<sup>456</sup> Still active in Casa Blanca, the Community Action Group has relied on the support and work of many community leaders and members over the years.

### *Unity Leagues*

Throughout Southern California, Unity Leagues were launched by the efforts of Ignacio Lopez, editor of *El Espectador*. Lopez is said to have gathered a group of 50 Mexican-Americans in Pomona and Ontario, “most of them veterans of World War II,” to form the Unity League, “an organization dedicated to increasing Mexican American political power and awareness in advancing civil rights.”<sup>457</sup> As of 1946, the director of the Casa Blanca Unity League was long-time resident Mrs. Belen Reyes. The Unity League participated in a wide variety of community initiatives, including voter registration and neighborhood improvement projects, such as the street lighting campaign led by Augustine Flores in 1956.

Unity Leagues “emerged as a significant organization in Southern California, proliferating across the San Gabriel Valley and San Bernardino citrus belt. Predating the Community Service Organization, the first Unity League formed in 1946 in Pomona. While the Leagues spoke out on issues like police brutality and segregation, their main focus was voter registration and campaigning for minority candidates.”<sup>458</sup> While the Unity Leagues gradually lost momentum, the group did “inspire the formation of the Community Service Organization in 1947, a more long-lived organization that emerged as the leading civil rights advocacy group in Los Angeles and the state.”<sup>459</sup>

### *Mexican American Political Association (MAPA)*

Founded in 1959 by Edward Roybal, Bert Corona, and Eduardo Quevedo in Fresno, the Mexican American Political Association, or MAPA, was a state-level organization that “grew out of the many Mexican American grassroots groups throughout California that tried to elect their own representatives to local and state government.”<sup>460</sup> As scholar Richard Griswold del Castillo wrote,

MAPA grew out of the frustrations born of the electoral defeats of Mexican American candidates. MAPA was a nonpartisan political association that was based on the premise that increased political representation and voice for Mexican Americans would influence legislation and policy in the arena of civil rights.<sup>461</sup>

MAPA sought to bring more Mexican-American voters in American electoral politics, both as voters and as candidates. During the organization’s height, there were 90 local branches of MAPA throughout California. Throughout the postwar period, there was a high level of overlap and collaboration between organizations. Community Service Organization workers collaborated closely with MAPA, for example, and more often than not, the organizations shared many members and leaders. Riverside had a very active chapter of MAPA. Based on interviews with MAPA members from Riverside, historian Paul Viafora wrote that

the nucleus of this new group consisted of former members of the Mary O’Keefe Democratic Club and GI Forum. In part, the founding of MAPA reflected the disillusionment of some Chicanos with the GI Forum’s low level of political activity and their design for more progressive leadership. The basic goals of MAPA are increased educational opportunities for Chicanos, registration of potential Chicano voters, and bringing out the vote. MAPA also created a small scholarship fund with grants of \$150-200 going to the most outstanding Chicano and Chicana high school students each year.<sup>462</sup>

MAPA was also a factor in John Sotelo’s 1963 campaign for city council. In later years, the Riverside chapter of MAPA remained active, participating in the 1994 student walk-outs and other activities.

### *The Chicano Civil Rights Movement*

The era of reform that defined the 1960s brought a new energy and a new generation of Latino leaders to the fore in Riverside (and beyond). The Civil Rights Movement resulted in increased political power, access, and legislative victories for Latinos and communities of color throughout California and the United States. In addition, though primarily focused on politics and social issues, “the agenda of the movement...also generated a cultural renaissance in art, music, theater, and literature.”<sup>463</sup> In the political realm, by the late 1960s and into the 1970s,

the drive for full political rights reached a high point... Activists became more confrontational and assertive in demands for full inclusion into the American political system, and Latinos began scoring a series of significant electoral victories and establishing a permanent presence within the political parties.<sup>464</sup>

The Chicano Civil Rights Movement spanned a wide range of issues. Groups across the political spectrum worked to increase the community's political presence and power and to embrace and celebrate Chicano identity and heritage. As before, central issues included fighting for an end to discrimination, in schools, places of employment, and public spaces. This work was buoyed by civil rights legislation of the 1960s. In addition, Latinos in Riverside and throughout California fought for an end to the practice of gerrymandering. This was a long, uphill battle. As Latino Councilman John Sotelo said with regards to gerrymandering,

'If you don't have good representation, it is much easier to be discriminated against. And it is much easier for the legislature to act out this discrimination because they never see the victims of their programs and policies. But it hits just the same. Whether it's the teacher in the classroom or the assemblyman in the legislature, discrimination affects the Mexican-American.'<sup>465</sup>

As a result of these lobbying efforts in the early 1970s, a reapportionment bill was passed by the California state legislature in 1971. The bill was then vetoed by Republican Governor Ronald Reagan. This issue remained central for the Chicano civil rights movement, however. As Jesse Ybarra said,

'The power structure...had it so well worked out that the Chicano was kept out of the mainstream of politics. If Chicanos are to be included, we'd better make some rearrangement in reapportionment, because we don't have our share of Mexican-Americans in the state legislature.'<sup>466</sup>

Through the 1960s and 1970s, civil rights battles increasingly included issues of equal opportunity and hiring as well as police relations with the community. High-profile cases of police abuse against Latinos and minorities catalyzed the movement's involvement in this respect. In 1979, the CBS television program "60 Minutes" aired a segment on Casa Blanca; in the program, Riverside police department members made derogatory comments about Casa Blanca. With this, community leaders such as Jesse Ybarra, Leo Lueras, and Joe Cantaoi spoke out and met with Riverside Mayor Ab Brown. Through the years, discrimination and police abuse remained pressing problems for the community. However, that Ybarra, Lueras, and Cantaoi were at the table with the Riverside City Mayor signaled a new era in Chicano representation and political influence.

**Figure 168** From left, Joe Cantaoi, Leo Lueras, and Jesse Ybarra meet with Riverside Mayor Ab Brown regarding "60 Minutes" segment on Casa Blanca, 1979



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 19 January 1979; courtesy of Luana Ybarra Hernandez

### THE INFLUENCE AND INSPIRATION OF CÉSAR CHAVEZ AND “EL MOVIMIENTO”

The Chicano Rights Movement gathered momentum through the mid-1960s, inspired in part by the work of revered labor organizer César Chavez and the United Farm Workers (UFW). For his part, Chavez had a long association with the City and County of Riverside. In 1960, as an organizer for the Community Service Organization, Chavez worked to register Latino voters in Casa Blanca. Chavez visited UC Riverside on two occasions, and in 1968, Chavez and the UFW worked to organize Riverside County farm workers. The UFW grape strike arrived in Riverside County in the late 1960s. Chavez inspired Latinos throughout California: “Acknowledged by many to be the spiritual father of the chicano movement, Chavez symbolized and sparked the urge for a better life.”<sup>467</sup>

By the mid-1960s, as historian Paul Víafora noted, “the Inland Empire began to feel the effects of the growing Chicano movement”:

When César Chavez’s farm workers initiated a labor strike against the grape industry in Delano, California, the call of the national grape boycott reached Riverside. Hundreds of local Chicanos, mostly young, rallied behind Chavez’s banner. Numerous local rallies and demonstrations were held to lend moral and financial support to the strikers.<sup>468</sup>

In June 1993, after Chavez passed away, the City Council voted to change the name of the Riverside Community Center to the César E. Chavez Community Center. In 2012, the City broke ground for a memorial honoring the legacy and life of Chavez. Designed by artist Ignacio Gomez, the bronze memorial was dedicated in 2013 on the mall on University and Main, near the UC Riverside/California Museum of Photography. At the dedication of the memorial, City Council member Andy Melendrez praised the symbolism of the memorial design, commenting that:

This monument will show César moving forward in an upward direction with a strong stride, humbly clothed and the farm laborers rising behind him. The farm worker families are transitioning from a stooped position to one where they are reaching upwards towards César and the sky.<sup>469</sup>

**Figure 169 César Chavez Memorial, City of Riverside**



Source: City of Riverside

In Riverside, by the late 1960s, the spirit of the Chicano civil rights movement had spread throughout the community. At UC Riverside, along with the new Chicano Studies Department and Student Programs, young people founded their own groups. A branch of United Mexican-American Students (UMAS) was established at UC Riverside in 1968. As *The Press-Enterprise* noted in 1972, “Although the group’s primary emphasis was on education—especially the recruitment of high school Chicano students to UCR—it also stressed community-wide activism to improve every aspect of brown existence.”<sup>470</sup> UMAS was instrumental in advocating for a Chicano Studies department at UC Riverside and sponsored a number of events. The group later aligned itself with a broader students’ movement known as *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán* (Chicano Student Movement of Aztlán, or MECHA). With young people taking the lead, the movement for Aztlán signaled a shift toward a full embrace and appreciation for Mexican-American heritage and identity:

Rallying around the concept of ethnic pride and identification, these groups concentrated on trying to make reforms in the educational system, which they considered basically unresponsive to the needs of Chicano students. These young activists confronted school administrators with a number of demands to improve the quality of education they were receiving.<sup>471</sup>

The idea of Aztlán, “a nation, a union of free pueblos” for Mexican-Americans became a touchstone in the movement. The symbol of Aztlán was based on “a profound sense of pride, of homeland,” as Cecilia Rios, a county probation officer explained. “It’s an identity that says I’m a chicana and I’m proud of where I came from.”<sup>472</sup> This symbol for Mexican-American identity wasn’t just for the students. Explaining the idea to *Press-Enterprise* reporter Douglas Martinez in 1972, Grace Bailón, head librarian of the Casa Blanca Branch of the Riverside Public Library, said that “Aztlán” symbolizes the chicano ‘struggle in the sense that we know there has to be change. We all must be recognized. The Bill of Rights isn’t just for certain people, it’s for everybody.”<sup>473</sup> For many Latinos in Riverside, Aztlán “is a realization by Mexican-American people, a crystallized pride and mission to correct injustice,” said Leo Lueras.<sup>474</sup>

Even as a greater sense of empowerment and identity were emerging, a number of crises during the Civil Rights Movement rocked the Latino community and launched new groups in response. One well-known group that represented the new generation of activists was the Brown Berets. Founded in East Los Angeles to serve and protect Latino communities, the approach of the Brown Berets was more assertive and unafraid of confrontation. One well known and respected leader of the Brown Berets in Riverside was Gilberto Chávez. Casa Blanca’s Brown Beret chapter was established in 1970 in response to several police killings of Mexican-American youths. Historian Paul A. Viafora cited the 1969 killing of Jesse Salcido by a Riverside police officer as a direct catalyst in the formation of the Brown Berets. The Brown Berets became a vocal, active force in addressing and correcting police abuse, racial profiling, and continuing discrimination.

In this era, a number of other local groups emerged from the Chicano Civil Rights Movement. One group founded in Riverside was the Brown Baggers, established in mid-1969. During the height of the Chicano movement, the Brown Baggers met each week at the community Settlement House, to discuss issues affecting the community:

Average weekly attendance is between twenty and thirty. Brown Baggers look for solutions to problems facing the Chicano community, provide information to the Chicano community on employment, job rights, and local welfare and social agency services, and provide increased communications between governmental agencies and Riverside Chicanos.<sup>475</sup>

The groups and voices that emerged in Riverside's Chicano Civil Rights Movement were varied and represented a diverse range of opinions, approaches, ages, and socioeconomic positions. According to Chicano historian Paul A. Viafora, one of the most important groups to emerge during the Chicano Civil Rights Movement was a group that brought them all together, Coalition de la Raza. Founded in 1971, the group brought together "nearly two dozen Riverside Chicano organizations ranging from conservatives groups like the Progresistas to activist groups" such as MECHA and the Brown Berets.<sup>476</sup>

In 1973, Viafora took stock of progress made in the Chicano Civil Rights Movement to that point. While much work remained to be done, one "encouraging note" cited by Viafora was the increase in Latinos and African-Americans in political office. "By 1972," Viafora wrote, "Chicanos and Blacks held 16 per cent of the city's appointive positions, whereas prior to World War II only one person of Spanish surname (Estudillo) had ever held an appointive office."<sup>477</sup> Although progress in employment and housing integration was slow, Viafora observed, "Chicano political involvement has born fruit":

John Sotelo, first elected to the City Council in 1963, was reelected twice and served until 1973. Augustine Flores, a former G.I. Forum leader, served on the City Planning Commission, while Joseph Aguilar and Ernest Lopez were elected to the boards of trustees of Riverside City College and the Riverside Unified School District Board, respectively. Finally, MAPA succeeded in placing a Chicano on the local draft board.<sup>478</sup>

This progress has continued to the present day. As of 2018, just as one example, John Sotelo's 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward City Council seat is currently held by Councilman Andrew Melendrez, Jr., son of decorated World War II veteran Andrew Melendrez, Sr., and protégée of John Sotelo.

**Figure 170 Long-time City Councilmember Andrew Melendrez, Jr. and John Sotelo (left); Sotelo and family, ca. 2008 (right)**



Source: *El Chicano Weekly*, 3 September 2009

Figure 171 Mrs. Simona Valero, in 2011 in Casa Blanca



Source: Fuentes, KCET, 2011

Figure 172 Photo collage and homage to Simona Valero, February 2012



Source: Courtesy of Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society

*Spotlight on: Simona Valero, Life-Long Community Organizer, Activist, and Social Worker*

In 1990, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors proclaimed February 21<sup>st</sup> as Simona Valero Day, in honor of this Casa Blanca native's life-long service to her community and the citizens of Riverside County.

Valero was born in Casa Blanca on 21 February 1922, to parents who had come to Casa Blanca in circa 1910, escaping the tumult of the Mexican Revolution.

For many decades, Valero has been a champion of and fighter for the Latino community. The focus of her early work was Casa Blanca, where she was born and raised. She attended Casa Blanca Elementary School in the 1920s and 1930s during an era of segregation. During World War II, Valero capitalized on an opportunity to leave agricultural work and accepted an aircraft assembly job. This job led to an office-based administrative position, and in the postwar period, Valero combined her knowledge of her community and its needs, and the professional skills she had acquired, and became a social worker and administrator, serving the community for many years.

In the 1960s, as the County's Economic Opportunity Board was searching for community leaders to staff its Casa Blanca Community Services Center, Valero was one of two people selected, along with Mrs. Georgette White. She served in this position, as well as a Social Service Assistant, for 25 years. She continued her education with extension classes at UC Riverside.

Valero's civic involvement and commitment included (and includes) works in the "PTA, Home of Neighborly Service, Casa Blanca Villegas Center and Park activities and innumerable other activities in Casa Blanca, as well as the Riverside Inland Epilepsy Foundation."<sup>479</sup> In addition, along with her husband, John, Valero was an instrumental leader and organizer of the *Sociedad Progresista Mexicana*, for nearly four decades.

Valero was one of the many community members who lobbied for the creation of Villegas Park and Community Center, a project that came to fruition in the postwar period.

As a child, Valero's family belonged to the Casa Blanca Presbyterian Church, on Madison Street. Remembering the difficult days of the Great Depression, Valero recalled that the Presbyterian Church was active in distributing food and clothing to community members in need. Later, as she recalled in 2015, she joined the Pentecostal movement, attending the Church of God on Diamond Street.

Valero and her husband John were married for 46 years before John passed away. The couple raised their four children in Casa Blanca, in the family home on Diamond Street. The Riverside County Board of Supervisors recognized Valero for the "exemplary life of service to all people whose lives touched hers." At the age of 96, Valero still lives in, contributes to, and loves her community of Casa Blanca.

**Figure 173 John Sotelo, US Navy, World War II, circa 1943**



Source: Courtesy of Phyllis Sotelo Salinas

*Spotlight on: John Martin Sotelo, "Father of the Eastside Community"*

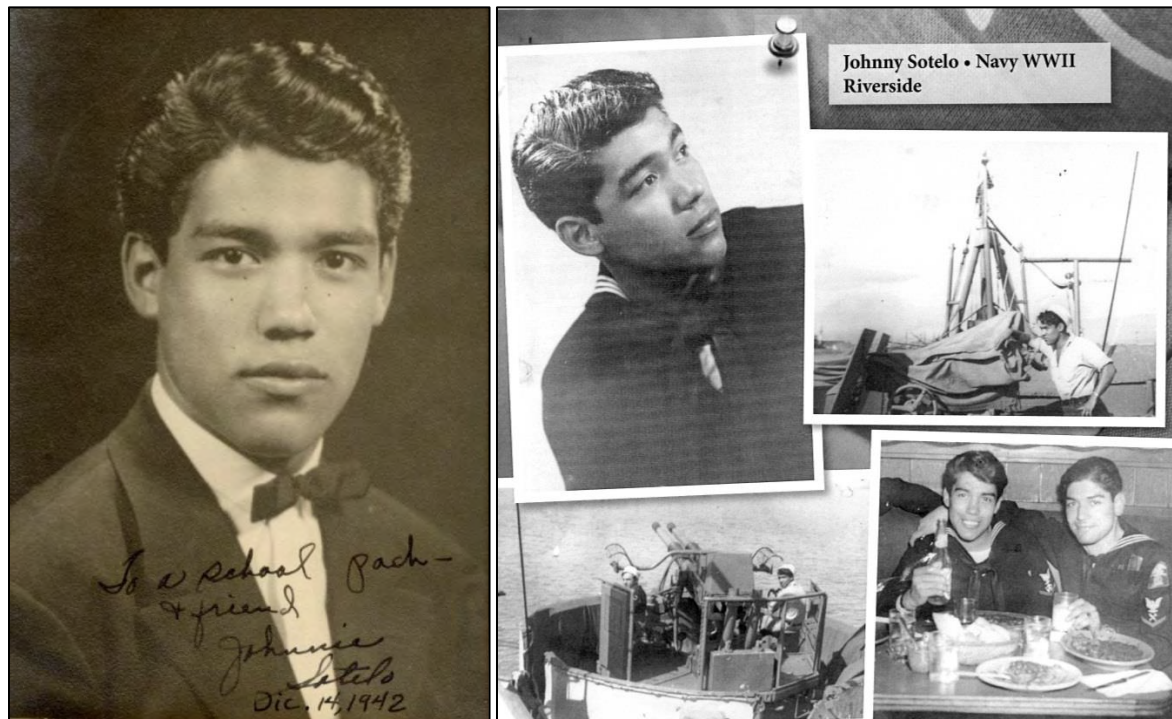
Born in 1925, Sotelo was the son of Meliton Sotelo and Feliciana Escobedo.<sup>480</sup> Meliton arrived in Riverside in 1910 from Guanajuato, Mexico. After working at a cement plant and saving, Sotelo's father opened a grocery store, which served the Eastside community. The Great Depression hit the family hard, however, and the Sotelo family grocery store went out of business. With this, Sotelo's family joined the ranks of itinerant farm workers. Sotelo described the exhausting travel schedule:

The navel oranges in Riverside would start in late November... 'til May; the Valencias came in early May... 'til June. And then... a lot of [farm workers] took off, as my mom did with [her] children... Some went to Hemet 'cause Hemet was [the] apricot center in the area... From there... we went to pick grapes in the Fresno area... and then we could go... to San Jose to pick prunes.<sup>481</sup>

During these years, it was common for Mexican-American children of farm workers to attend school through junior high, then to begin working. Sotelo was an exception, graduating from Riverside's Polytechnic High School in 1943. Sotelo excelled in technical classes such as auto shop, which he later translated into his first job. During his senior year, he was the only Mexican-American selected among a group of students for an apprenticeship with Riverside auto dealers. He earned a position with the Rubidoux Cadillac dealership, where he remained until enlisting in the US Navy to serve in World War II. Upon his return, Sotelo married Ramona Estrada. The couple had four children.

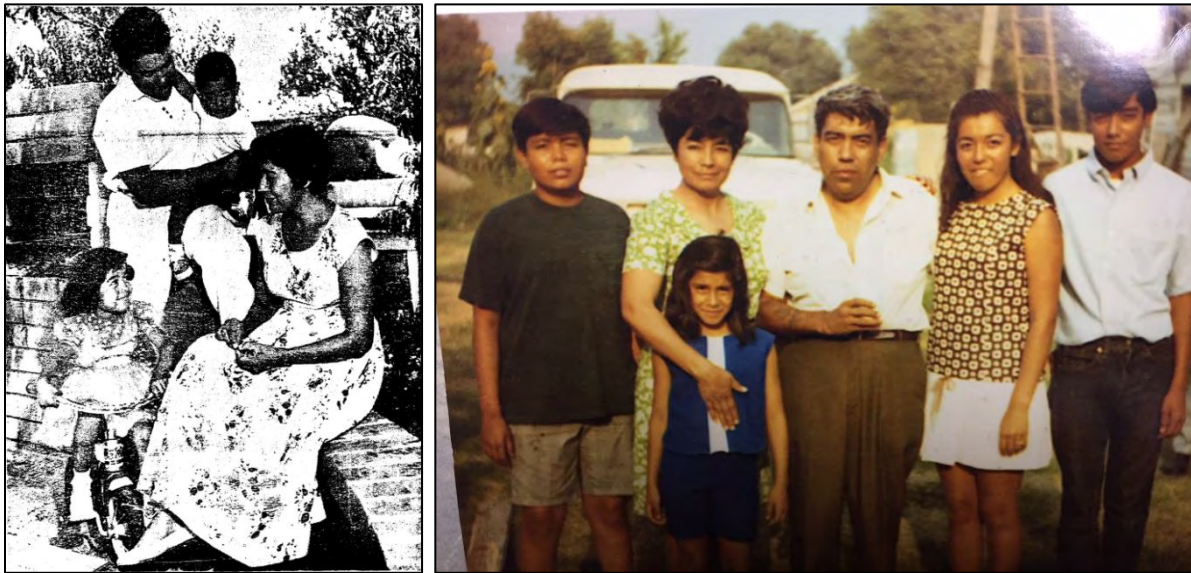
Upon returning from the war, Sotelo visited his former employer at Rubidoux Cadillac and was promptly asked to don a pair of coveralls so he could help with some car repairs. Sotelo remained on at Rubidoux Cadillac until the mid- to late 1950s. In 1957, Sotelo capitalized on an opportunity to start his own business, a Shell gas station, auto towing company, and shop at the corner of 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Victoria Avenue (now an Arco Gas Station), which Sotelo named Victoria Shell Station.

**Figure 174 Johnny Sotelo, in 1942 (left) and during World War II service (right)**



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

**Figure 175 John & Ramona Sotelo, with children Phyllis & Ken, 1956 (left); Sotelo family, circa 1970**



Source: *Riverside Daily Press*, 15 August 1956 and courtesy of Phyllis Sotelo Salinas

World War II proved to be a defining, empowering experience for Sotelo. Looking back on the experience in 1972, he recalled that “World War II was the biggest thing, leaving our little town, mixing, it made me feel I was not a second-class citizen, that I had fought for this country and I was just as good as anyone else.”<sup>482</sup> When Sotelo returned from the war, he began actively working for equal rights and access, quickly earning a reputation as an effective community activist. Recalling one early story, Sotelo recounted his efforts on behalf of a young Mexican-American student who was denied entry to a segregated school:

‘A young [Mexican American boy was not admitted to ...school...so I told the mother, ‘You take him back to school’...And they sent him home [again]...and I went up to the superintendent of schools (Ira C. Landis], and I told him that I was going to go to the newspaper[s], and I was gonna get some money to hire a lawyer and we were gonna sue the school. So, he admitted the boy. They personally came in a car and picked the boy up after the third day.’<sup>483</sup>

In 1963, Sotelo was elected Riverside’s first Mexican-American City Council member, where he was able to broaden his work in advocacy and civil rights. He also helped inspire a new generation of Latino politicians:

Sotelo served as a model, mentor and friend. Ward 2 Councilman Andy Melendrez and Riverside Community College Trustee Mary Figueroa both recalled how when they were growing up John Sotelo was someone they looked up to and aspired to be like. ‘He became a role model for many of us,’ Figueroa said... ‘He’s a great Latino story and a great Riverside story,’ added Riverside County Supervisor Bob Buster.

After his passing in 2009, *El Chicano* writer Cynthia Mendoza remembered Sotelo’s life and legacy:

Throughout his life Johnny Sotelo worked to improve the lives of others. His work took on many different forms but the bottom line remained the same: serving and enriching lives. During his last interview with this reporter in July of 2008, Sotelo concluded by saying ‘Stay in school,’ his advice to all young people about what it takes to be successful in life.<sup>484</sup>

## Subtheme: Latinos in Labor History

### *Labor Movement*

While little information has been identified to date on the history of the Latino labor movement in Riverside, this section details the broader history and related union activities in the region. This information is intended to serve as a starting point for future research.

In California, the labor movement started in earnest in the early twentieth century.<sup>485</sup> As noted in the pioneering 1988 study, *Five Views*, in 1903, “more than 1,000 Mexican and Japanese sugar-beet workers carried out a successful strike near Ventura.”<sup>486</sup> In these early years, the first large-scale union serving Mexican-born and Mexican-American workers was the *Confederacion de Uniones Obreros Mexicanos* (Federation of Mexican Workers Union, or CUOM). CUOM’s primary goals were “equal pay for Mexican and Anglos doing the same job, termination of job discrimination against Chicano workers, and limitation on the immigration of Mexican workers into the United States.”<sup>487</sup>

In the Inland Empire citrus industry, one significant event in the labor movement occurred in 1917, when citrus workers from a number of communities went on strike. Workers’ demands were modest; in a number of communities, the workers asked for a .25-cent daily wage increase, from \$2.25 to \$2.50, for each day’s 9-hour shift of work. In Highland in March 1917, approximately 100 citrus workers went on strike over daily wages.<sup>488</sup> The strike affected Highland growers, including Gold Buckle and West Highland Citrus Association, among others. However, in response to the worker shortage and “labor agitation,” Highland growers went around striking workers and brought in 200 Mexican laborers from El Paso to pick oranges. In this way, workers had an uphill battle at best in organizing strikes for better pay or conditions

In the lemon groves of Corona, just southwest of Riverside, striking workers demanded the same a daily .25 cent raise—from \$2.25 to 2.50 for nine hours of work. One tactic employed by Corona lemon ranchers was threatening to fire not just striking workers but “every Mexican in their employ” and vowing to “not hire Mexicans in the future”:

Now that the Mexicans have made demands, which the fruit men deem unreasonable, they have decided to turn them down and hire none but white help in the future. The fruit men mean business; they will pay from \$2 to \$2.25 a day to white men.

As an aftermath of the strike of the Mexican lemon pickers at Corona...the people of the Circle City have sent out a call in all directions for help. And it must be white help, too. They have decided to give the white man the preference in the future, and to this end have asked the Press to state that any Riverside men looking for work picking fruit can get it at Corona.<sup>489</sup>

The workers’ strike arrived in Riverside in 1917, as well. On 27 March 1917, a meeting took place in Casa Blanca involving “practically every Mexican orange picker in the Arlington Heights fruit district.”<sup>490</sup> The local press blamed “Corona agitators” for the discussions (rather than low wages, long days, and grueling work conditions). Arlington Heights citrus workers went on a large-scale strike in Riverside, greatly slowing production during a busy season. On 28 March 1917, an estimated 400 workers walked out of Riverside’s Arlington Heights groves, a majority of them Mexican and Mexican-American, joined by Japanese and Japanese-American workers.<sup>491</sup>

This strike spread throughout the Inland Empire. By April, according to newspaper accounts of the day, the strike included “nearly 1,000 Mexicans” throughout the citrus groves of San Bernardino and Riverside counties; the strike eventually spread to the Colton cement plant, as well. By April, the

strike had spread to include “Mexican orange and lemon pickers” in Riverside, Redlands, Colton, Highlands, East Highlands, Mentone, Crafton, Redlands Junction, Rialto and Upland.<sup>492</sup>

In Riverside, Arlington Heights citrus ranchers blamed “outside agitators” for the walkout and brought in strike breakers: “With the arrival of 79 Mexicans from El Paso last night, picking operations in the orange groves on Arlington Heights today are being conducted on a scale similar to that in effect before the recent walkout of the Mexican pickers. There are at work in the citrus groves today about 250 men.”<sup>493</sup> With this, many workers were forced to capitulate: “The crew is daily being increased with the return to work of members of the old strikers, who have decided to resume work at the proposed scale.”<sup>494</sup>

In this way, citrus ranchers understood the economic power they wielded over workers. Indeed, news coverage noted how “peculiar” it was that Mexican workers would go on strike since, “Mexicans have, as a rule, no reserve funds on which to fall back for the necessities of life. They have never before made a concerted move in the labor circles in Southern California.”<sup>495</sup> Rather than honoring workers’ requests, ranchers preferred to fire or replace striking workers. During the 1917 strike, F.A. Little and W.G. Fraser, superintendent and general manager of the Riverside Orange Company, explained their unwillingness to meet worker demands in this way:

Most of the associations have conceded to the demands of the Mexicans. Some of our men have come back but we are short now and what are we going to do? ...We find that our troubles do not end with the raising of wages. There is still the shortage of labor and when they get one raise, they want more, just as they have in Redlands, shortly after receiving concessions demanding shorter days. There is no telling where it will end.<sup>496</sup>

The solution of Arlington Heights citrus growers to hire strike breakers was short lived, however. As the *Riverside Daily Press* reported on 5 April 1917, most of the El Paso striker breakers themselves refused to go to work, upon learning that their pay would only be \$1.80 a day and that they were be responsible for paying a \$24 railroad fare, as well as daily room and board.<sup>497</sup> As a result, “Several packinghouses in the Riverside area were shut down and picking halted for several days. Owners and strikers finally agreed to a piece work rate increase from three cents to five cents a box—a victory for the workers.”<sup>498</sup>

Figure 176 Coverage of Riverside 1917 citrus strike in Arlington Heights: from planning meeting in Casa Blanca (March 27), to walk-out of 400 workers (March 28), and rancher’s response (April 4)



Source: Riverside Independent Press, 27 March 1917, 28 March 1917, and 4 April 1917

While workers' groups and unions did exist in Riverside, ranchers clearly wielded the power, understanding that workers had no recourse and few resources for sustaining a long walk-out. This, coupled with the draconian measures taken in response to strikes, dampened any momentum that might have resulted from the 1917 strikes in and around Riverside.

In subsequent decades, on the topic of workers' rights, press coverage at the time was notably unsympathetic, as local newspapers characterized workers' demands as "communists seeking control of the food industry" and prompted by visits from outside "agitators."<sup>499</sup> In the 1930s, the anti-union, Red Scare tactics were elevated, as attempts to organize Riverside and Corona citrus workers was denounced in the news as a "grave danger" to American capitalism launched by Moscow itself.<sup>500</sup>

Even so, during the Great Depression, the labor movement gained momentum, as approximately 40 agricultural unions were established by Mexican and Mexican-American workers in California. Strikes in 1933 that began in El Monte and San Joaquin Valley spread throughout the state, ultimately involving thousands of workers.

The unions still faced an uphill battle, as ranchers, with the help of local law enforcement officials, used extreme means and measures to halt strikes and intimidate workers into compliance. In 1930, when hundreds of Mexican and Filipino field workers went on strike in the Imperial Valley, six of the strike leaders ended up not only fired but imprisoned in San Quentin, prosecuted under the California Criminal Syndicalism Act. Ranchers and farmers would also throw workers and their families out of the homes. Efforts to unionize during the Great Depression were fought by the farmers, who founded the group Associated Farmers to counter unionization. Even so, California became a hotbed for union activity throughout the 1930s.

In the 1930s, other strikes that are likely to have involved Latino laborers included a widespread citrus and milk workers strike in 1934 throughout Southern California. In a familiar scenario, ranchers called in deputies and law enforcement officials for "protection against what they termed 'communists seeking control of the food industry.' They demanded enactment of an anti-picketing ordinance, threatening to form vigilante groups unless their demands were met. Strike leaders denied communist affiliations, declaring they wanted a higher wage scale."<sup>501</sup> The strike affected Riverside, San Bernardino, and Orange Counties, where "deputies were ordered to guard roads" after 600 pickers and packing house workers walked out of work. In order to stop strikes, special deputies were sworn in, "usually Anglo employees of the grove owners, to protect against labor agitation. These deputies were to patrol the groves to prevent the outbreak of strikes and agitation from outsiders."<sup>502</sup>

In the early 1930s, another call for a widespread citrus workers' strike arrived in the Inland Empire. This time, officials acted quickly to shut it down. In January 1934, two organizers from the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union, Harvey and William Foster, were arrested in Corona after efforts to organize Mexican-American citrus workers on charges of "vagrancy."<sup>503</sup>

In early 1934, citrus workers had planned a meeting in Eastside at the Mercantile Hall, at Thirteenth Street and Park Avenue, to discuss a possible strike. Before the event began, however, Riverside police and sheriff officers violently broke up the meeting and arrested the strike leaders, all of whom were from San Bernardino: Frank Moreno, Earl Ambrose, Frank Winters, and Chester Stewart. The strike, said to have been launched by "community agitators," ultimately was not successful.<sup>504</sup>

In addition, on 15 January 1934, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors passed an emergency measure "prohibiting the obstruction of public highways and sidewalks," aimed at stopping strikes: "The ordinance makes it unlawful for any person to 'loiter or to stand or sit in or upon any public

highway, alley, sidewalk or cross walk in the unincorporated territory of Riverside county.”<sup>505</sup> The law was adopted in order to “deal more effectively in unincorporated territory with labor agitators and others seeking to incite strikes such as are now being attempted in the county citrus districts.”<sup>506</sup> As historian Paul Viafora noted, “by the late 1930s, no less than 31 of California’s 59 counties had passed anti-picketing ordinances.”<sup>507</sup>

With the advent of the Cold War and escalation of the Red Scare, union organizing continued to be seen as the work of communist agitators, and ranchers continued to deal with strikes or worker demands in a harsh manner.

The most significant forward movement for the labor movement arrived in the postwar period, through the leadership of César Chavez, Dolores Huerta, and many others through the United Farm Workers movement. With this movement, in the mid-1960s, labor organizing saw resurgence and renaissance, as “hundreds of local Chicanos, mostly young, rallied behind Chavez’s banner.”<sup>508</sup> There was widespread support for the Delano grape strike in Riverside, as “numerous rallies and demonstration were held to lend moral and financial support to the strikers.”<sup>509</sup> In addition, in 1973, Chavez led a grape boycott in nearby Coachella Valley that greatly raised awareness of the issues facing farm laborers.

**Figure 177 Jesse Ybarra and American GI Forum members, leading food and clothing drive for striking grape workers in Delano, 1965**



Source: *Riverside Press Enterprise*, 30 December 1965

**Figure 178 César Chavez's March to Delano, 1965 Grape Strike**



Source: "The Land Is Rich: 1966 United Farm Workers," California Agricultural Labor, 1966

**Figure 179 César Chavez and Robert F. Kennedy, 1966**



Source: "The Land Is Rich: 1966 United Farm Workers," California Agricultural Labor, 1966

**Figure 180 Riverside County Sheriff Deputies arrest striking grape worker in Coachella, 1973**



Source: United Farm Workers, 1973 footage of Coachella Valley strike, available on YouTube

## 5 Associated Property Types

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The following sections describe the property types and eligibility standards that apply to the themes of significance: Theme #1, Making a Home and a Nation, Theme #2, Making a Living, Theme #3, Making a Life, and Theme #4, Making a Democracy.

In order to ensure consistency with the state-level framework, this section includes excerpts from the 2015 California Office of Historic Preservation study, *Latinos in Twentieth Century California*. Excerpts from the state-level guide for conducting evaluations have been adapted and tailored where appropriate for Riverside.

The present project did not include a citywide survey or intensive-level evaluations. However, research and site visits have identified a number of potentially eligible resources and significant associations warranting further study, survey, evaluation, and designation.

In general, the properties identified might include a potentially significant individual or business, but research conducted to date has not verified properties reflecting the period of significance. In other cases, research conducted to date has not yet verified the addresses or extant resources reflecting the individual, group, or business. It is recommended that these resources or associations be carried forward for subsequent research and intensive-level evaluation.

Appendix A presents a summary of potentially eligible resources recommended for survey, further research, and possible evaluation and/or designation.

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

### **Property Types Associated with Immigration and Settlement**

#### *Buildings, Sites, and Objects associated with Early Founding Years*

##### **DESCRIPTION**

While rare, built environment resources qualifying under this category would be buildings, objects, or sites that have a strong association with the founding years of the Latino community in Riverside. This would include (but might not be limited to) the early settlement sites at Agua Mansa and La Placita, Latino labor at Jensen Alvarado Ranch, or other related resources. Historic archaeological sites might also qualify under this theme.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Extant buildings, objects, or sites that reflect the early settlement years of the Latino community in Riverside may qualify for federal, state, and/or local listing under Criteria A/1/1.

##### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

In order to qualify under this theme, resources have a demonstrated, strong association with the founding years of the Latino community in Riverside (1840s through 1900). Integrity considerations should consider the rarity of such resources. A higher level of alteration is permissible, given the relative rarity of these resources.

##### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Trujillo Adobe, 1863 (Locally designated)
- Agua Mansa Bell, 1865

#### *Headquarters and Offices of Prominent Organizations*

##### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context were the headquarters or offices of organizations that supported Latino immigrants. Few organizations had the means to erect buildings during their formative years, and many organizations survived for only brief periods. Thus, they operated out of donated or rented spaces such as churches, theaters, and commercial buildings. In limited cases, organizations were able to raise funds to purchase existing buildings or to construct new ones. These buildings are typically small in scale and modest in design and include large meeting rooms, a few offices, and restrooms. Such buildings may be found throughout the state in large cities and small towns alike.

The architectural qualities of office buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Buildings that were used by organizations that supported Latino immigrants may qualify for federal, state, and/or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local or state level depending on their sphere of

influence. An important early group was the *mutualista*, or mutual aid society. At the beginning of the twentieth century, numerous mutualistas emerged throughout California. The swell of immigrants in the 1910s expanded the membership of existing mutualistas such as *La Sociedad Progresista* and *La Sociedad Hispano Americano*, both of which operated in Riverside.

Most mutualistas operated by charging dues and pooling resources to provide insurance, loans, and burial assistance. Many also supported the indigent in their communities with medical care, food, and clothing. These groups typically had a nationalistic orientation and sponsored patriotic events. Some also organized libraries and schools to supplement the education their children received in public schools. Mutualistas are significant in this context because they fostered cultural bonds and social networks that were critical in the subsequent development of more political groups.

During the latter half of the twentieth century, mutualistas became engaged in political activism, and new organizations were formed to assist immigrants in securing legal status in the United States.

## ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

**Individual Properties:** To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, buildings must be strongly associated with a prominent organization that supported Latino immigrants. It is not necessary for the organization to have constructed the building, only to have occupied some part of it during the period in which it gained significance. Buildings should retain sufficient integrity to convey their character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be present in the evaluation of integrity. Buildings may be modest in their workmanship and materials due to the limited financial resources of most organizations. Primary interior spaces such as large meeting rooms might be extant. Acceptable alterations might include the removal and replacement of some original materials and features.

**Historic District:** If a significant concentration of buildings associated with Latino immigration and settlement exists in a defined geographic area, it may constitute a historic district. Historic districts associated with this context may be found in large cities as well as small towns. Immigrants tended to settle near their places of employment in neighborhoods frequently known as barrios and colonias. These neighborhoods were often located on the outskirts of towns, because racially restrictive covenants prevented people of Mexican descent from living in white communities. By the 1930s, settlement patterns began to shift to urban areas as Mexicans sought work in the transportation, construction, and industrial sectors.

Company towns and labor camps were more organized forms of settlement for Mexican immigrants. Company towns could include elementary schools, community halls, and recreational facilities in addition to small wood frame houses. They were particularly common in the citrus regions of southern California including Riverside, Fullerton, Whittier, and Ventura. There are no known surviving examples.

Historic districts associated with Latino immigration and settlement may be eligible for federal, state, and/or local listing at the local or state level under Criteria A/1/1 depending on their age and rarity. While the Latino population in California is diverse, it has historically been dominated by Mexican Americans. A complex set of push and pull factors drew Mexicans to California. These included labor demands and shortages, transportation improvements, and public policies on both sides of the border.

Predominately Latino neighborhoods and towns may reflect the settlement patterns of Latinos at various points during the twentieth century. During the first half of the century, they may be

significant for documenting the limited housing options that were available to Mexican Americans. Racially restrictive covenants and discrimination in education and employment segregated Mexican immigrants from Anglo communities. Segregationist policies resulted in barrios and colonias that were culturally self-sustaining, and residents observed a variety of patriotic and religious celebrations from their home country. During the second half of the century, Latinos had more, not necessarily unfettered, housing options. Existing barrios and colonias either disappeared or became more cohesive. In addition, working class neighborhoods and suburbs emerged in formerly white areas.

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/3, historic districts must be located in one of the primary areas of settlement by Latinos within a city or county. Primarily residential neighborhoods are significant in the context of early settlement if they contain important businesses and institutions such as churches or schools, thereby reflecting the complexity and nuances of the Latino community. The neighborhood must have been predominately Latino for a significant period of time to qualify, and not all predominately Latino neighborhoods are eligible.

Historic districts should reflect the period of time they were settled and occupied by Latinos. The evaluation of integrity should focus on the totality and overall characteristics of the historic district, not the individual contributing buildings. Additions and alterations should be compatible with the overall design, materials, and scale of the original portion of the contributing buildings.

#### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Community Settlement Association/House (4366 Bermuda Avenue). NRHP listed. Local evaluation and designation should include any associated recreational spaces, support structures, or artwork as extant.
- Home of Neighborly Service (7680 Casa Blanca Street); evaluation should include associated recreational spaces, support structures, and artwork (such as Roy Duarte murals from 1972)
- Riverside office space or headquarters of La Sociedad Progresista Mexicana, La Beneficia Sociedad, and La Sociedad Hispano Americano
- The “Hub” or historic center of Casa Blanca (pre-1945 settlement area)
- The Streeter Housing Tract, Eastside (one of three postwar housing tracts open to minority buyers); pending survey; roughly bounded by 14th Street (north), Sedgwick Street (east), Pennsylvania Avenue (south), and High Street (west)
- Los Ranchitos Housing Tract, Casa Blanca (one of three postwar housing tracts open to minority buyers); pending survey; roughly bounded by Lincoln Avenue (north), Sonora Place (east), Santa Rosa Way (south), and Madison Street (west)
- Woods Subdivision, Eastside (one of three postwar housing tracts open to minority buyers)

## 5.2 Theme #2: Making a Living

### Property Types Associated with Agricultural Labor and Citrus Industry

*Labor Camps, Citrus Colonias, Packinghouses/Related Properties, Residences*

#### DESCRIPTION

Individual properties associated with this context might include a broad array of building types associated with Latino labor, such as labor camps, bracero camps, citrus groves, packinghouses, and offices (as a cultural landscape), offices, or residences of long-time citrus workers or braceros. Historic districts and/or cultural landscapes might include long-time areas of settlement by citrus workers and their families, adjacent citrus groves, packinghouses, and other support structures, and other properties directly reflecting the association with citrus-worker settlement.

#### SIGNIFICANCE

Buildings, sites, cultural landscapes, historic districts, and other spaces strongly associated with Latino labor in Riverside's citrus industry may be eligible for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local level. Those properties with a strong association to a long-time, accomplished citrus worker or bracero might qualify under Criteria B/2/2.

#### ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, properties must show a strong, long-term association with Latino citrus labor or citrus-worker housing and settlement. To be eligible under Criteria B/2/2, the property should show a strong association with a prominent, long-term citrus industry worker. Eligibility under Criteria B/2/2 would generally be the residences of citrus workers.

Properties reflecting this theme and era are relatively rare. Integrity considerations should include the scarcity of the resource; a higher degree of alterations is permissible for resources with few known examples. In addition, consideration should be given to the relatively limited access to financial resources that the owners and builders of associated properties might have had; potential resources might appear modest and exhibit some degree of alteration and addition over time.

Research conducted to date has not yet revealed any surviving remnants of labor camps or bracero camps in Riverside. Should further research identify built environment traces of such camps, the eligibility requirements described here would apply.

#### EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY

- Casa Blanca Citrus Workers Settlement; evaluation should consider the boundaries and representative, intact examples of residences, planning features, and other associated properties reflecting the early era of Latino citrus-worker settlement in Casa Blanca.
- Arlington Heights Fruit Exchange, 3391 Seventh Street; property listed in the NRHP; designation could be updated to add "Making a Living" theme of significance, to capture association with Latino labor in the citrus industry
- Subsequent research should focus on identifying the residences or other associated properties for long-time, accomplished citrus workers; some examples might include (but not be limited to) Jess Avila, Henry Bermudez, Virginia Rodriguez Solorio, Ilario Alfaro, and

Melchor Rangel, one of Riverside's best known field foremen from the 1930s through the 1950s, among many others

- Subsequent survey should focus on intact citrus-industry properties (groves, packinghouses, related support structures) adjacent to Latino neighborhoods

## **Property Types Associated with Business and Commerce**

### *Commercial and Office Buildings, Schools, and Other Related Properties*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

**Individual Properties:** Properties associated with this context include a broad array of commercial building types such as offices, markets, banks, restaurants, funeral homes, bakeries, dance halls, record stores, and general retail shops. (This could also include educational facilities, for pioneering educators or administrators.) Some served basic needs, while others provided entertainment or professional services. Most often they are located on major corridors and within historically Latino neighborhoods. In early years in Riverside, some businesses were located in residences or outbuildings in residential neighborhoods. This context might also include buildings associated with the citrus industry in Riverside and Latino labor.

While some significant businesses were housed in stand-alone buildings, many were located in strip malls or as one storefront in a multi-storefront building. Therefore, building size, massing, and form will range from small, one-story, single storefront varieties to large, multi-story, multi-storefront examples. In addition to office and retail spaces, some buildings associated with this context may include light industrial spaces, used for manufacturing and/or storage. The architectural qualities of commercial buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

**Historic Districts:** If a significant concentration of buildings associated with Latino business and commerce exists in a defined geographic area, it may constitute a historic district. Historic districts associated with this context will typically be located along corridors or at intersections. In some cases they may extend onto adjacent streets within a neighborhood. They may be small, consisting of a single block or intersection, or large, consisting of multiple contiguous blocks. Architectural styles in the district may vary from building to building based on date of construction. Size, form, and massing may also vary, though most will likely be low- to mid-rise in height. A complex of related buildings dedicated to one particular business, such as a plant or campus, may also constitute a district.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Commercial buildings and districts associated with the history of Latinos may be eligible for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local or state level. During the twentieth century, trends in Latino business and commerce followed trends in population growth and settlement. As populations in given areas increased, the demand for goods and services also increased, and entrepreneurial Latinos established businesses to meet the rising demand.

Most of these businesses were small, neighborhood, family-owned operations serving basic community needs. Often, they remained within the same family for multiple generations and became important community institutions. While many Latino businesses remained small local shops, some grew into franchises or large corporations, especially toward the end of the twentieth century.

In terms of NRHP eligibility, buildings associated with long-standing neighborhood businesses would be significant only at the local level; those associated with far-reaching franchises or corporations may be significant at the local or state level. Likewise, for NRHP eligibility as a historic district, a grouping of buildings associated with neighborhood businesses would be significant as a historic district at the local level; a complex of buildings associated with a franchise or corporation may be significant as a historic district at the local or state level.

## ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

**Individual Properties:** To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, individual commercial buildings must be strongly associated with an important long-standing Latino business. The business must have been or continue to be an important fixture within the community in which it is located. It may have achieved symbolic meaning as a gathering place for special occasions or for providing specific services or goods. It will often be the oldest or longest lasting business of its particular type within a neighborhood or community.

Commercial buildings must retain sufficient integrity to evoke their use and character from the period of significance. They should possess integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. They may be modest in terms of workmanship and materials depending on their architectural style and original level of design detail. Limited materials replacement or alteration may have occurred. An important business may have changed locations over time and may be associated with more than one property. In this case, the property or properties associated with the business during the period in which the business achieved significance would be eligible. Previous or subsequent locations should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for eligibility, based on period of significance and length of tenure at the location.

**Historic Districts:** To be eligible under Criteria A/1/3, historic districts must be comprised of buildings that were, and possibly continue to be, strongly associated with Latino business and commerce. Districts must be important commercial centers within their communities or they must be complexes of buildings associated with a single important business. In addition to contributing buildings, districts will likely have other contributing features from the period significance, such as planning features, circulation patterns, street lights, decorative paving, and designed landscaping. Districts should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their significance as centers of commerce or corporate complexes, as well as their character from the period of significance. They should possess integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. They may be modest in terms of workmanship and materials depending on the architectural styles present. Limited materials replacement or storefront alterations may have occurred.

## EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY

- Ahumada Market and Restaurant, Casa Blanca
- Bob's TV and Radio
- Former Camp Anza and nearby Latino-owned businesses, such as Mars Barbershop, owned by Mars Macias, 8739 Cypress Avenue; Leo and Mela's Market, Cypress Avenue; real estate office of Leo and Mela Lueras
- Carlos's Market (2993 Fourteenth Street), Eastside
- Chavarrias Store/Tony's Market (4098 Park Avenue), Eastside
- Chavez Auto Store (Madison and Evans Streets), Casa Blanca

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- Checkie's Café (4120 Park Avenue), Eastside
- Leon's Mexican Restaurant (7778 Evans Street), Casa Blanca
- Manuel's Café (Cary and Evans Streets), Casa Blanca
- Mendoza Market/El Amigo Market (3199 Madison Street)
- Victoria Shell Station/Arco Station (14<sup>th</sup> and Victoria Streets), Eastside
- Teen's Furniture Store
- Zacatecas Café (Park and University Avenues, 1963-1985; 2472 University Avenue, 1985-2016; pending research to select most appropriate location)
- Concentrations of commercial properties on University Avenue, Park Avenue, Madison Avenue, among others
- Subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

*Residences and Offices of Pioneering Entrepreneurs, Businesspeople, Educators, and Professionals*

**DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include the residences and places of business of significant Latino entrepreneurs and professionals. Their size, style, and architectural detail will be based upon the location and date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria B/2/2.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Throughout the twentieth century, Latino entrepreneurs and professionals served as important leaders within their communities. The residences and offices of prominent Latino entrepreneurs and professionals in California may be eligible under Criteria B/2/2 at the local or state level, depending on the person's sphere of influence.

In the first half of the century, many Latinos started small businesses or opened firms and practices that provided a wide variety of goods and services, ranging from basic necessities to entertainment to legal and medical counsel. They often facilitated trade with their home countries, sustaining important cultural and commercial connections. After World War II, with the passage of the G.I. Bill and the impact of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement, Latinos' access to education and small-business funding improved, leading to an increase in entrepreneurship, as well as increases in employment with major corporations and in professional fields, such as law, medicine, and accounting.

Persons significant in the context of Latinos in Business and Commerce are men and women who founded important business or achieved great success within their chosen field. They were often also engaged in a variety of civic organizations and trade associations. For a professional to be considered significant, they must have been the first Latino to ascend to a particular level or receive a particular accolade within his or her industry, or they must have used their professional skills for the greater good of their communities, rather than just for personal gains. Properties that are closely associated with the productive lives of these individuals may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria B/2/2 at the local or state level, depending on the person's sphere of influence.

## ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

**Individual Properties:** To be eligible under Criteria B/2/2, buildings must be closely associated with a significant Latino entrepreneur or professional.

Determining the property that best represents the person's productive life needs to be carefully evaluated. Most often, the person's place of business during the period in which he or she achieved significance will be the property that best represents his or her work. Residences may also be eligible, if the other properties associated with the individual no longer exist or do not retain integrity. On a case-by-case basis, properties associated with living persons may qualify, so long as the association warrants this recognition and the individual has already retired. (National Park Service Bulletin No. 22, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance within the Past Fifty Years*, should serve as reference for any evaluation or designation for properties associated with living persons or fewer than 50 years of age.) Properties should retain their integrity from the period of time in which the significant individual lived or worked there.

The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. A basic integrity test for a property associated with an important person is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists at the time of evaluation.

## EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY

- Residence of Miguel Estudillo, 4515 – 6<sup>th</sup> Street, home of Estudillo between 1918 and 1950
- Residence of Raymond Buriel (Cassia Street, as of 1968, and 257 Cannon Road, 1989-2016); research and survey recommended to determine representative, intact properties
- Residence of Eugene Cota-Robles, pioneering Chicano professor and administrator within the University of California system; research and survey recommended to determine representative, intact properties
- Residence of Ernest Z. Robles, educator, administrator, and cofounder of Hispanic Scholarship Fund; research recommended to determine representative, intact properties
- Residence of Richard Leivas, pioneering Latino businessperson (Luther Street); research and survey recommended to determine representative, intact properties
- Residence of Leo and Mela Lueras, pioneering Latino business owners, real estate professionals and developers
- Subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

## Property Types Associated with Military History

### *Social Halls*

#### DESCRIPTION

Buildings associated with this context include social halls that were used by veterans organizations. In their early years, veterans organizations did not have dedicated buildings. Rather, meetings might be held in residences, churches, libraries, or other available spaces until enough funds could be raised to purchase or construct a building. Social halls, often referred to as posts, may be found in cities with large concentrations of Latino veterans. These buildings are typically small in scale and modest in design and include large meeting rooms, a few offices, and restrooms. The architectural

qualities of such buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Social halls associated with the history of Latinos in California may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local level. In the aftermath of two American wars during the second half of the nineteenth century, several veterans organizations were formed. These organizations included the Veterans of Foreign Wars (1899) and The American Legion (1919) among others. Veterans organizations provided financial, social, and emotional support to members of the Armed Forces.

Due to discrimination, Latino veterans often did not seek assistance from these organizations. Thus, Latinos sometimes formed their own chapters, including branches of the American GI Forum. Established in Texas in 1948, the American GI Forum specifically addressed the concerns of Latino World War II veterans who were denied entrance to other veterans groups. Often these organizations played other roles in the community such as providing scholarships to Latino students, organizing Veterans Day and Memorial Day parades, and sponsoring Cinco de Mayo and Mexican Independence Day celebrations.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, social halls must be strongly associated with the Latino community in which they are located. Only the social halls connected with the oldest Latino veterans organizations in California established in the 1950s and 1960s will qualify at this time. Social halls should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their original use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Social halls may be modest in their workmanship and materials due to the limited financial resources of most organizations. Primary interior spaces such as large meeting rooms might be extant.

### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Ysmael Villegas American Legion Post, established in 1949 (research needed to determine representative property)
- American Legion Post for Dario Vasquez
- Office, headquarters, or founding place of Riverside branch of the American GI Forum
- Memorials, social halls, and other related sites as identified through research
- Subsequent research will identify additional examples warranting survey

### *Residences of Prominent Persons*

### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include the residences of Latino war heroes and may be found throughout the state. They may include single-family or multifamily residential buildings. Their size, style, and architectural detail will be based upon the location and date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criterion B.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

Latinos have served in all branches of the military since the American Revolution. Military service has been used by Latinos to express their patriotism for the United States as well as to advance their equal treatment and integration within US society. Persons significant in the context of Latinos in the Military are men and women who served in the Armed Forces and were highly decorated for their bravery. These distinguished veterans symbolize the contribution that Latinos have made to American military history. These would include and not necessarily be limited to the following Medal of Honor recipients from Riverside:

- Ysmael R. Villegas, Army, World War II, Casa Blanca
- Salvador J. Lara, Army, World War II, Casa Blanca
- Jesus Duran, Army, Vietnam War

As the accomplishments of such individuals occurred overseas in battle, there are no properties in Riverside that reflect their contributions to military history. Because these individuals are held in such high esteem by the Latino community for their wartime sacrifices, their residences may qualify for federal, state, and/or local listing under Criteria B/2/2 at the local level.

## **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criterion B, the residence must be closely associated with a Latino person who made important contributions to US military history. Determining the residence that best represents the person's life needs to be carefully evaluated. As many war heroes die in battle, the best representative may be their childhood home. In other cases, the best representative may be their residence after returning from overseas. The length of the association should be an important factor when there is more than one property associated with an individual. Properties associated with living persons may qualify, so long as they have completed their military service.

Residences should retain their integrity from the period of time in which the significant individual lived there. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. A basic integrity test for a property associated with an important person is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists at the time of evaluation.

## **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Ysmael Villegas residence (3105 Madison Street), Casa Blanca
- Sergeant Jesus S. Duran residence, Vietnam War veteran, Medal of Honor recipient (research needed to determine representative, intact properties)
- Staff Sergeant Salvador J. Lara residence, World War II veteran, Medal of Honor recipient (research needed to determine representative, intact properties)
- Andrew Melendrez, Sr., World War II recipient of Silver Star, Purple Heart, and Bronze Star (research needed to determine representative, intact properties)
- Dario Villegas residence (3105 Madison Street), Casa Blanca
- Corporal Dario G. Vasquez residence, World War II casualty, winner of Bronze Star and Purple Heart (11<sup>th</sup> Street, Eastside)

- World War II casualties, Gold Star Families, Venturo Macias, Gus Cabrera, Manuel Rangel, and Theodoro Molindo residence (research needed to determine most representative properties)
- Isidro Diaz residence, World War I veteran, Casa Blanca (research needed to determine level of significance and representative, intact properties)
- Subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

### *Sites of Historic Events*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Historic sites associated with this context might include churches, buildings, parks, or memorials that hosted significant memorials or events associated with Latino military service.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Latinos played a significant role in US military history and service. This theme is intended to capture those events and memorials with a direct association with a significant event in Latino military history. Such events could include the site of the Lincoln Park World War II memorial for Gold Star families, the memorial service for Staff Sergeant Smiley Villegas in the Casa Blanca Elementary School auditorium, high mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, the World War II victory parade route, or other events as identified through subsequent research.

#### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, a historic site must be the location of a key historic event or memorial significant in the Latino community. To be eligible, the historic site should retain its integrity of location, setting, and feeling from the period in which the event occurred.

## 5.3 Theme #3: Making a Life

### **Property Types Associated with Religion and Spirituality**

#### *Religious Buildings*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context were used by religious institutions that ministered to the Latino community. They may include churches, and associated rectories, ministry centers, and parish halls, parochial schools, settlement houses, and offices for charitable organizations affiliated with religious institutions. Church buildings were constructed throughout Riverside to serve the Latino community. In other cases, existing church buildings were adopted by Latinos as their numbers rose in the community. Their size, style, and architectural detail will be based upon the location and date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

The Catholic Church tended to favor the Spanish Colonial Revival and Mission Revival styles, while Protestant churches tended to favor the Gothic Revival and Classical Revival styles. The earliest

church buildings constructed specifically for Latinos are typically small in scale and modest in design. They were often referred to on Sanborn Maps and City Directories as missions, implying that these were outposts designed to serve foreigners. Parochial schools are sometimes situated next to churches, and in other cases they are independent buildings. Settlement houses and the offices of charitable organizations will primarily be located in large cities and may or may not have been purpose built.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

Religious buildings associated with the history of Latinos may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local or state level. During the early part of the twentieth century, Catholic and Protestant churches sought to minister to Latinos. While these ministries addressed the spiritual needs of the community, they were also focused on Americanizing Mexican immigrants who had their own religious traditions and practices.

Charitable organizations, settlement houses, and parochial schools were also established with the purpose of turning immigrants into good American citizens. By mid-century, Latinos began to form their own churches, which allowed them to freely express their religious beliefs and traditions. The Catholic Church and Protestant denominations became more responsive to the needs of the Latino population in the 1970s and became active in supporting Central American immigrants in the 1980s.

## **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

This context statement does not address the architectural merit of properties, only their historical importance. Religious properties may be eligible for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 if they are significant in the ethnic and/or social history of the Latino community in Riverside.

For NRHP listing, religious buildings that meet Criteria Consideration A and Criterion A are those that played a larger role in the history of the Latino community in which they are located. For example, in one Orange County example, the Sacred Heart Mission in Anaheim was established in 1926, and was the spiritual, social, and cultural center of the Colonia Independencia. The original church building still stands and is used as the parish center. In some cases, religious buildings may be significant because they represent the Americanization programs of churches to acculturate Mexicans. A prime example of such a property is Forsythe Memorial School for Mexican Girls, established by the Presbyterian Church in 1914. Located in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles, the school operated until 1934.

Churches that were founded by and for Latinos may be significant, as well as churches that played important roles in the Sanctuary movement. An example in Riverside is the Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, constructed primarily by and for the Latino community in Eastside in 1929-1931.

Churches are not significant in this context merely because the congregation is or was predominately Latino. It is not necessary for the congregation to have constructed the building, only to have occupied it as their primary place of worship during the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Religious buildings may be modest in their workmanship and materials due to the limited financial resources of most congregations. The application of newer materials, such as stucco or stone, on top of original materials should not automatically exclude the building from eligibility, especially if the alteration occurred during the period of significance and if the essential form and other major design features are present. Additions and related buildings such as parsonages, Sunday school

buildings, and social halls should also be evaluated and included in nominations if they were present during the period of significance and retain their integrity.

#### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine (2858 Ninth Street), 1929 (constructed) to present, Eastside; may be eligible for NRHP and as possible National Historic Landmark
- St. Anthony's Catholic Church (3056 Madison Street), 1975-1976 (constructed on site of 1923 church), Casa Blanca
- Other churches, assembly halls, or buildings throughout City that might be intact; subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

### **Property Types Associated with Sports and Recreation**

#### *Recreational Facilities*

##### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings, structures, and sites associated with this context include a broad array of recreational facilities, including and not limited to baseball fields, boxing gyms and arenas, handball courts, and football stadiums. They may be found throughout the City.

Recreational facilities such as boxing clubs are typically located in older buildings that were designed for other uses. Facilities associated with amateur athletics and community-based athletic teams are likely to be located in public parks or school campuses. Structures may be large in scale, as in the case of boxing arenas or football stadiums, or smaller in scale, as in the case of handball courts. Their style and architectural detail, if present, will be based upon the date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Recreational facilities associated with the history of Latinos in California may be eligible for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1. Over the course of the twentieth century, Latinos utilized sports to reinforce community identity and neighborhood pride, to counteract negative stereotypes, to obtain access to higher education, and to develop leadership skills. They formed their own amateur sports teams, and their presence in professional sports increased as the century progressed.

Most amateur sports teams were neighborhood-oriented and often were a source of pride for a community. Team sports such as baseball and soccer also served as social events and a means of gathering together the community's youth. Some sports teams remained based in the community in which they originated, while others went on to become significant to the state's Latino community at large.

Facilities associated with a particular neighborhood or community would be significant at the local level, while those associated with teams that became more widely known may be significant at the local or state level. Prime examples of recreational facilities associated with this context include the baseball field at Grant Park in Sacramento, home of the Mexican American Octubre Club from 1931 to 1957 and the Grand Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles, the premier boxing arena in California and the place where Latino boxers such as Art Aragon competed.

## ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, buildings, structures, cultural landscapes, or sites must be strongly associated with Latino sports. Neighborhood facilities must be strongly associated with the Latino community in which they are located. Not all facilities associated with Latino sports will qualify under Criteria A/1/1. Only those that were associated with Latino sports over an extended period of time will qualify.

Recreational facilities associated with individual athletes or coaches significant within this context are unlikely to qualify for eligibility under Criteria B/2/2 unless no other associated resources are extant. Recreational facilities should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their original use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Alterations that were required to accommodate changes in the related sport should be expected and should not automatically exclude the facility from eligibility.

## EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY

- Ysmael Villegas Park (evaluate as potential cultural landscape, including recreational fields, handball court, murals/artwork)
- Lincoln Park (evaluate as potential cultural landscape)
- Bordwell Park, 2008 Martin Luther King Boulevard, Eastside
- Lincoln Boxing Club, Eastside
- Fields or recreational areas in Latino neighborhoods that were important venues for sporting activities

### *Residences of Prominent Persons*

## DESCRIPTION

Buildings associated with this context include the residences of significant Latino athletes and coaches. They may include single-family or multi-family residential buildings. Their size, style, and architectural detail will be based upon the location and date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria B/2/2.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Latinos became increasingly prominent in sports over the course of the twentieth century. Persons significant in the context of Latinos in Sports include men and women who were important sports figures, either within their community in the case of amateur sports, or in the world of professional sports. These can include players or coaches who achieved great success within their chosen sport. For an individual to be considered significant, their activities must be demonstrably important within the context of Latinos in Sports. They may have been the first Latino to ascend to a particular level or receive a particular accolade within his or her sport. They may also have used their success in sports to contribute to the good of their communities. As most athletes and coaches played at numerous recreational facilities throughout their careers and are not closely associated with any one facility, their residences will likely be the property that best represents their productive life. Residences associated with the productive lives of these individuals may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria B/2/2 at the local or state level, depending on the person's sphere of

influence. Professional athletes and coaches may be significant at the local or state level, while amateur sports figures, most frequently significant in the community in which they lived, may be significant at the local level.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria B/2/2, the residence must be closely associated with a significant Latino sports figure. Determining the residence that best represents the person's life needs to be carefully evaluated. Many professional sports figures moved from one city to another. If more than one residence is associated with a person, the residence in which they spent the productive period of their life would be the most representative. In addition, the length of the association should be an important factor when there is more than one property associated with an individual

Properties associated with living persons may qualify, so long as they have retired from playing sports. Residences should retain their integrity from the period of time in which the significant individual lived there. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. A basic integrity test for a property associated with an important person is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists at the time of evaluation.

### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Ernest Benzor, coach (research needed to determine level of significance and representative, intact properties)
- Glen Ayala, Villegas Park director (research needed to determine level of significance and representative, intact properties)
- Emma Galvan, women's fast-pitch softball player (research needed to determine level of significance and representative, intact properties)
- Subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

## **Property Types Associated with the Arts**

### *Performing Arts Venues*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include purpose built and non-purpose built performing arts venues. Purpose built spaces may include freestanding theaters and nightclubs as well as auditoria in multi-purpose buildings such as schools and churches. They will primarily be located in large cities and metropolitan areas. Non-purpose built spaces may include restaurants and outdoor spaces where musicians performed informally, at least initially. Building size, massing, and form will vary greatly, depending on architectural style, location, and date of construction. The architectural qualities of such buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Performing arts venues associated with Latinos may qualify for federal, state, or local listing in the under Criteria A/1/1 at the local level. During the twentieth century, Latinos utilized these venues to perform plays and music that reflected their experiences in the United States and often blended Anglo and Mexican cultural traditions. During the 1920s, many plays were written and performed in Spanish to cater to the growing population of Mexican immigrants. During and after World War II, plays reflected the increasing political awareness and activism of Latinos. Perhaps the most influential theater company during the Chicano movement was *El Teatro Campesino* that formed in 1965. In some cases theater companies toured throughout the state and in other cases they were based in particular theaters. During the 1970s, Latino theatre became accessible to a wider audience due to the broadcasting of performances on public television stations and to the construction of more theater spaces.

Latino musical groups sometimes performed at these theaters as well, and generally toured throughout the state. Latino music is as diverse as the population itself and the work of one musician may be significant for achievement in a particular genre, while the work of another musician might be significant for successfully melding styles. Some music venues are significant for their association with a particular musical group. For example, La Fonda Restaurant was the permanent home of Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano and attracted locals as well as tourists. Other venues are significant for their association with a particular genre or period.

## ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, performing arts venues must be strongly associated with Latino performing arts, including theater and music. The significance of the theater or musical group must be established and illustrated in order for a venue associated with them to be considered significant.

Venues should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their original use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Buildings may be modest in terms of workmanship and materials depending on their architectural style and original level of design detail. Limited materials replacement or alterations may have occurred. Primary interior spaces, especially performance spaces, should remain intact.

### *Cultural Centers*

## DESCRIPTION

Buildings associated with this context include cultural centers used by Latinos. In most cases, cultural centers are located in older buildings designed for other uses. In a few instances, organizations were able to raise funds for the construction of new buildings. They may be found in cities with large concentrations of Latinos. Building size, massing, and form vary greatly, depending on architectural style, location, and date of construction. The architectural qualities of such buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Cultural centers may qualify for federal, state and/or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local level. Such centers arose primarily during the late 1960s and early 1970s when Latinos began to reclaim their cultural history. Larger cultural centers could be multidisciplinary venues that offered

educational programs for the community as well as exhibition and performance space for visual artists, musicians, dancers, poets, playwrights, etc. Small cultural centers could be limited to one form of art and were sometimes the homes of artist collectives. In either case, cultural centers played important roles in the communities in which they were located as cultivators of Latino art as well as meeting places and havens for local youth. Programming at cultural centers was often free to the community and featured artists and groups that were ignored by mainstream galleries and museums. As a point of comparison for future evaluations, examples of related cultural centers outside of Riverside include:

- Social Public Art Resource Center (SPARC), Los Angeles County
- Plaza de la Raza, Los Angeles County
- Bilingual Foundation for the Arts, Los Angeles County
- Galeria de la Raza, San Francisco County
- Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, San Francisco County
- Centro de Artistas Chicanos, Sacramento County

Research conducted to date has not identified any related sites in Riverside; should subsequent research identify related events or sites, the following eligibility standards would apply.

#### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, cultural centers must be associated with significant Latino artist collectives or prominent Latino arts organizations. They must have played an important role in the creation and/or dissemination of Latino art in the twentieth century. It is not necessary for the collective or organization to have constructed the building, only to have occupied it during the period in which they gained significance.

Cultural centers should retain sufficient integrity to evoke their original use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Buildings may be modest in terms of workmanship and materials depending on their architectural style and original level of design detail. Limited materials replacement or alterations may have occurred. Primary interior spaces, especially exhibition and performance spaces, may be extant.

#### *Murals*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Murals associated with the history of Latinos in Riverside are most likely to be present in Latino neighborhoods, such as Casa Blanca, Eastside, Arlington Heights, Northside, and Arlanza, among other neighborhoods. Murals are most frequently located on the exterior of buildings and can also be found on interior common spaces as well, such as dining rooms in restaurants or lobbies in commercial and institutional buildings. They are often found on buildings belonging to Latino businesses or institutions. Murals may be found in other public spaces, such as freeway retaining walls and bridge supports.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Murals by important Latino artists or art collectives may be eligible for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria C/3/4 as the work of a master Latino artist or for their high artistic value. Murals may also be eligible under Criteria A/1/1 if they illustrate the development of Latino or Chicano visual arts in the twentieth century, often most notably the art of the Chicano movement.

There are too many Latino artists to mention here individually, and many artists are still alive and working. By way of comparison, for future evaluations, examples of important Latino art collectives include, for example: the Mexican American Liberation Art Front in Oakland; Self-Help Graphics in Los Angeles; Toltecas en Aztlan and Congreso de Artistas Chicanos de Aztlan in San Diego; Broche del Valle in the Salinas Valley; Mujeres Muralistas in the San Francisco Bay Area; Royal Chicano Air Force in the Sacramento Valley; and the Royal Chicano Navy in the Fresno area.

For much of the twentieth century, murals provided Latinos with a means for public artistic expression, often in response to events or circumstances in the community. Latinos utilized murals to express opinions, political ideas, and emotion. Though occurring since the first decades of the twentieth century and pulling inspiration from the muralism movement in Mexico, murals as an art form became widespread during the Chicano movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

## ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

To be eligible under Criteria C/3/4 as the work of a master, the artist responsible for the mural must meet the definition of a master. A master is a figure of generally recognized greatness in the field. Furthermore, the mural must represent a particular aspect of the artist's work or phase in his or her career. Murals that possess high artistic value are those that are recognized as important achievements in Latino muralism.

Extant resources reflecting this theme in Riverside are relatively rare. Evaluations should include the scarcity of these resources. In addition, National Park Service Bulletin No. 22, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance within the Past Fifty Years*, should serve as reference for any evaluation or designation for murals and other "fragile or short-lived resources" that might have acquired significance but are not yet 50 years old.

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, murals must be strongly associated with the Latino community in which they are located. Under either criteria, murals may be significant at the local or state level, depending upon the importance and scope of the artist(s) who painted them and the degree to which their influence was felt around the state. Murals should retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

## EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY

- Virgen de Guadalupe mural, Casa Blanca Elementary School, Roy Duarte and Jim Gutierrez
- Grandesa Azteca mural, Ysmael Villegas Park, Jim Gutierrez
- Roy Duarte murals, Ysmael Villegas Park and Home of Neighborly Service, 7680 Casa Blanca Street (interior and exterior examples)
- Daniel "Chano" Gonzales mural, UC Riverside Chicano Student Programs office
- Subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

### *Residences and Studios of Prominent Persons*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include the residences and studios of significant Latinos in the arts. They may include single-family or multi-family residential buildings. Their size, style, and architectural detail will be based upon the location and date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria B/2/2.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Latinos have played an important role in the arts throughout the twentieth century. They have contributed greatly to art created for both a general audience and a specifically Latino audience. Persons significant in the context of Latinos in the Arts may include musicians, composers, playwrights, and visual artists.

For an individual to be considered significant, his or her activities must be demonstrably important within this context. The artist may have received a particular accolade such as a National Heritage Fellowship, a lifetime honor presented by the National Endowment for the Arts. For example, Eduardo “Lalo” Guerrero (1916-2005) received a National Heritage Fellowship in 1991. He was a highly acclaimed composer, singer, and bandleader who is considered the father of Chicano music. Artists may also have contributed to the good of their communities by founding arts organizations. For example, Carmen Zapata (1927-2014) began her acting career in the musical *Oklahoma!* in 1946 and worked steadily on Broadway. She moved to California in 1967 and appeared in many television shows and films. In 1972 she co-founded the Screen Actors Guild Ethnic Minority Committee. The following year she co-founded the Bilingual Foundation for the Arts. Properties that are closely associated with the productive lives of prominent persons may qualify for listing in the National Register at the local or state level, depending on their sphere of influence.

#### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria B/2/2, buildings must be closely associated with a Latino who is significant for his or her contributions to the arts. Determining the property that best represents the person's productive life needs to be carefully evaluated. Visual artists and musicians often worked out of studio spaces that may or may not have been connected to their residences. Thus the building in which his or her studio is located would best represent their productive life. If that building no longer exists, the artist or musician's residence may be the only property remaining that is able to represent his or her life's work, and therefore may be eligible. Writers, on the other hand, often worked out of rooms in their homes. As a result, the place that would best represent their productive life would likely be their residence during the period in which they achieved significance.

Properties associated with living persons may qualify, so long as they are no longer creating art, in whatever form that may be. Properties should retain their integrity from the period of time in which the significant individual lived or worked there. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Limited materials replacement or alterations may have occurred. A basic integrity test for a property associated with an important person is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists at the time of evaluation.

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

### Property Types Associated with Struggles for Inclusion

#### *Headquarters and Offices of Prominent Organizations*

##### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context were used by Latino civil rights organizations. Few organizations had the means to erect buildings during their formative years, and many organizations survived for only brief periods. Thus, they operated out of donated or rented spaces such as churches, theaters, and commercial buildings. Even as organizations grew and their influence expanded during the 1960s and 1970s, few appear to have constructed their own buildings, preferring instead to rent space in traditional office buildings. In some cases organizations occupied entire buildings; others occupied a few offices or floors in larger buildings. The architectural qualities of such buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Buildings that were used by Latino civil rights organizations in Riverside may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local or state level, depending on their sphere of influence. By 1900, Mexicans began forming organizations to foster community cohesion and mutual support. These groups became critical foundations for activism in later decades. An important early group was the mutualista, or mutual aid society. The Latino civil rights movement in California gained critical momentum in the 1930s as it intersected with the labor movement. Job inequality continued to be considered a civil rights issue for Latinos in subsequent decades.

Several organizations were formed that reflect this vital link between labor rights and civil rights. While these organizations may not have had a presence in Riverside, they are included here by way of comparison, to guide future research and evaluations. Organizations throughout California that might have had a presence in or around Riverside include El Confederación de Uniones Obreras Mexicanas and La Unión de Trabajadores Mexicanos.

Organizations reflected a range of political orientations from conservative to progressive. The League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC) was founded in Texas and spread to California by 1940. LULAC was known to be more conservative in its approach to civil rights and race relations. The group brought about important lawsuits against school segregation. The Congress of Spanish Speaking People (El Congreso) was one of the most important Latino civil rights groups in California. Active from 1939 to approximately 1945, they worked on a variety of issues including housing, voting rights, immigration, police brutality, and education.

In addition, Latino World War II veterans were instrumental in forming several community-based organizations including the Unity Leagues and Community Service Organization, both of which had an active presence in Riverside. Both organizations advocated on a broad array of civil rights issues, and focused on voting rights and electoral politics. In the 1960s and 1970s, the struggle accelerated with the rise of the Chicano movement. Several key national groups were formed in 1968 including the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund and the National Council for La Raza, a national alliance of community-based organizations. In California, affiliates included The East Los Angeles Community Union. Buildings associated with the local chapters of organizations would be significant only at the

local level; those associated with statewide organizations may be significant at the local or state level.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, buildings must be strongly associated with a prominent Latino civil rights organization. It is not necessary for the organization to have constructed the building, only to have occupied it during the period in which the organization gained significance. Buildings should retain sufficient integrity to convey their character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Buildings may be modest in their workmanship and materials due to the limited financial resources of most organizations. Limited materials replacement or alteration may have occurred.

### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Riverside office space, headquarters, or founding place of organizations such as the Community Service Organization, Office of Economic Development, American GI Forum, MAPA, School Integration Advisory Committee, and others

#### *Residences and Offices of Prominent Persons*

### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include the residences and offices of Latino civil rights leaders. Their size, style, and architectural detail will be based upon the location and date of construction, and are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria B/2/2.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Latinos endured widespread discrimination and segregation, despite their significant contributions to California history. This inequity drove a long, unyielding fight for full equality and inclusion in American society. The Latino struggle for inclusion in Riverside and throughout California was led by many individuals from various walks of life, generations, and political orientations.

Persons significant in the context of Latino Struggles for Inclusion may include politicians, attorneys, educators, union organizers, volunteers, community organizers, and housing advocates working on local as well as statewide issues.

By way of example, for future research and evaluations, Edward Roybal (1916-2005) is a prime example of an early Latino civil rights activist who would be significant in this context. Many of his accomplishments occurred more than 50 years ago. Roybal was a co-founder of the Community Service Organization in 1949, served on the Los Angeles City Council from 1949 to 1962, helped organize the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA) in 1960, and served in the US House of Representatives from 1963 to 1993. Properties that are closely associated with the productive lives of prominent persons may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria B/2/2 at the local or state level, depending on their sphere of influence.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria B/2/2, the building must be closely associated with a person who played a prominent role in Latino civil rights history. Determining the property that best represents the person's life needs to be carefully evaluated. If the organization with which the person was affiliated

did not have headquarters or offices, the best representation of his or her productive life may be their residence. Residences may also be eligible if the other properties associated with the individual no longer exist. Properties associated with living persons may qualify, so long as they have retired. Properties should retain their integrity from the period of time in which the significant individual lived or worked there. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association must be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. A basic integrity test for a property associated with an important person is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists at the time of evaluation.

#### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- John Martin Sotelo residence (Streeter Tract, 2427 Pennsylvania Avenue), 1950-1972
- Josephine Lozano residence (2346 12th Street)
- Jesse Ybarra residence (2706 Pleasant Street), 1963-2007
- Simona Valero residence (7443 Diamond Street), Casa Blanca
- Augustine Flores residence (needs research to determine representative, intact properties)
- Juan Acevedo residence (needs research to determine representative, intact properties)
- Subsequent research and survey will identify additional examples

#### *Mexican Schools*

##### **DESCRIPTION**

Buildings associated with this context include so-called “Mexican schools,” created by public school districts throughout the state for communities with large Mexican populations. As Mexican children were not encouraged or expected to attend school past the eighth grade, Mexican schools were typically designed for elementary school children and located within walking distance to Latino colonias and communities. Mexican schools were often stand-alone classroom buildings and were modest in size and amenities, especially compared with their Anglo counterparts.

The architectural qualities of such buildings are less important factors in the evaluation of eligibility under Criteria A/1/1. There are at least three known examples remaining in California: Cypress Street School and Westminster School in Orange County, and Casa Blanca School in Riverside. Buildings associated with this context also include schools associated with efforts to end segregation.

As one of three known examples of “Mexican schools” in California, Casa Blanca School in Riverside is recommended as eligible for the NRHP and CRHR, as a local landmark, and as a potential National Historic Landmark.

##### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Schools designated for Mexicans may qualify for federal, state, or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local or state level depending on their age and rarity. During the first half of the twentieth century, the vast majority of school districts in California with large Mexican populations practiced segregation. Mexican children were not just physically separated from their Anglo peers, they were usually taught in more crowded classrooms, with less experienced teachers, and with outdated books and materials.

The greatest difference between schools was the curricula. Mexican schools focused on Americanization and on teaching boys industrial skills and girls domestic skills, as opposed to writing, math, or science. By the end of the 1920s, Mexican children were by far the most segregated ethnic group in the public school system in California. There were numerous grassroots efforts around the state focused on challenging these policies. Early legal victories included *Roberto Alvarez v. Board of Trustees of the Lemon Grove School District* (1931), *Mendez, et al v. Westminster School District of Orange County* (1946), and *Romero v. Weakley* (1950). These court decisions collectively ended de jure educational segregation by the 1950s, but de facto school segregation persisted. Mexican schools are significant in this context because they symbolize the way Mexicans were shut out of mainstream American society and denied equal access to education.

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, a school must have been designated for Mexicans by the school district in which it is located, or actively associated with desegregation efforts. Schools with predominately Latino student bodies by virtue of exclusionary housing policies are not eligible in this context.

Schools should retain sufficient integrity to convey their use and character from the period of significance. The historic location, setting, feeling, and association should be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity. Schools may be modest in their workmanship and materials given the limited funds that were spent on their construction. Limited materials replacement or alterations may have occurred, especially if the buildings have been adaptively re-used.

### **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Casa Blanca School (3060 Madison Street), 1923-1967 (evaluate along with any associated secondary structures, artwork, such as mural on front elevation; as one of three known “Mexican” schools in California identified by the State Office of Historic Preservation, the Casa Blanca School appears eligible for the NRHP and potentially as a National Historic Landmark)
- Independiente School (though closed in 1948 and re-opened as Hawthorne Elementary School, warrants research to determine if any of the original buildings survive)
- Irving Elementary School (4341 Victoria Avenue); warrants research to determine strength of association and extant buildings
- Lowell Elementary School (4690 Victoria Avenue); warrants research to determine if any original buildings remain
- Parochial school of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church (Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine)

### *Sites of Historic Events associated with the Struggle for Inclusion*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Historic sites associated with this context include places that symbolize injustices and struggles for inclusion as well as the locations of demonstrations and marches related to the Latino civil rights and Chicano movements. These events typically occurred in streets and public parks or in front of public buildings. Unless the public building came to symbolize the historical event, the site should be considered the documented boundaries of the assembly space. These events may be associated

with private buildings as well, and the location of the event has more value than any extant buildings.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

The Latino struggle for inclusion in California was in response to widespread discrimination and segregation that intensified after 1900. Latinos were hemmed into particular neighborhoods and confined to low-wage jobs. The formation of barrios and colonias reinforced segregation in other forums such as churches, recreational facilities, and schools. Latinos used a variety of tactics to reverse discriminatory policies from demonstrations to lawsuits.

By way of comparison, beyond, Riverside, early important actions against educational discrimination were the Los Angeles “Blow-Outs” in the spring of 1968, a series of protests by high school students in East Los Angeles. (In June 2018, the five Los Angeles Unified School District campuses associated with the 1968 Blow-Outs were added to the National Trust of Historic Preservation’s 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in the United States.

In Orange County, the 1943 case *Doss et al. v. Bernal et al.* is an example of a significant legal victory for Latinos in this context. The case revolved around the Bernal family who were sued by their white neighbors for violating the race restrictive covenant on their property. The Bernals hired their own attorney who successfully argued that race restrictive covenants violated the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments. The Bernals’ house still stands, and its parcel symbolizes the place and time Latinos broke the color barrier.

In Riverside, similar properties that are closely associated with such events may qualify for federal, state or local listing under Criteria A/1/1 at the local or state level, depending on the impact of the event.

## **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, the historic event must be demonstrably important within the context of Latino Struggles for Inclusion. These will likely be pivotal events that changed the course of the Latino civil rights and Chicano movements. These events must have occurred prior to 1975. To be eligible, the historic site must retain its integrity of location, setting, and feeling from the period in which the event occurred.

## **EXAMPLES OF DESIGNATED OR POTENTIAL RESOURCES WARRANTING FURTHER STUDY**

- Lincoln Park and Plunge and Arlington Park and Plunge (if extant representative buildings or features remain)
- Fairmount Park and Plunge (research should determine strength of association, should no remaining examples of segregated parks and pools be identified)
- Lowell Elementary School (4690 Victoria Avenue); warrants research to determine if any extant buildings remain

### *Sites of Historic Events*

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Historic sites associated with this context include the locations of anti-war demonstrations and marches. These events typically occurred in streets and public parks or in front of public buildings. Unless the public building came to symbolize the historical event, the site should be considered the documented boundaries of the assembly space.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Latinos played a significant role in the anti-war movement in the U.S., and eventually decided that they needed to form an all-Chicano group to oppose the war. Rosalio Muñoz and Roberto Elias formed the National Chicano Moratorium Committee, focused on the disproportionately high death rate of Mexican American soldiers in Vietnam. Muñoz and Elias organized anti-war demonstrations and marches throughout the Southwest, including California. The largest of these marches was held in East Los Angeles on August 29, 1970. As such, the march route may qualify for listing in the National Register at the state level. This march, as well as demonstrations held in other cities, helped to bring about an end to the war and shed light on social injustices Latinos faced at home. Other historic sites may qualify for federal, state, or local listing at the local level.

Research conducted to date has not identified any related events or sites in Riverside; should subsequent research identify related events or sites, the following eligibility standards would apply.

#### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To be eligible under Criteria A/1/1, a historic site must be the location of a key demonstration or march in the anti-war movement in Riverside. These events must have occurred during the height of the anti-war movement, November 1969 to August 1971. To be eligible, the historic site must retain its integrity of location, setting, and feeling from the period in which the event occurred.

## 6 Summary and Recommendations

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Riverside is home to one of the oldest, most cohesive Latino communities in California. Across generations, this community was built by pioneering immigrants, migrant workers, community organizers and civil rights leaders, teachers and artists, business owners and volunteers. For well over a century, the Latino community in Riverside has made a vital, immeasurable contribution to the City's growth and prosperity. This Historic Context Statement provides a framework for evaluations, in order to ensure that resources reflecting significant associations with the City's Latino community are identified.

As the City moves forward in using this study and identifying resources significant to the Latino community, several next steps are recommended:

### 1. Carry forward identified resources for intensive-level research, evaluation, and possible landmark designation

This project did not include a citywide survey or intensive-level evaluations. However, based on literature and site visits completed, a number of potential historic resources were identified.

It is recommended that these resources be carried forward for survey, additional research, intensive-level evaluation, and possible landmark designation.

Some resources warrant further research and intensive-level evaluation in order to confirm eligibility. In some cases, research carried out as part of this project has identified a potentially significant individual, organization, or business, but additional information is needed to verify the representative, intact properties and to evaluate its significance and retention of integrity. In other cases, information was not readily available to verify addresses or extant resources reflecting the individual, group, or business. It is recommended that these resources or associations be carried forward for subsequent research and intensive-level evaluation.

### 2. Conduct focused, thematic oral history interviews with community members

For many years, the Latino community's history and contributions in Riverside were marginalized. As a result, the available literature has many data gaps.

In order to continue recuperating the themes, people, and places that were significant to the community over time, it is recommended that the City conduct focused, thematic oral history interviews with community members. In order to optimize the output of the oral histories, these sessions would be interactive, with interviewers preparing in advance the specific research questions to explore, along with available materials.

While data gaps exist for each theme of significance, some of the areas warranting additional research include topics relating to cultural life, arts, music, murals, and literature; recreational life, sports, baseball, boxing, and other activities of importance to the community; settlement and important places for the Latino community in neighborhoods beyond Casa Blanca and Eastside, such as Arlanza, Northside, and Arlington Heights.

Future research should also focus on post-1975 cultural developments, in particular as relates to the Chicano Civil Rights Movement, and Chicano cultural expression.

**3. Implement a neighborhood-by-neighborhood historic resources survey to identify additional resources significant to the Latino community**

Since each neighborhood has a distinct history when it comes to the people, places, and settlement patterns, it is recommended that a city-wide survey of Latino resources take place. Given the differences in settlement patterns and chronology, it is recommended that this survey be phased by neighborhood, in order to ensure that surveyors can correct for any data gaps encountered in the course of research.

**4. Coordinate with local groups and historians (Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society, UC Riverside, California Citrus State Park, among others) to collect and share information (oral histories, photographs and historic documents) in order to continue recuperating the history of Riverside's Latino community.**

In order to recuperate and continue telling the story of Riverside's Latino community, input from the community itself is crucial. This could take the form of focused oral history interviews, photo and document collection, panels and workshops, and other initiatives.

While beyond the scope of the current project, as of 2018, numerous opportunities exist for carrying this project forward in this respect, in order to provide a more comprehensive view of the Latino experience in Riverside.

Focused interviews with community leaders, historians, and long-time members are needed in order to fill the data gaps in topics that are not adequately represented or reflected in the available literature. Ongoing data collection, through collaboration with groups such as the Riverside County Mexican-American Historical Society, UC Riverside, California Citrus State Park, and other groups, represents a key next step in order to explore and document the story of the Riverside Latino community.

## 7 Timeline and Milestones<sup>510</sup>

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- 1821 *End of Spanish rule over Mexico, Mexican Independence*
- 1847 *Treaty of Cahuenga signed; the United States takes control of Los Angeles*
- 1848 *California becomes part of the United States as Mexico cedes control in the Treat of Hidalgo*
- 1850 *California becomes the 30<sup>th</sup> state of the United States*
- 1874 In Riverside, the new Anglo-American community creates the Trujillo School District to serve Anglo residents of La Placita, thereby isolating the Mexican community and initiating a nearly century-long period of school segregation
- 1880 Riverside population reaches an estimated 1,358
- 1880 Production of oranges in Riverside climbs from 19 carloads in 1880-1881 to 1,500 carloads by 1889/1890 (with 286 boxes per carload)
- 1890 Riverside population reaches an estimated 4,683
- 1900 Riverside population reaches an estimated 7,973
- 1902 Mexican-American community in Riverside forms the Sociedad de la Vella Union de Trabajadores, a mutual benefit society
- 1906 The Riverside City School Board reaffirms the 1874 decision by ruling that all children must attend school in the attendance district in which they lived, continuing school segregation
- 1907 Mexican-American community in Riverside organizes the Superior de la Union Patriotica y Beneficia Mexicana, dedicated to providing aid and assistance to the community
- 1910 *Mexican Revolution begins in November and spans the next decade, creating unrest in Mexico and triggering widespread immigration to the United States*  
Riverside population reaches an estimated 15,212
- 1915 *The “Home Teachers Act” is passed in California, encouraging the assimilation of immigrant students in the public school system*
- 1917 *Passage of US Immigration Act – “Marks a turning point in US immigration policy, while the new law does not significantly reduce the numbers of people emigrating from Mexico, it does have an impact on the circular pattern of migration established in previous decades.*  
*US enters World War I; 4,900 Mexicans and Mexican-Americans voluntarily register for the draft. Faced with labor shortage, US allows for influx of “temporary” Mexican workers, who are encouraged to come to the United States.*
- 1920 Riverside population reaches an estimated 19,341
- 1921 *Immigration Act of 1921 imposes limits on legal immigration; LA LHCS: “agricultural businesses from California and Texas successfully oppose efforts to limit the immigration of Mexicans who are critical to their success”*
- 1924 *Immigration Act of 1924 creates the Border Patrol*

- 1925 *US Congress creates Border Patrol in order to decrease illegal border crossings. Initial focus is on Chinese immigrants.*
- 1926 *Spanish-language newspaper La Opinion founded.*
- 1927 *Establishment the first large-scale union serving Mexican and Mexican-American workers, the Confederacion de Uniones Obreras Mexicanas (Federation of Mexican Workers Union, CUOM)*
- 1930 Rise of nativist, anti-immigrant sentiment with the onset of the Great Depression.
- 1930 Riverside population reaches an estimated 29,696
- 1932 *As Great Depression takes hold, US government begins “voluntary” repatriation program, which results in the expulsion and deportations of an estimated 500,000 Mexican-Americans through the course of the decade.*
- 1940 Riverside population reaches an estimated 34,696
- 1941 *US entry into World War II again creates a labor shortage and allows an increasing number of Mexican-Americans to branch out from jobs in agriculture and to secure employment in new sectors, such as defense-related employment and manufacturing*  
  
*Hundreds of thousands of Latinos enlist to serve in the armed forces during World War II, including dozens from Riverside*  
  
*The Fair Employment Practices Committee formed by federal government to review complaints of job discrimination. Among initial complaints, more than one-third are filed by Latino workers from the US southwest.*
- 1942 *The Bracero Program established, allowing temporary residency status for Mexican workers in the United States.*
- 1943 *Zoot Suit riots in Los Angeles, a ten-day period during which young Latinos are harassed and beaten by US sailors.*
- 1945 Riverside population reaches an estimated 43,939
- 1947 *As a result of Mendez v. Westminster, racial segregation of schools is found unconstitutional under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment.*  
  
*Community Service Organization is founded to organize and engage Mexican-American voters. In 1960, Cesar Chavez leads voter registration drives in Riverside.*
- 1948 *Through Shelley v. Kraemer, the US Supreme Court finds that exclusionary deed restrictions are unenforceable.*
- 1950 Riverside population reaches an estimated 46,764; citrus groves and agricultural lands increasingly give way to new housing tracts and development.
- 1953 *US Immigration Service rounds up an estimated 3.8 million Latinos throughout the country, as part of “Operation Wetback.” Many US citizens and activists unjustly deported.*
- 1954 *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education ruling by US Supreme Court finds state laws providing for segregated public schools unconstitutional.*
- 1960 Riverside population reaches an estimated 84,332

- Cesar Chavez's Community Service Organization leads voter registration drives in Riverside's Casa Blanca neighborhood.
- 1964 *The landmark Civil Rights Act is signed into law, outlawing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The law further prohibited discrimination and segregation in schools, the work place, and public spaces and institutions.*
- 1965 *The Immigration and Nationality Act becomes law, establishing strict quotas for numbers of immigrants permitted from countries throughout the Western Hemisphere.*
- 1965 Riverside population reaches an estimated 133,200
- Following pressure from a multi-ethnic coalition of Latino and African-American parents and their allies, Riverside Unified School District announces plans for school desegregation in October. The controversial plans called for immediate closure of Lowell Elementary, Irving Elementary, and Casa Blanca Elementary.
- Led by Cesar Chavez, the United Farm Workers start a strike in Delano, California, protesting poor working conditions by grape growers.*
- 1966 Riverside population reaches an estimated 136,800
- 1968 *"Blowouts" in East Los Angeles high schools, as thousands of Latino students stage walk-outs and protests*
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund established*
- Federal Bilingual Education Act becomes law; Martin Luther King, Jr. assassinated; Federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability*
- 1969 UC Riverside launches one of the first Mexican-American/Chicano Studies departments in the US, led by Professor Carlos Cortés and Alfredo Castaneda
- Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MECHA) founded at UC Santa Barbara*
- 1970 *US Department of Health, Education and Welfare prohibits denial of education to non-English speakers*
- Prominent Los Angeles Times journalist Ruben Salazar killed during Chicano Moratorium in Los Angeles.*
- The Riverside Unified School District releases "The Mexican American," a source book to assist the classroom teacher in Riverside "in better understanding and teaching about the Southwest's largest minority, the Mexican American." Publication funded through Title I and sponsored by the federal Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- 1974 *US Congress enacts the Equal Educational Opportunity Act to increase availability to bilingual education*
- 1975 *US Voting Rights Act expanded to require language assistance for voters at polling stations, increasing access and representation for Latinos in the United States*

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