



NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY | A LOOK INTO THE PAST

Valley Glen's rich history comes from a strong and proactive community. The desire to create a sense of identity was what led to the inception of Valley Glen. Once divided into portions of Van Nuys and North Hollywood, Valley Glen is now recognized as its own neighborhood. Local residents established the need to separate their community in order to beautify and preserve the quality of the neighborhood. Through activism and perseverance, the neighborhood residents made this happen in less than a decade. It is evident that the Valley Glen neighborhood is strong-willed and unites its residents with a common goal to build a visually attractive and safe haven community. This chapter is more than just the origin of Valley Glen's name. It encapsulates the notable key events in the neighborhood that enriches Valley Glen's history as it defines itself at the heart of the Valley, which sets the footprint for its future.

Valley Glen is situated between Van Nuys and North Hollywood and spans 4.8 square miles in the heart of the San Fernando Valley. It is bounded by Burbank Blvd. on the south, Hazeltine Ave. on the west, Sherman Way on the north, and east along the Hollywood Freeway (Highway 170). Bisecting Valley Glen is the Tujunga Wash and the flood control channel that connects to the Los Angeles River, which runs north-south of the valley.

Major Development and Infrastructure Prior to Valley Glen

Prior to becoming Valley Glen, the area was predominantly agricultural in the early 1900s. During the post-war in the 1950s, the entire valley experienced rapid suburbanization in which wheatfields and ranchlands made way for tract housing development. Erected in 1950, the Hollywood Freeway runs north-south between San Fernando Valley and Downtown Los Angeles, which was later extended through North Hollywood along the boundaries of what is now Valley Glen in 1966.¹ Next to the freeway was the popular Victory Drive-In Theater, which was built in 1947.² The theater was closed in the mid-1970s and replaced by what is currently the Victory Plaza shopping center.³ Conveniently located next to the existing freeway, Victory Plaza is the only power shopping center in Valley Glen, which consists of 132,995 square feet of retail space. The shopping center is currently anchored by LA Fitness, CVS Pharmacy, Vallarta Supermarket, and Citi Bank.

Bisecting the southwest part of Valley Glen is the former Southern Pacific Railroad Burbank Branch right-of-way that runs east-west across the valley, which was used by steam locomotives, electric trolleys, diesel trains for nearly 100 years.⁴ From 1904 to 1920, the railroad carried passengers through the stations located in North Hollywood and Van Nuys. The right-of-way also supported the Pacific Electric Red Car service from North Hollywood to Van Nuys from 1938 to 1952.⁵ The railroad was later abandoned and is now being used as a 14-mile busway by the Metro Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), with two transit stations located within Valley Glen, which opened in 2005.

Valley Glen's Inception

Valley Glen was a part of Van Nuys and North Hollywood until 1998. The community came together to beautify the area through an anti-graffiti project led by the local neighborhood watch program.⁶ In 1994, neighborhood residents sought to create an identity separate from Van Nuys by proposing a new name that would help establish a sense of community, preserve the quality of their neighborhood from urban blight, and reduce crime rates.⁷ Ideas for naming the community included *College Park*, *Erwin Oaks*, *Valley Oaks*, *Erwin Ranch* and *Walnut Grove*.⁸



Detail of a 1925 rail map of Los Angeles County showing the Southern Pacific's Burbank Branch, which is now used as a designated busway for the Metro Orange Line.



Tujunga Wash connecting the Los Angeles River.



Source: Los Angeles Public Library < <http://jpg1.lapl.org/00103/00103538.jpg> >

Opened in 1953, the Victory Drive-in Theater was located on 13037 Victory Boulevard, which is now replaced by the Victory Plaza Shopping Center.



Source: Los Angeles Public Library < <http://jpg1.lapl.org/pics43/00041116.jpg> >

Aerial view of Hollywood Freeway Extension in 1965.

Valley Glen's Name Change

November 1997

More than 70% of the area's homeowners signed a petition requesting the name change to Valley Glen.⁹

February 1998

City Council Member Mike Feuer endorsed the creation of Valley Glen as a new neighborhood and proposed to neighboring areas in Van Nuys if they wanted to join Valley Glen or remain a part of Van Nuys.¹⁰

June 1998

Changing the name of the neighborhood to Valley Glen became official on June 23, 1998. The approved boundaries included portions of Woodman Ave. and Coldwater Canyon, Sherman Way and Burbank Blvd.¹¹ The Department of Transportation mounted 12 new signs of the new name throughout the neighborhood.¹²

April 2006

The Greater Valley Glen Council held a logo design competition to represent Valley Glen's civic diversity. The competition was open to high school and college students in the area.¹³

September 2008

The United State Postal Service formally recognizes Valley Glen as a neighborhood and officially designated three zip codes from Van Nuys and North Hollywood as Valley Glen, which incorporated the zip codes 91401 and 91405 from Van Nuys, and 91606 from North Hollywood.¹⁴



Source: The Greater Valley Glen Council Homepage <<http://www.greatervalleyglencouncil.org/files/>>

A neighborhood watch was established in the Valley Glen area in the early 1990s. Significant efforts made from the residents involved in the program have paved the way to renaming to the neighborhood to Valley Glen.



Source: Valley Glen Neighborhood Association Website <<http://valleyglen.org/map/>>

Blue signs of the new name Valley Glen were placed throughout the community after it was officially established as its own neighborhood.

Key Moments in the History of the Neighborhood (1949-Present)

Los Angeles Valley College (1949)



The campus of Los Angeles Valley College (LA Valley College) is bounded by Oxnard St. on the north, Fulton Ave. on the west, Burbank Blvd. on the south, and the Tujunga River to the east, and figures significantly into the social and physical context of the neighborhood. Founded on September 12, 1949, the college was initially located on the campus of Van Nuys High School at 6535 Cedros Ave. until 1951 when it moved to its current location. The physical development of the current campus took place over the course of four phases, which was completed in 1959, 1961, 1963, and 1973, respectively. The Valley College Historical Museum, the only museum dedicated to the history of the San Fernando Valley, was established in 1974.¹⁵

The top communities that the LA Valley College serve include North Hollywood, Van Nuys, Burbank, Panorama City, Sherman Oaks, Sun Valley, Arieta, and North Hills. As of the Fall 2013 semester, there were 18,397 students enrolled at the college with 18% of the students attending full-time. There are 200 full-time faculty members and 398 part-time faculty members. LA Valley College offers 61 Associates of Arts degrees, 19 Associates of Science degrees, 57 Certificates, and a number of special programs.¹⁶

With more than 1,600 different trees and plants, the LA Valley College campus is known for its urban forest. In fact, Valley College has been named a “Tree Campus USA” by the Arbor Day Foundation in 2011 and 2012, the only campus in LA and the only community college campus in California to receive the honor. To preserve the campus’ natural beauty, Valley College established an Urban Forest Master Plan in 2010.¹⁷

The Great Wall of Los Angeles Art Mural (1974)



The Great Wall of Los Angeles is an art mural that stretches 2,754 feet long along the concrete walls of the Tujunga Flood Control Channel of San Fernando Valley beginning at W Oxnard St. and Burbank Blvd. alongside the LA Valley College. At a half-mile long, the mural is considered the longest mural in the world.¹⁸ In 1974, the Army Corps of Engineers collaborated with Judith F. Baca and her organization, Social and Public Art Resource (SPARC), to create a mural along the flood control channel as a part of a beautification project.¹⁹ Baca designed the mural to reflect California's history beginning with prehistory and colonialism followed by important events leading up to the 1950s.

In 1976, Baca recruited a team of community members, artists, and historians to bring the mural to life. The mural took five summers to complete.²⁰ However, the mural was flooded several times between 1976 and 1983. Though it was not damaged by the floodwater, the mural's condition began to deteriorate after being exposed to air pollution and direct sunlight over time. The mural was restored in 2011 by Baca, students from UCLA, local artists, and community members.²¹



Baca and a team of community members, artists, and historians completed the 2,754 foot mural in five years. The mural is one of Valley Glen's prized asset in the community.



The historical content and drawings for each panel of the mural along the Tujung Wash took approximately one year to research and prep before transferring the artwork to the walls.

Valley Glen Community Park (2000)



Source: Valley Glen Neighborhood Association Website < <http://valleyglen.org> >

The largest park in Valley Glen is the Valley Glen Community Park, which is located determined by Erwin St. on the north, Atoll Ave. on the west, Ethel Ave. on the east, and the termination of Mary Ellen Ave. on the south. Initially known as the Erwin Street Park until the early 2000s, residents successfully lobbied the city to change the name of the park to Valley Glen Community Park to better reflect the neighborhood's identity.²² There is one large tree in the park that may soon be removed because it is dangerous to visitors.

The park includes a number of picnic tables, small paved areas with benches, and an unlit baseball diamond, the backstop of which may soon be removed and placed elsewhere.²³ The park also received a brand new Universally Accessible Playground from Shane's Inspiration, an organization that has built 40 similar playgrounds around the world.²⁴

Additionally, there are two mini parks located in Valley Glen—Kittridge Mini Park and Hartland Mini Park. Kittridge Mini Park is located on the southwest corner of Kittridge St. and Greenbush Ave., and includes a large area paved in concrete with three benches and two trash cans. There is a small strip of grass with trees against a brick back wall. The park is within walking distance to Kittridge Street Elementary School.²⁵

Hartland Mini Park is located on the southeast corner of Hartland St. and Woodman Ave. Like the Kittridge Mini Park, the Hartland Mini Park includes a large paved area. There are five trees located against the stone back wall, and two more along the curb. The park is a short walk to the busy commercial intersection at Woodman Ave. and Vanowen St.²⁶

Metro Orange Line (2005)



Source: Los Angeles Photo Archive <http://www.you-are-here.com/transport/orange_line.html>

The Metro Orange Line is a 14.5 mile bus rapid transit (BRT) route that runs east-west of the San Fernando Valley, which also connects to the Metro Red Line to North Hollywood. The origin of the name and color of the Orange Line reflects the history of citrus trees that are planted throughout the valley.²⁷ Opened to the public on October 29, 2005, the Valley Glen Neighborhood Association celebrated the grand opening of the Orange Line at the Van Nuys Station.²⁸ The Orange Line consists of 14 transit stations that are located at approximately one mile apart. There are two stations located in Valley Glen—Woodman/Valley Glen Station and the Valley College Station. The Orange Line runs primarily along a two-lane dedicated busway within an abandoned rail right-of-way.²⁹ To reduce the noise pollution generated from the Metro liner vehicle nearby the residential neighborhoods, Metro installed rubberized asphalt pavement along the residential section of the busway.³⁰

The Orange Line also supports bicycling as part of its system. Running parallel to the BRT is the Metro Orange Line bicycle path, which serves as a mix of a Class I bike path and a Class II bike lane. The Valley College Station, located on Burbank Blvd. and Fulton Ave., includes 8 bike rack spaces and 8 bike lockers. The Woodman/Valley Glen Station, which is located on Oxnard St. includes 12 bike rack spaces and 8 bike lockers.³¹ According to Metro's ridership statistics as of February 2014, the Orange Line BRT sees 30,164 boardings in an average weekday, compared to 14,255 boardings on the Silver Line BRT.³² In 2013, the Valley College Station experienced an average of 1,325 weekday boardings, whereas the Woodman/Valley Glen Station experienced an average 928 weekday boardings.³³



Source: Los Angeles Metro Website <<http://www.metro.net/riding/maps/>>

Tujunga Wash Greenway and Stream Restoration Project (2007)



As a tributary to the Los Angeles River, the Tujunga Wash is a 13-mile long stream that runs across the Los Angeles County. Roughly 2 miles of the stream runs through the Valley Glen neighborhood. Along the Tujunga Wash is a 9-mile flood control channel, which was built in the early 1950s, to funnel rainwater to the Los Angeles River.³⁴ As part of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan, the Tujunga Wash Greenway and Stream Restoration Project aimed to transform the pathway along the Tujunga Wash into a 15-acre riparian habitat that would conserve water and beautify the flood control channel.³⁵

Completed in 2007, the project was a collaboration of a multi-agency partnership between Los Angeles County, the City of Los Angeles, and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, which includes the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and the Rancho Simi and Conejo Recreation and Park Districts.³⁶ The project is located on the east and west sides of the Tujunga Wash between Vanowen Ave. and Oxnard Blvd. There are three entrances to the greenway, which are located at Vanowen Ave. and Fulton Ave., Victory Blvd. and Ethel Ave., and Oxnard Blvd. and Coldwater Canyon Ave.

The restoration project consists of a 1.2 mile and 50-ft wide greenway, which serves as a habitat for plants and wildlife, as well as open space and recreation for Valley Glen residents. The greenway features a natural streambed and a walking path that is landscaped with native California plants, and also includes benches and a picnic area.³⁷ In 2012, the Tujunga Wash Ecosystem Restoration Project extended the greenway by an additional mile towards the north along the banks between Vanowen St. and Sherman Way.³⁸

Current Forces of Change

A number of forces are currently helping Valley Glen to becoming a more recognizable and memorable environment. Developers and architects are beginning to see space in Valley Glen as opportunities for attractive developments. Valley College and certain portions of the Tujunga Wash are also undergoing serious changes in the near future. If planned effectively and strategically, these forces could turn out to be great assets to the community.

Victory Plaza Mixed-Use Development

Victory Plaza was set to be demolished and replaced with a 12.2-acre mixed-use development.³⁹ The development would have included 150 residential units, a hotel with 230 rooms, a movie theater, 550,000 square feet of office space, and a 285,000 square foot shopping center, all in a “village-like” setting.⁴⁰ However, on January 22, 2014, the site was acquired by the real estate investment company Kennedy Wilson.⁴¹ It is still too soon to tell how the new ownership of the site will affect the specific design of the proposal.

Great Wall of Los Angeles Pedestrian Bridge

The Great Wall of Los Angeles is situated about 13 feet below street level, which separates the view of the mural and visitors by a long chained fence. SPARC intends to change that with plans to replace the former wooden pedestrian bridge, which crossed Tujunga Wash between Miranda and Hatteras streets on Coldwater Canyon Blvd., with a new solar-lit bridge designed by wHY architects. The bridge will be constructed primarily of recycled materials, such as broken glass, recycled cans, and plastic.⁴²

A plan for the bridge restoration was approved by the LA County Board of Supervisors in January 2014. The bridge will cost about \$1.3 million and will be funded by the LA County, the City of Los Angeles, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and the California Cultural Historical Endowment. The bridge will re-open access between LA Valley College and the mural. Construction of the bridge is set to commence in February 2014, and completed by the end of the year.



Source: Dasher Lawless Inc. Website
<<http://www.dasherlawless.com/1400.xml>>

Rendering of the proposed 12.2-acre development project The Plaza at the Glen.



Source: KOET Website < <http://www.koet.org/socal/departures/lanier/confluence/mver-notes/great-wall-of-los-angeles-finally-gets-its-bridge.html>>

The pedestrian bridge on top of the Great Wall of Los Angeles will re-open access between LA Valley College and the mural.

Los Angeles Valley College Facilities Master Plan

LA Valley College embarked on a large-scale \$626 million master plan in 2003, which was updated in 2010. Steinberg Architects was selected to develop a plan for the college's future after the passage of Measure J, which dedicated \$305 million for construction on the campus. The 2010 update to the master plan outlines a number of goals, many of which focus on the quality of the student experience, maintenance of the campus' natural charm, and strengthening the identity of the college through better definition of the campus' edges and pathways. While the master plan is continually evolving as future projections for the campus' needs are updated, as of now the full buildout will include two instructional buildings and an additional parking structure.⁴³ These improvements may draw more students to the college, further influencing the character and identity of the Valley Glen neighborhood.

Crest Apartments

A new apartment building, Crest Apartments, is to be developed by-right at 13604 Sherman Way by the Skid Row Housing Trust. The apartment complex will cater mainly to low-income males, a number of whom will likely be veterans. The impact of the project, located across the street from a hotel that has had issues with narcotic sales and prostitution, must be monitored closely.

Findings and Conclusion

The common themes evoked from its key historical moments within the neighborhood involved beautifying their community and its open space, and focusing on Valley Glen as a center of education. Outside organizations also see potential in Valley Glen and have sought to make the community better. Projects, such as the Valley College Facilities Master Plan and the construction of a new pedestrian bridge over the Tujunga Wash reflect Valley Glen's vision towards sustainability, neighborhood beautification, and community unity in establishing a sense of identity. It may be a good idea to capitalize upon some of these projects and processes while formulating new identity opportunities.

1. Continue to champion Valley Glen's open space and natural environment

Valley Glen fully embraces its natural landscape and open space. For example, the recent greenway and restoration project along Tujunga Wash have completely transformed the flood control channel into a pleasant landscaped and recreational space for the community. This project also continued to extend the landscaped improvements further north towards Sherman Way, which was completed in 2012. These activities create opportunities for the development or improvements in and around the Tujunga Wash. The community could create more active open space along both sides of the Tujunga Wash to attract more people to use the green space recreationally and the space outside of it commercially—thus bringing in more economic opportunities to the area. The community could also work on connecting the Community Park and the LA Valley College campus via the quiet Ethel Ave., perhaps attracting students, faculty, and staff to the Community Park to enjoy its serenity.

2. Build upon Valley Glen's public art

The community and organizations outside of Valley Glen see potential in transforming the neighborhood aesthetically through public art and landscaping. For example, the Army Corp of Engineers had the idea of creating a mural along the flood control channel, and conservancy agencies helped to enhance the Tujunga Wash in Valley Glen. The mural has grabbed international attention as its been dubbed the longest mural in the world. Valley Glen should extend the mural if there are enough panels along the flood channel to do so. Valley Glen could also shift focus and display public art along the Metro Orange Line busway where it can be viewed and appreciated by the transit riders. Valley Glen should consider using matching grants to invest in extended mural and/or improved parkland along the Tujunga Wash between Oxnard St. and Victory Blvd., thus connecting LA Valley College to the future Victory Plaza and tying the community together. The community should coordinate with existing partnerships, such as SPARC to establish more public art in the community. Furthermore, the Greater Valley Glen Council can work with students and faculty from the art department at LA Valley College to discover new opportunities for public beautification and art installments. For instance, Valley Glen has recently purchased a large horse figure as part of a "Valley of Horses" program. The Council could work with faculty and students from Valley College to determine not only the best location for the figure, but methods for making the structure even more beautiful and providing a landmark for residents.

3. Popularize Valley Glen as an educational hub

Residents rightfully have a lot of pride in the LA Valley College, which has been a staple of the community for over 60 years. Furthermore, Valley Glen is home to a number of additional educational institutions. The community can find creative ways to advertise the neighborhood's focus on education through design and programming. The Council could perhaps implement a widespread book-sharing program, or have a communal celebration or awards ceremony for exceptional students and faculty at any of the schools. The community may also want to invest in celebrating the achievements of LA Valley College Alumni somewhere on campus, in the Community Park, or at various other locations around Valley Glen.

4. Further develop Valley Glen's pride in its urban forestry and natural environment

For two consecutive years, LA Valley College has been named a "Tree Campus USA" by the Arbor Day Foundation. The college has even established an Urban Forest Master Plan in 2010 to help preserve the natural beauty of the campus. And known for being the urban forest with over 1,600 kinds of trees and plants, LA Valley College is truly home to trees. Valley Glen residents have long treasured and protected the local trees. There stands the opportunity of designing and producing 'The Map of Trees' in Valley Glen to amplify the value and attraction of local trees. The map will showcase the different kinds of trees on the map of Valley Glen in the simple colorful sketch style. For each place that non-Valley Glen residents might visit, look for a kind of tree near the site and put up a small designed plate on it along with a unique stamp of that tree. By collecting all the stamps that are attached to the specific trees near a site, visitors get to walk and drive around Valley Glen with more fun and stronger motivation. The completed map of trees can also be kept as a souvenir.

5. Build upon history and enhance community awareness

The Valley College Historical Museum is the only museum dedicated to the San Fernando Valley's rich history. This creates an opportunity for Valley Glen to showcase the historical timeline of events in the community, as well as key historic moments that occurred in the neighborhood that contributed to the identity of the neighborhood. The community could create a Valley Glen brochure to be distributed in the San Fernando Museum. The brochure will be designed to provide historical highlights of the community, advertisements of local businesses, and could include a map that shows various walking paths along the Tujunga Wash Greenway and other self-guided tours around the community, such as an Ethnic Food Restaurant Guide. To help these programs find success, the Council should find ways to partner with LA Valley College to advertise all that the Museum offers by speaking in classes, at sporting events, or simply putting up flyers. The Council should also give a few of these brochures to local businesses so visitors can be made aware of the history of the community.

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Lin, Ian. "Valley Glen Community Park." Photo. 11 Jan. 2014. 11 Jan. 2014.

"Heart of Greater Valley Glen."

STAKEHOLDERS & PARTNERSHIPS | Greater Valley Glen

INTRODUCTION

The Greater Valley Glen Council defines a community stakeholder as "anyone who lives, works or owns property within the Council boundaries," as well as "anyone who participates in educational institutions, religious institutions and community organizations" in the community.* The organization of this chapter follows the Council's definitions of community stakeholder groups. Stakeholder interests and needs will play an important role in determining priorities for Valley Glen's community identity design projects. Across all groups, the primary stakeholder needs and interests include community safety, aesthetics, property values, and access to educational/employment opportunities and other amenities.

* Greater Valley Glen Council Website - About - Stakeholders. <<http://greatervalleyglencouncil.org/about>>

LIVES IN VALLEY GLEN

Residents of Valley Glen can be characterized by two primary means: First, by the larger organizations that represent them, and second, as groups with similar needs and interests. We explore the needs and interests of Valley Glen residents by the following groupings:

- Valley Glen Neighborhood Association
- Greater Valley Glen Council
- Children and Families
- Students
- Adults
- Seniors
- Residents with disabilities or special needs
- Residents with limited English proficiency

Valley Glen Neighborhood Association

The goal of the Valley Glen Neighborhood Association is “to foster community pride, civic betterment and community beautification, to make our neighborhood a better and safer place to live and work, to promote businesses and business growth in Valley Glen, and to foster education and the arts in Valley Glen.” Their primary interests consist of the safety and security of residents and properties, property values, community aesthetics, and resident satisfaction.

The Valley Glen Neighborhood Association is focused on the geographic area bordered by Burbank Boulevard, Hazeltine Avenue, Vanowen Street/Tujunga Wash/Kittridge Street, and Whitsett Avenue/Cold Water Canyon Avenue. This area, “Valley Glen,” is distinguished from the broader “Greater Valley Glen.”



Field, Jay. "Tujunga Wash Greenway." Photo. US Army 23 Aug. 2012. 18 Feb. 2014. <<http://www.army.mil>>
Source: US Army News Archive. <<http://www.army.mil/article>>

"Residents stroll along the newly opened Tujunga Wash Greenway."



"Holiday Party." Photo. 10 Dec. 2013. 16 Feb. 2014. <<http://valleyglen.org>>
Source: VGNA Homepage. <<http://valleyglen.org>>

"Santa in Valley Glen."



Greater Valley Glen Council

The Council's purpose is "to protect stakeholder participation in local issues affecting their community, and to make government more responsive to local needs." As an organization, the Council's primary interests are the safety and security of residents and properties, property values, community aesthetics, and resident satisfaction both with the physical community as well as its participatory processes. The Council serves the "Greater Valley Glen" area, bordered by Sherman Way, the 170 Freeway, Burbank Boulevard and Hazeltine Avenue.



"From the left: Past President Judy Price, President Carlos Ferreyra, Dr. Susan Carleo and Past President and current council member Terry Anderson."



Greater Valley Glen Residents

Residents of Valley Glen can be characterized by various groupings, including age group, ethnic group, occupational group, income group, etc. Each of these groups has varying interests and needs (see Stakeholder Matrix). In general, all residents care about the safety of their community, as well as their access to education and employment opportunities, recreation, and other relevant services or amenities.

"Valley Glen residents at annual yard sale."

WORKS IN VALLEY GLEN

People who work in Valley Glen include business owners and employees of businesses or institutions in Valley Glen. Residents of Valley Glen also operate a number of home-based businesses. Additionally, Valley Economic Development Center, an organization that works to create and sustain jobs and businesses in the community, can be considered a stakeholder in this category.

- Business owners
- Employees of businesses and institutions in Valley Glen
- Home-based business owners
- Valley Economic Development Center

Business Owners

Business owners in Valley Glen could be residents or non-residents of the community. Across a range of business types, primary interests and needs include the accessibility and visibility of their business, connections with the business community, and a desire to retain local retail dollars, as well as to attract external dollars.

Employees of Businesses/Institutions in Valley Glen

Residents or non-residents employed at businesses in Valley Glen are primarily interested in the ease of access to their job (transportation options and parking), and the safety and aesthetics of the surrounding area.

Home-based Business Owners

Home-based business owners are also residents of Valley Glen. Their particular needs and interests are based in clients' ease of access to the business.

Valley Economics Development Center

The Valley Economic Development Center provides services to small- and mid-sized business owners, entrepreneurs, and members of Valley communities, with the vision to create and sustain jobs and businesses in communities. Programs in Valley Glen include: business opportunity funds, small business loans, access to capital workshops, consulting services, and the Entrepreneurial Training Program.*



*A free program that assists local businesses to create strategic planning, target marketing, cashflow and other financial analysis.



"A florist on the corner of Coldwater and Vistory."



"A bakery that sells a variety of buns originating from around the world."

OWNS PROPERTY IN VALLEY GLEN

People who own property in Valley Glen may have a more formalized investment in the community than renter-residents or workers. Property owners tend to feel more invested in neighborhood safety and maintenance, property values, rent value, and access to amenities. Additionally, property owners are more likely to be involved in long-term planning processes.

- Owner-occupied single family homeowners
- Apartment complex owners
- Commercial property owners
- Public property owners (City, Los Angeles Unified School District, etc.)

Owner-occupied Single Family Homeowners

Homeowners are often strongly rooted in their neighborhood, and sometimes have been for decades. This group of property owners will primarily be concerned with neighborhood safety, property values, neighborhood aesthetics, education and employment opportunities, and other relevant community services and opportunities.

Apartment Complex Owners

Apartment complex owners may or may not live in the buildings they operate. As property owners, their primary interests and needs are in areas of neighborhood safety, aesthetics, and services, which all impact property and rent values.

Commercial Property Owners

Commercial property owners may or may not operate businesses out of their property storefronts. As a general group, they are interested in property visibility and accessibility (specifically including parking), as well as general neighborhood safety and aesthetics, which can contribute to increased property values and business opportunities, through increased consumer activity.

Public Property Owners

Public property owners (the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Unified School District, etc.) are interested in land value (related to neighborhood safety, aesthetics, and amenities), as well as the ease of maintenance of their properties.



Lin, Ian. "Hatteras and Mammoth" Photo. 11 Jan. 2014. 11 Jan. 2014.
"Single family house in the alley."



Loopnet. "Fulton Ave Multifamily Housing" Photo. n.d. 20 Mar. 2014.
"13 unit; 3 (studio), 9 (1bd/1ba), 1 (2bd/1ba) apartment."



Loopnet. "Varna Ave Multifamily Housing" Photo. n.d. 20 Mar. 2014.
"24 unit; 2 (studio), 21 (1bd/1ba), 1 (2bd/2ba) apartment."

PARTICIPATES IN EDUCATIONAL OR RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS OR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS IN VALLEY GLEN

People who participate in educational, religious, or community activities or organizations in Valley Glen have a particular set of interests and needs compared to people who live or work in the community. People who spend less time in the community may be less invested in its identity and planning processes, but nonetheless are affected and form perceptions based on the results of these processes. This group of stakeholders includes:

- LAUSD students
- Los Angeles Valley College students
- Participants in religious institutions or community organizations

LAUSD Students

LAUSD students attending one of Valley Glen's public schools can be residents or non-residents of Valley Glen. All students will have an interest in safe routes to school, as well as the general safety and aesthetics of the surrounding neighborhood.

Los Angeles Valley College Students

Approximately 20,000 students attend Los Angeles Valley College in Valley Glen. Valley College students may be residents or non-residents of Valley Glen. All students will have an interest in a safe and convenient route to campus, as well as the general safety and aesthetics of the surrounding neighborhood. Some students may be involved with the College's Department of Community Service, which provides community outreach programs such as the 2014 Summer Reading for Children and Adults, and the Monarch Summer Camp for Kids.

Participants in Religious Institutions or Community Organizations

Valley Glen contains a diversity of religious/spiritual institutions (including churches and synagogues, among others) that play an important role in holding events and gathering people, both residents and non-residents of Valley Glen. These stakeholders will likely be most interested in the safety and aesthetics of the neighborhood surrounding the institution they attend, as well as the ease of accessibility to the institution.



"Community Services." n.d. 17 Feb. 2014. <<http://lavalley.augusoft.net>>
Source: Los Angeles Valley College Community Services Department Homepage. <<http://www.lavc.edu/communityed>>

"A variety of class selection at LAVC, including dance, gymnastic, arts and crafts, performing arts, computer applications, and career training."



"Tu B'svat." n.d. 17 Feb. 2014. <<http://www.emhabanim.com/apps/photos>>
Source: Em Habanim Sephardic Congregation Photo Album. <<http://www.emhabanim.com>>

"Children celebrating Tu B'svat."



"Tu B'svat." n.d. 17 Feb. 2014. <<http://www.emhabanim.com/apps/photos>>
Source: Em Habanim Sephardic Congregation Photo Album. <<http://www.emhabanim.com>>

CONCLUSIONS

LIVES IN VALLEY GLEN

The Valley Glen Neighborhood Association and Greater Valley Glen Council represent residents and their broader interests. Identity projects will likely gain the most public support if they are implemented in areas that engage both the “Valley Glen” and “Greater Valley Glen” definitions of the community.

Resident stakeholders have a range of age, culture, and income. The development of a community identity project must consider the unique experiences of different types of residents, reflecting their varying needs or interests. For example, a project will be most successful if it is simultaneously useful and engaging to both youth and senior residents, or both English-proficient and non-English-proficient residents.

All residents are likely to have a vested interest in their neighborhood’s safety, security, aesthetics, and access to amenities and opportunities. These common interests will be key influences to draw on in developing community identity projects.

WORKS IN VALLEY GLEN

People who work in Valley Glen, regardless of their type of work, are likely interested in the accessibility and success of their business or place of employment.

Business owners in the community will be interested in and motivated by capturing as much local and regional consumer spending as possible, and will likely support any identity efforts that may increase their sales or profitability.

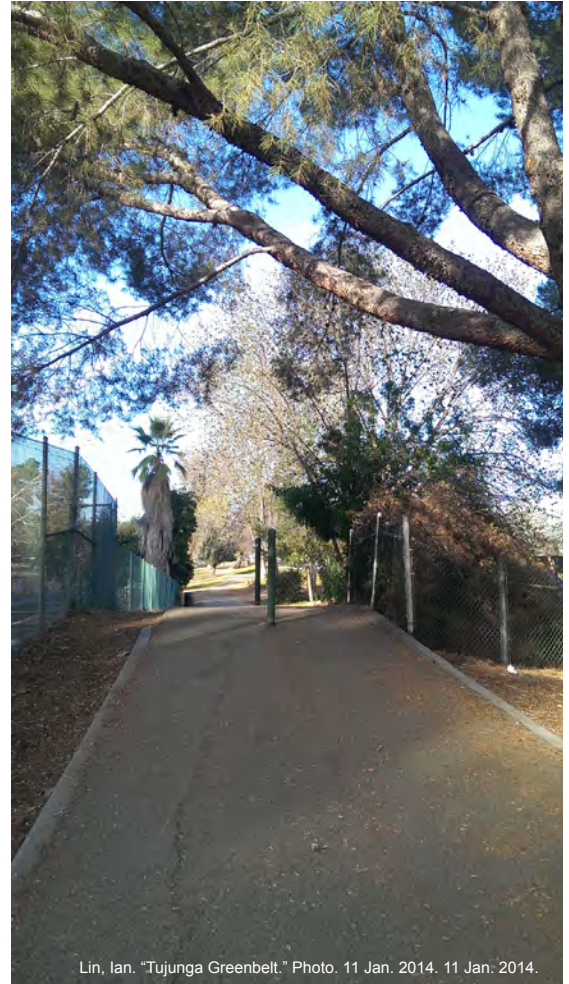
Many businesses are located in strip malls, and thus business owners may have strong opinions about the aesthetics or management of the strip malls in which they are located. Any identity effort focusing on strip mall aesthetic cohesion, façade improvement, or commercial corridor improvement must incorporate the opinions of business owners within the strip malls.

OWNS PROPERTY IN VALLEY GLEN

Property owners are likely to be a primary group participating in community visioning or community identity processes, as they tend to feel more long-term investment in the community. Property owners’ particular connection to place will be an important acknowledgement to make in an identity or planning process. Additionally, property owners are potential investors in community identity projects.



“The Great Wall of Los Angeles.”



“A view on the Tujunga Greenbelt ”



Lin, Ian. "Fulton Avenue" Photo. 11 Jan. 2014. 11 Jan. 2014.

"A side of Los Angeles Valley College."



Lin, Ian. "Hatteras Street" Photo. 11 Jan. 2014. 11 Jan. 2014.

"Into the silence."

CONCLUSIONS

PARTICIPATES IN EDUCATIONAL OR RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS OR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS IN VALLEY GLEN

While participants in institutions or organizations in Valley Glen may not have as much investment in long-term identity and planning processes, their needs and interests should still be considered, as the results of these processes may impact their perception and use of the community.

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR IDENTITY



"Balloon Dog - Jeff Koons."



"Grand Park - Los Angeles, CA."



"Fork on the road - Pasadena, CA."

1) Utilize the reach of the Greater Valley Glen Council and Valley Glen Neighborhood Association to develop and express community identity

The role of the Greater Valley Glen Council and Valley Glen Neighborhood Association in organizing and engaging community residents can be extended in this process of developing and expressing community identity.

Possible projects include:

- Facilitate community visioning events culminating in public art project(s), possibly located in existing core community spaces (Community Park, etc.)
- Compile and distribute "Block Party Kits" with materials and resources for residents to host and engage in block parties and public gathering across the community
- Develop a stylized and uniquely-branded community events calendar to distribute throughout the community, highlighting community events sponsored by the Council and Neighborhood Association
- Sponsor a fun and unique community activity or feature, such as playful street art installations

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR IDENTITY



"Million Trees - New York, NY"



"Mackinac Island, Michigan." n.d. 18 Feb. 2014.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mackinac_Island>
Source: Wikipedia. <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>>



"Fall on Mackinac Island." 31 Oct. 2012. 18 Feb. 2014.
<<http://jkgphotos.wordpress.com/2012/10/31/fall-on-mackinac-island/>>
Source: Joleen's Photos Blog.
<<http://jkgphotos.wordpress.com/>>



"Putting on roots." 15 Sep. 2010. 18 Feb. 2014.
<<http://arslocii.wordpress.com/2010/09/15/>>
Source: arsllocii: placeness as art.
<<http://arslocii.wordpress.com/>>

2) Enhance residents' and property owners' sense of community safety and aesthetics through strategic street beautification

Residents and property owners in Valley Glen already express a sense of identity around community safety and aesthetics (particularly the community's trees). These points of pride can be further enhanced through an effort to ensure that the community's achievements in safety and aesthetics extend to all parts of the community. Targeted efforts can address areas of the community that may not currently align with this sense of identity as fully as others.

Possible projects include:

- Tree planting initiatives along thoroughfares to create a more cohesive identity between the residential neighborhoods with other community spaces, as well as to make walking more desirable near commercial destinations.
- Revamp the Victory Boulevard medians with drought-resistant landscaping, public art installations, and/or signage
- Sponsor a fun and unique community activity or feature, such as playful street art installations

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR IDENTITY



Lin, Ian. "Greenbelt-Tujunga Wash"
Photo. 11 Jan. 2014. 11 Jan. 2014.



"LAVC Library and Academic Resource Center."



Lin, Ian. "Community Park" Photo. 11 Jan. 2014. 11 Jan. 2014.

"Puppy mingling."

3) Enhance and promote identity around existing community institutions and resources

Valley Glen already contains numerous community institutions and resources that residents, employees, and students feel invested in, including the LAUSD schools, Valley College, and the community's parks and Tujunga Wash Greenway. Energy and creativity can be rallied around these existing assets to help create a clear and unified community identity.

Possible projects include:

- Enhance and promote programming and investment in the community's parks, greenway, Valley College, and LAUSD schools (example programming could include a doggie play/meet-up group at the Community Park, a cohesive installation of place-based art projects at elementary schools, or healthy living walking club along the Tujunga Wash Greenway)
- Develop a "Greenway Fitway" community fitness route along the Tujunga Wash Greenway
- Develop a stylized and uniquely-branded community events calendar to distribute throughout the community, highlighting community events sponsored by the Council and Neighborhood Association

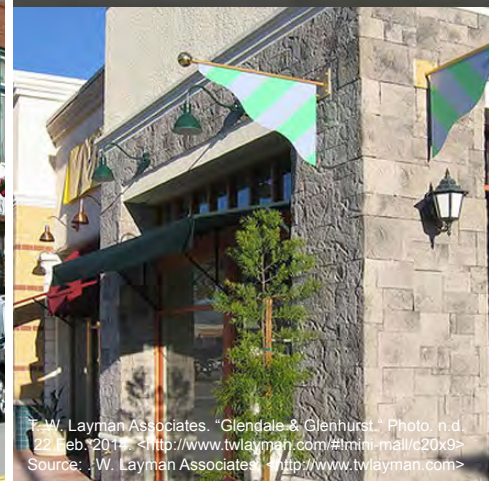
5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR IDENTITY



"M Street - Georgetown, Washington, D.C."



T. W. Layman Associates. "Arrow & Rennell." Photo. n.d. 22 Feb. 2014. <<http://www.twlayman.com/#lmini-mall/c20x9>>
Source: T.W. Layman Associates. <<http://www.twlayman.com>>



T. W. Layman Associates. "Glendale & Glenhurst." Photo. n.d. 22 Feb. 2014. <<http://www.twlayman.com/#lmini-mall/c20x9>>
Source: T. W. Layman Associates. <<http://www.twlayman.com>>

"Mini malls in California."

4) Include local business owners as assets in developing and expressing community identity

Local business owners are resources in the community and can be looked to for support in the efforts to establish a unified community identity. Additionally, business owners could work together to create a cohesive identity strategy for strip mall storefronts and signage.

Possible projects include:

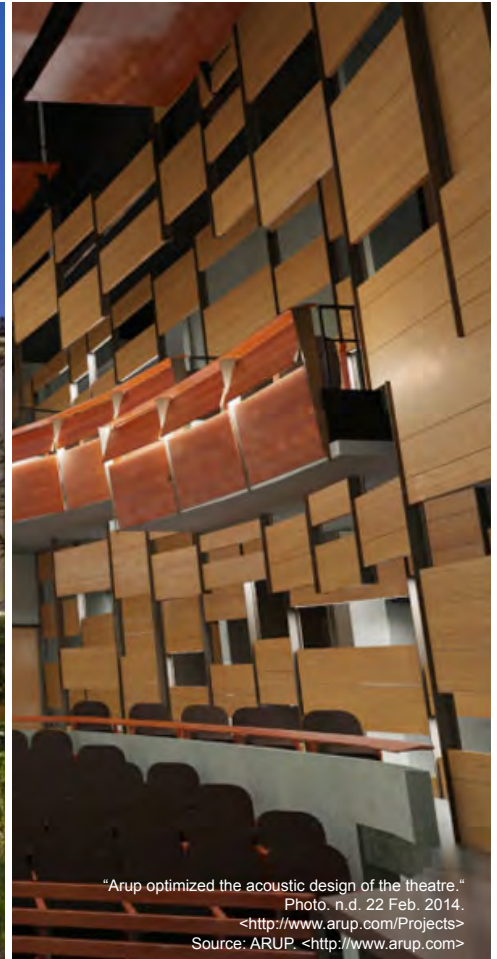
- Façade makeover or strip mall sign cohesion projects for local businesses to aesthetically improve and coordinate commercial identity
- Improve pedestrian crossings at "commercial corners" to enhance cohesion of commercial resources
- Improve public gathering and seating options at "commercial corners," to encourage shoppers to spend more time in the area

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR IDENTITY



"Allied Health Sciences Center."

"Allied Health Sciences Center." Photo. n.d. 22 Feb. 2014.
<<http://architype.org/project/allied-health-sciences-center>>
Source: Architype. <<http://architype.org>>



"LAVC's Performing and Media Arts Center."

"Arup optimized the acoustic design of the theatre." Photo. n.d. 22 Feb. 2014.
<<http://www.arup.com/Projects>>
Source: ARUP. <<http://www.arup.com>>

5) Engage Valley College as a key stakeholder and partner

Valley College operates the community's largest public space, and provides the community with many assets and resources, including space, academic and technical resources, and the service of students and staff. As such a prominent resource in the community, Valley College can be targeted as a key partner in community identity development and expression.

Possible projects include:

- Partner with Valley College to more fully integrate its campus and programming into the community
- Sponsor community programming or events to take place in part of Valley College's unused parking area
- Incorporate Valley College students into community event programming (e.g. Concerts in the Park, Theatre in the Park, etc.)



"Community meeting with City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation & Parks."

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 <<http://www.vedc.org>>



Source: Los Angeles City Department of Planning. <<http://planning.lacity.org/>>

BUILT ENVIRONMENT | NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER & URBAN FORM

INTRODUCTION

While the official boundaries span across two different citywide community areas, Valley Glen remains its own distinguished entity with specific goals and characteristics. The distribution of land uses reflect a small-scale, residential neighborhood within Los Angeles, with an emphasis on single-family housing and vehicle-oriented layouts. There is a grid-like network of major streets as well as commercial strip malls concentrated on intersections and corners. The east side is bounded by the 170 Freeway while the Metro Orange Line cuts through the southwestern part of the area. Notably, a natural feature—the Tujunga Wash—bisects the neighborhood, which is somewhat of an organizing element as it binds together Los Angeles Valley College, Victory Plaza, and the northwestern boundary of Valley Glen. Multi-family housing is prevalent generally along the North-South paths and also along strips of major arterial roads near commercial areas. Located in the center region, Valley Glen Community Park is the primary open, green space, while the rest of the area is quite park poor in terms of land use designation, although there is an abundance of trees. The Built Environment chapter encompasses the urban form of these elements within the context of Valley Glen.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER & URBAN FORM

Valley Glen has a distinct character among other nearby areas within the City of Los Angeles as a quiet, leafy neighborhood, with goals serving to preserve this community identity. There is an abundance of single-family residential homes, as can be seen by the land use pattern above, that are laid out in a network of small, non-contiguous paths in the interior of larger blocks. This planned network of unconventional residential streets functions as a mechanism to protect the residents from negative impacts of external activity. As reflected in the history of Valley Glen, the community aims to serve its residents first and foremost, and detract attention from acting as a regional hub or a highly urbanized environment.

The neighborhood accommodates for vehicles and bus transit well, with high-capacity streets and plentiful parking for those who commute to and from their homes. For the residents who do not leave Valley Glen on a regular basis, there are designated commercial areas featuring main street retail and strip malls for basic amenities, though most high-intensive services and retail are found outside its boundaries. Thus, the neighborhood is very safe and stable with several local schools and concerned residents who make up the local governance to uphold its values.

Valley Glen is known as a tree-friendly city, which is evident along the many complex streets constituting the residential areas. As such, the community prides itself in its well-utilized park--the Valley Glen Community Park--and has recently renovated the Tujunga Wash to include a landscaped pedestrian walkway running alongside its path. Another significant landmark distinguishing Valley Glen is Los Angeles Valley College which features architectural and academic excellence during its long history in the City. The campus attracts a diverse mix of students and provides ample parking, as does the rest of Valley Glen, for its enrollees. Relatedly, there is mixed-income housing embedded within the major paths and multi-family housing available for those who seek to rent.



"Landscaped single-family home in residential area."



Ahn, Esther. "Intersection in residential area." Photo. Jan 25, 2014.



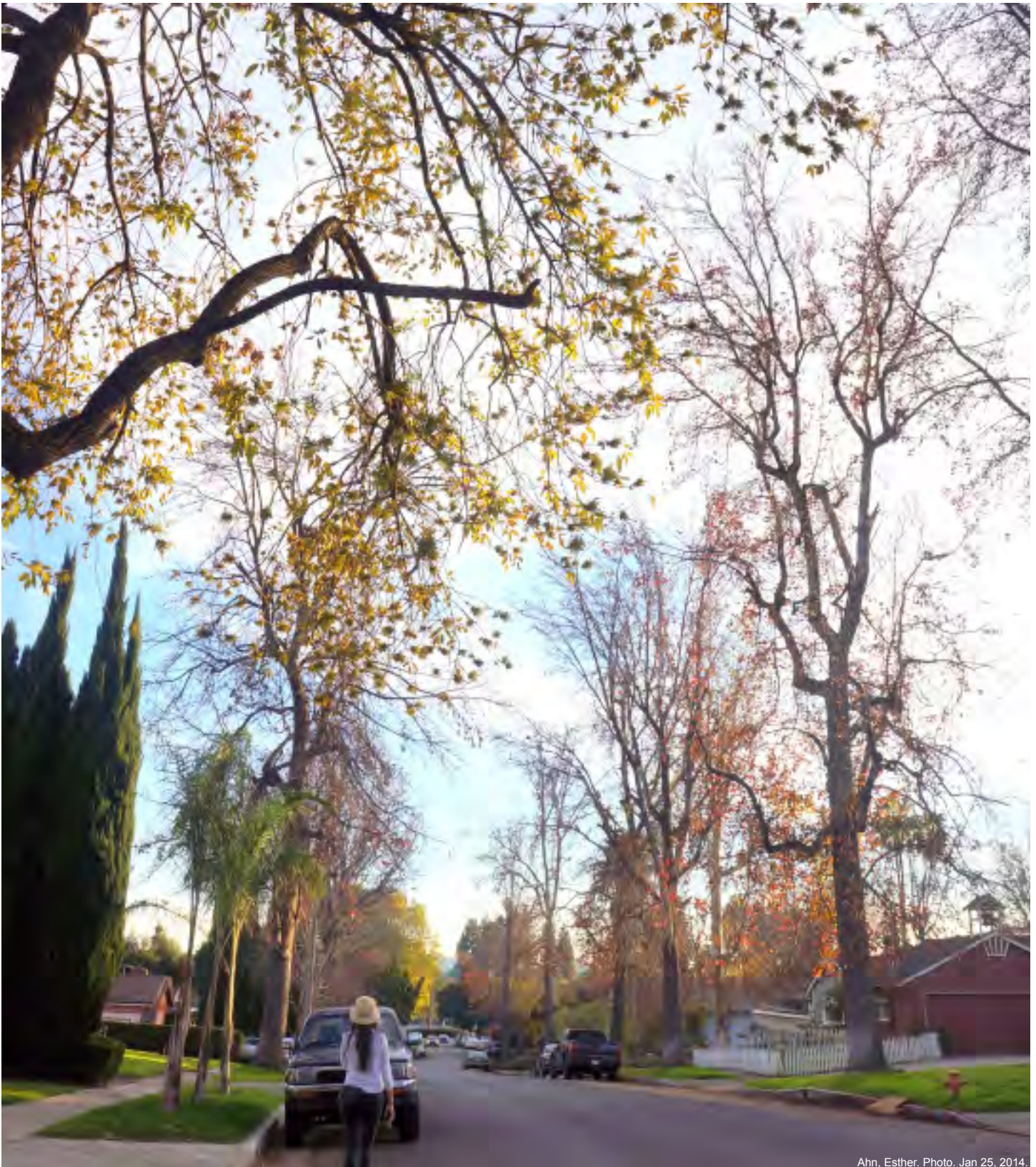
Ahn, Esther. "Multi-family residential with landscaping." Photo. Jan 25, 2014.



Valley Glen Community Park with residents gathering around the park's amenities. Receptacles for dog waste and plastic bags are also available for those who bring their dogs.



The recently completed Tujunga Wash Greenway and Streamwater Restoration Project, serving to reconnect the neighborhood to the Los Angeles River. Also, home to the monumental Great Wall of LA which celebrates the City's history.



Ahn, Esther. Photo. Jan 25, 2014.

A residential street with both a multitude and diversity of tree types lining the sidewalks. Many single-family homes within these areas have front yard landscaping with plentiful off-site parking available.



Kaili Liu . Photo. 18 Jan. 2014 19 Feb . 2014

LANDMARKS AND NODES

While much of Valley Glen is residential areas, the neighborhood has prominent landmarks and nodes embedded within the commercial areas. The largest landmark is Los Angeles Valley College which attracts many people from both within and from outside the community. With its rich history and architectural excellence that defines it, Valley College is a salient feature, both functionally and visually, that people often associate with Valley Glen. A minor visual landmark that defines Valley Glen is the welcome sign located on the intersection of Coldwater Canyon Avenue and Burbank Boulevard, which simply indicates to visitors that they have entered the Valley Glen boundaries. The other minor landmark is Victory Plaza, the main center for local amenities and services located in the center of Victory Boulevard. It is important to note this site because it will be redeveloped in the future to serve as an even more powerful landmark than it does at present. When analyzing where the largest number of people gather, the major node, currently, is Valley Glen Community Park. It is located quite centrally and near Valley College, and is used heavily by local residents. The next major node is the Starbucks located on the intersection of Coldwater Canyon and Victory Boulevard as it seems to be a popular place for both residents and visitors to meet at during the weekdays and weekends. A minor node is the newly constructed Orange Line Station since it is the major entrance and exit of Valley Glen for those traveling by Metro. More local to Valley Glen, the Cinemark movie theater is another minor node because it is convenient for those close-by to go to a place of entertainment. Overall, these landmarks could be improved upon to include more distinguishing features and prominence to help define Valley Glen's identity.



Starbucks

This worldwide chain establishment is the most popular place for people to gather, based on our observations. This situation is less than ideal for defining the identity of Valley Glen. A potential problem could be that Starbucks has a competitive advantage over other local stores, preventing their growth, but more locally rooted places for people to gather are needed, especially in locations of high traffic and exposure such as commercial corners.



Los Angeles Valley College

This is a major landmark and educational institution in Valley Glen. Many people from other places know Valley Glen for housing this well-regarded community college.



Valley Glen Community Park

This well-maintained open, green space is the primary node of local activity and place for neighbors in the residential areas to meet and spend time. More places like this are needed to nurture the community identity in the neighborhood.



SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Residential areas constitute most of Valley Glen, but more specifically single-family homes, which lend to its small-town character. A majority of these single-family homes are located on secondary streets, rather than main streets, in order to protect these families from the nuisance caused by busy streets and high-intensive activity. The building ages for these homes range from 1940 to 2012, but most of the houses were built between 1950 and 1970. It is difficult to categorize the single-family housing stock by style because there is little consistency within visual character based on age; however, homes with higher real estate value and aesthetically attractive are located in the southwest corner of Valley Glen, relative to the other single-family homes in the neighborhood. In regards to the public realm, residential streets are fairly narrow and, at times, lacking sidewalks for pedestrians. Where sidewalks are existing and desired, streetscaping efforts could improve the consistency and conditions of the sidewalks, which would provide safer walking environments for children while also adding to the visual quality of these homes.



Northwest Corner of Valley Glen.
Houses in Picture were built between
1960 to 1970.





Northeast Corner of Valley Glen.
Houses in these photos were built in
the 1940s and 1970s.



South Corner of Valley Glen.
Houses in Picture were built between
1950 and 1970.



Kaili Liu . Photo. 18 Jan. 2014 19 Feb . 2014

Sidewalk and Street in Residential Area

This photo captures well-maintained landscaping seen frequently in the neighborhood. There are large and mature trees in the street while front yards sometimes have personal gardens.



Kaili Liu . Photo. 18 Jan. 2014 19 Feb . 2014

Missing Sidewalk in Residential area

While some areas have spacious, private sidewalks, others have narrow or unpaved sidewalks. This photo shows an example where the sidewalk is missing entirely, rendering the street incomplete and inconsistent with the rest of the residential areas.



MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Multi-family residential neighborhoods are located along the main east-west streets, such as Oxnard Street and Woodman Avenue, and on large north-south streets. In general, the building age of multi-family structures within Valley Glen range from 1950 to 2010. While some of the physical infrastructure is kept in good condition, others may not be as well-maintained but have facade improvements or repainted surfaces. As such, we found it very difficult to distinguish building types in accordance with building age. The landscaping and sidewalk maintenance in front of multi-family residential neighborhoods also vary in Valley Glen; however, we found that the landscaping and visual quality are the most appealing in the southwest corner, providing a strong connection with the natural environment. These parts of the multi-family housing areas in Valley Glen are most representative of the larger community's identity. Thus, they provide some guidance for further opportunities to improve the visual character of the built environment and the transitions connecting the multi-family housing to other areas of the neighborhood.



Kaili, Liu. "Multi-family buildings", Photo, Jan.17.2014

In front yards, trees can provide enough shade for pedestrians and residents of the building. Children also can play on the lawn, creating a friendly natural environment for the community.



Ahn, Esther " Sidewalks ", Photo, Jan.17.2014

The sidewalk in front of the building is wide enough to provide for the daily foot traffic. Also, the sidewalk is in the middle of grass, creating a beautiful visual character for the public eye.



Yuanyuan Bian. Photo. 18 Jan. 2014 19 Feb. 2014



Yuanyuan Bian. Photo. 18 Jan. 2014 19 Feb. 2014



Yuanyuan Bian. Photo. 18 Jan. 2014 19 Feb. 2014



Yuanyuan Bian. Photo. 18 Jan. 2014 19 Feb. 2014



Yuanyuan Bian. Photo. 18 Jan. 2014 19 Feb. 2014



Yuanyuan Bian. Photo. 18 Jan. 2014 19 Feb. 2014

Along the Oxnard Street
Houses in Picture were built between
1960s and 2000s





Along the Coldwater Canyon Ave
Houses in Picture were built between
1960s and 1980s





COMMERCIAL AREAS

Though the designation of commercial areas account for only a portion of Valley Glen's land use, they are concentrated at important pathway intersections and contribute significantly to the overall identity of the neighborhood. Commercial corners are prevalent on all the major North-South and East-West streets, in addition to several sections of major streets dedicated to retail. The primary visual identity which represents these uses consists of strip malls and main street retail. This aspect of Valley Glen's built environment is important because these commercial areas define the entry ways to access the abundant single-family and multi-family residential parts of the neighborhood. Furthermore, aligning the goals of the commercial areas with the overall vision of Valley Glen presents significant implications for the future development of the neighborhood as a flourishing destination for both residents, who may work locally or commute to elsewhere, and visitors who can take away lasting impressions of what makes Valley Glen unique. There is potential to beautify these commercial areas and improve upon the transition between commercial and retail to make a more cohesive and complete image of the neighborhood. In the long-range, the residents may be able to utilize these areas to plan for coordinated community-building and access to amenities, without affecting existing infrastructure and land uses, especially with the incoming large-scale retail redevelopment slated for parts along Victory Boulevard.

URBAN FORM

The urban form of commercial uses in Valley Glen can be categorized as one of two types: strip mall retail or main street retail. There is little aesthetic quality distinguishing one from the other, or visual features that are consistent within each type. Thus, the urban form, including architecture and site design, can be enhanced in order to give a sense of vitality and cohesiveness along commercial areas. Urban form specifically addresses the visual and functional quality of the main street retail and strip malls which constitute the commercial sector of Valley Glen. Important aspects include promoting pedestrian-oriented entryways, balancing the space dedicated to parking with landscaping, and ensuring a diverse mix of businesses to serve the community and occupy the spaces fronting major streets. The latter is significant especially because most of the retail is in the form of low-rise, connected commercial buildings. Emphasizing infill of existing infrastructure and vacant stores with the proper uses and form instead of developing further in a sprawled fashion can assist in meeting these goals. Highlighting structures with modern architecture, articulated entryways, and well-designed signage would also help make the commercial areas look more visually appealing and inviting.



Ahn, Esther. "Strip mall plaza Victory Boulevard." Photo. Feb 25, 2014.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

Within the context of Valley Glen and the needs of this community, it is important to promote goals that will reinforce the character of the neighborhood. As such, promoting pedestrian friendliness, sustainability and economic development would be in line with the larger goals outlined in this action plan. Enhancing the urban form of the commercial areas would constitute one part of these enhancements, while addressing the public realm and capitalizing upon the economic environment are other considerations that have potential for improvement. The wide streets and sidewalks provide for ample space and availability of off-site parking, but these areas could be made more efficient and characteristic of Valley Glen with site-specific landscaping which may also promote rainfall retention, tree-watering and flood hazard mitigation. Implementing smart growth strategies--e.g., denser retail, co-location of businesses, accessible amenities, pedestrian-friendly features--with new and further developments could bolster the community's economic and visual identity without impeding existing residential areas. Such strategies could also improve the perception of public safety in these areas which function as connecting nodes that bind the residential and commercial sectors of Valley Glen.



Ahn, Esther. "Main street retail on Victory Boulevard." Photo. Feb 25, 2014.



Ahn, Esther. Photo. Jan 25, 2014.

A two-story strip mall on the corner of Oxnard Street and Whitsett Avenue with on-site parking and prominent visual character. There is a diverse mix of businesses as well as landscaping adjacent to the sidewalk.

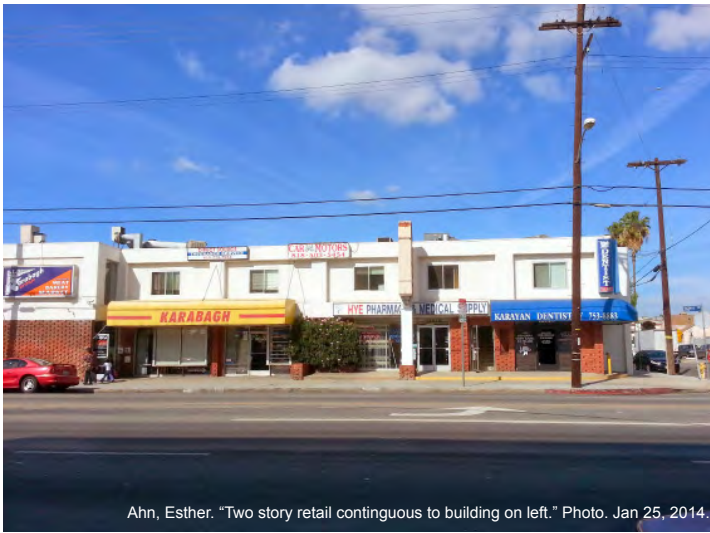


Ahn, Esther. Photo. Jan 25, 2014.

One-story main street retail facing Victory Boulevard with a variety of signage and services. There is some articulation of entryways and store frontage, in addition to utilization of the sidewalk for advertising purposes.



Ahn, Esther. "Single story main street on Victory Boulevard." Photo. Jan 25, 2014



Ahn, Esther. "Two story retail contiguous to building on left." Photo. Jan 25, 2014.



Ahn, Esther. "Alley way for parking on Victory Boulevard." Photo. Feb 8, 2014



Ahn, Esther. "Retail attached to strip mall on Victory Boulevard." Photo. Feb 8, 2014.



Ahn, Esther. "Street facing east on Victory Boulevard." Photo. Jan 25, 2014



Ahn, Esther. "High mass main street retail building." Photo. Jan 25, 2014.



FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

Neighborhood Character & Urban Form:

- There is an abundance of single-family residential homes that are arranged in small, non-contiguous paths in the Interior of larger blocks.
- Valley Glen is known as a tree-friendly city, but there are few trees in the main street, especially on Victory Blvd.
- According to the zone map, there is little diversity of uses in Valley Glen which limits the economical development that can occur.

Nodes and Landmarks:

- There are relatively few landmarks and nodes which the reason that many visitors cannot easily identify Valley Glen.
- The most major node is Starbucks, a worldwide chain establishment. To some extent, this situation may hurt local businesses.
- Landmarks and nodes are clustered around Valley College and Victory Plaza, which can imply cause of increased traffic in these areas.

Single Family Residential:

- In regards to the public realm, some of the sidewalks are incomplete, which is especially frequent for single-family residential buildings located on collector streets.
- Residential areas usually have well-maintained landscaping with various trees and private gardens.
- Single-family homes in southwest corner have a the most beautiful appearances.

Multi-Family Residential:

- While newly built multi-residential buildings look clean and modern, some older buildings require improvements to physical infrastructure or facades.
- Most of multi-residential buildings are located on the main streets, which subjects them with certain problems such as air pollution, noise pollution and limited private spaces and so forth.

Commercial:

- Commercial corners are prevalent on all the major North-South and East-West streets, in addition to several sections of major streets dedicated to retail.
- The signs in the Valley Glen are randomly arranged on billboards, leading to visual blight and inconsistency. To some extent, it may have an effect on the area's economical health.
- There is little differentiation between the two types of commercial retail which are strip malls and main street retail.

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR IDENTITY:

1. Build upon Existing Landmarks & Nodes

- Given that Starbucks is the major social node, the community could build more local businesses or stores that provide spaces for people to gather together. This would serve a dual purpose of encouraging local business and residents to walk around the community.
- Creating more prominent landmarks and functioning nodes can attract people to visit destinations and form more solid associations with Valley Glen.
- Adding landmarks and nodes can help establish local identity by bringing residents together where they can specialize and celebrate their values as they seem to do at Valley Glen Community Park.

2. Focus on Commercial as Primary Driver of Identity

- It is important for the community to promote articulated entryways and landscaping, especially along Victory Boulevard, Oxnard Street, and Vanowen Street, which can render store fronts more inviting and pedestrian-oriented.
- The community also needs to ensure integrate consistent signage for strip malls and main street retail with context-appropriate design and scale.

3. Preserve & Enhance Character of Residential Neighborhood

- Maintaining consistent landscaping in the residential area can contribute significantly to Valley Glen's reputation of a tree-friendly community.
- Ensuring complete sidewalks or other forms of pedestrian safety amongst moving vehicles promotes safety, especially for children.

4. Encouraging Multi-Family to be Good Neighbors

- Many multi-family residential buildings are located along the main streets, so clarification of the public space versus private space, or transitions between them, can strengthen Valley Glen's identity..
- Creating a pleasant and improved walking environment for pedestrians can bolster visual quality and safety for the community identity.

5. Tailor Further Infill Development to Capitalize on the Existing Built Environment

- There are various existing components of Valley Glen that define its built environment, such as the Victory Plaza and commercial areas along major streets. Capitalizing upon these establishments with further development can activate the opportunities inherent in those areas.
- Natural features of Valley Glen, including the Tujunga Wash and high prevalence of trees, can serve as focal points of future development. This anchor can serve the identity of Valley Glen as a tree-friendly community.



Inkelaar-Cruz, Sean, Jan. 19th, 2014

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT| GREEN IN VALLEY GLEN

Valley Glen is a community with a strong green appeal. The diversity and variety of trees as well as the native faunas fosters a pleasing first impression for visitors. The Valley Glen Community Park and the Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC) campus are valuable green assets in the community. However, some improvements are still needed for the natural environmental condition within the community, such as streetscape beautification, the creation of new parks, rehabilitation of existign parks, and habitat preservation. In this chapter, we will start with the exiting conditions, assess the findings, and form our conclusions. We have proposed five recommendations that could be used be “opportunities for identity”, in order to strengthen the characteristics of Valley Glen.

CLIMATE

According to a report published by sunset.com Valley Glen sits in two climate zones: interior climate zone and occasional ocean influence zone.

The Interior climate zones major influence on climate is the continental air mass; the ocean determines the climate no more than 15 percent of the time. Although the climate supplies enough winter chill for some plants that need it, it is not too cold for many of the hardier sub-tropicals like amaryllis. It is too hot, too cold, and too dry for fuchsias but cold enough for tree peonies and many apple varieties, and mild enough for a number of avocado varieties. Over a 20-year period, winter lows averaged from 22 to 17°F.

The Occasional Ocean Influence climate is made up of cold-air basins and hilltops. The Zone gets weather influenced by both ocean air and inland air. Due to the greater ocean influence, this climate supports a wide variety of plants. Typical winter lows are 37° to 43°F.

Valley Glen and most of the San Fernando Valley do not sit in a recognized fire zone. The fire zones are closer to the mountains in the south and east. Valley Glen sits in a mostly suburban neighborhood where there are not large amounts of chaparral and other fire fuels to be considered a fire zone. There is not much to be concerned about in this category as the fire zones are far enough away that Valley Glen would not need to be evacuated for fear of property damage due to a fire, the most Valley Glen has to worry about in terms of fires is the poor air quality that comes into the area due to burning fires in the fire zones.

Climate



Source: Sunset.com

Fire Zones



Source: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

GEOHAZARD

According to the State of California Department of Conservation, Valley Glen rests in an area where historic occurrences of liquefaction, or other geological, geotechnical and groundwater conditions indicate a potential for permanent ground displacements. However most of the San Fernando Valley sits in this zone as well and the impacts to construction and development has been minimal. The key takeaway is awareness of the region and also to be mindful when planning for new developments that the due diligence is taken to identify the proposed site as being suitable for development.

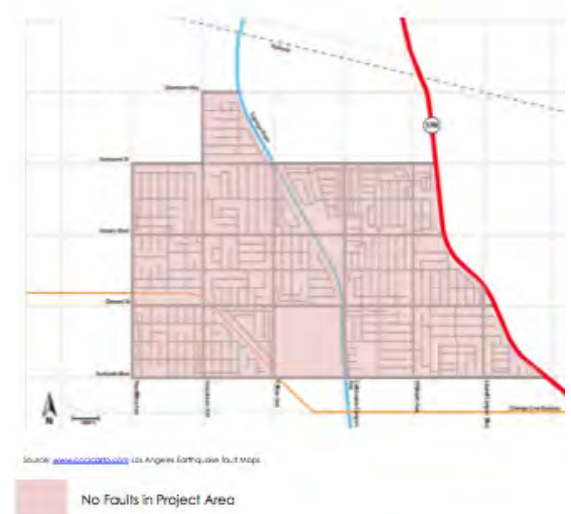
Although there are no faults that run through Valley Glen directly, it is surrounded by multiple active and dormant fault lines. As indicated by the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, Valley Glen does not need to sit on the fault to feel the economic effects of a powerful earthquake. The takeaway is awareness of the geological environment your community resides in and to plan accordingly, whether it be reinforced structures or height limits on developments.

Seismic Hazard Zones



Source: State of California Department of Conserva-

Earthquake Faults



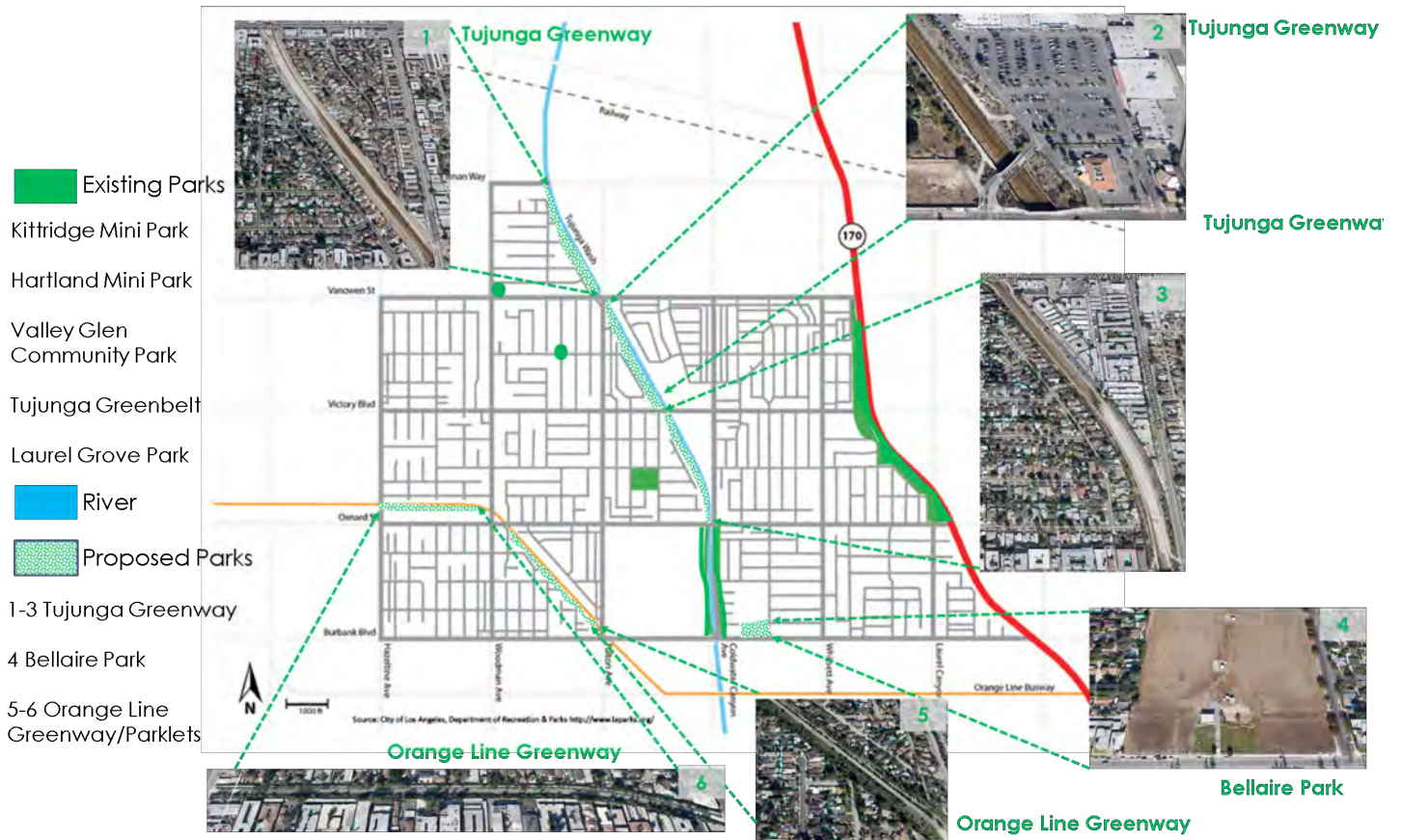
Source: www.cccicarto.com Los Angeles Earth-

EXISTING OPEN SPACES



Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood Council parks: Kittridge Mini Park, Hartland Mini Park, Valley Glen Community Park, Tujunga Greenbelt, Laurel Grove Park. The parks vary in size, layout, and the amount of leisure and athletic amenities available to the community. Some like the Hartland Mini Park offer nothing in the way of amenities and is nothing more than a shaded slab of concrete, while the Valley Glen Community park offers a nice play area for children as well as small walking, biking, and jogging paths. It also offers areas to sit in the shade and enjoy a good book.

POTENTIAL OPEN SPACES



Source: Google Map

We have analyzed the area and have proposed an additional six (6) areas for potential green space development: The Tujunga Greenway project would take three (3) sites, Bellaire Street Park, and the Orange Line Greenway/Parklets project would take two (2) sites. The Tujunga Greenway projects are already zoned open space and certain aspects of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan could be introduced into this area. Collaboration with local non-profits, the city, and Valley College may bring together the required resources needed to jumpstart this project which would serve as a true anchor point for the Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood.

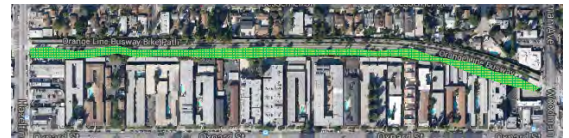
OPEN SPACES

The Bellaire Street Park parcel is currently zoned RD3-1 and R1-1, both which include a provision to build Park, playgrounds or community center, owned and operated by a governmental agency (Zimas.lacity.org). This area is in dire need of a larger green space. It has no true park in the nearby vicinity and would provide a quiet respite for a boulevard that has many multi-family dwellings.



Source: Sean Inkelaar-Cruz

The last areas identifies are the two (2) areas adjacent to the Orange Line stations within the Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood. These look to be Metro owned properties, but there may be potential to partner with Metro, and the local city government, as well as, local non-profits to develop the site into more than what it is now, which seems to be overgrown shrubbery. The potential for pocket parks is high in this area and would serve the single family dwellings directly adjacent to the Orange Line.



Source: Google Map



Source: Google Maps

Takeaway

Valley Glen is searching for an identity and the greenways could provide the community with that identity. Potential exists to collaborate with local non-profits and city government to create larger scale projects. Valley Glen can be at the forefront of shaping what type of structure is ultimately decided upon at the Victory Plaza site. The community has an opportunity to create green equity within its community by expanding or improving upon its existing stock of green spaces.

EXISTING STREET TREES



The street tree diagram identifies the type of trees that dominates each of the main corridors in Valley Glen. The main street tree types in the community included: Pine, Ficus, Palm, Evergreen Pear, and Sweetgum Trees. The diversity of the street trees creates various landscape layout along the corridors, which is pleasing for the visitors. Valley Glen's established tree landscape is a strength of the community's character and future design and development decisions should continue to enhance this strength.

Liang, Weining, Feb. 4th, 2014



Pine



Ficus



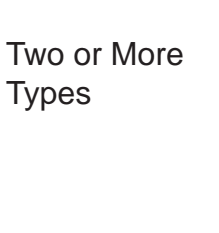
Palm



Evergreen Pear



Sweetgum Tree



Two or More Types



CORRIDORS LACKING STREET TREES



The streets which are lacking street trees are mainly east-west bound. The south-north bound corridors have a satisfying amount of street trees. Street trees can improve the walking environment for pedestrians. It is recommended that the addition of trees in the east-west corridors be considered. Adding medians in the corridors is another option for street beautification.



Inkelaar-Cruz, Sean, Jan. 19th, 2014

FLORA & FAUNA

According to the California Natural Diversity Database (California Department of Fish and Wildlife), the flora and fauna species existing in Valley Glen are listed as follow:

- Western pond turtle
- Coast horned lizard
- Coastal California gnatcatcher (Native)
- Hoary bat
- Least Bell's vireo
- Los Angeles pocket mouse (Native)
- Pallid bat
- Silver-haired bat
- Swainson's hawk
- California Walnut Woodland (Native)
- Davidson's bush-mallow (Native)
- Plummer's mariposa-lily (Native)
- Riverside Alluvial Fan Sage Scrub (Native)
- San Fernando Valley spine-flower (Native)

As the database's scope only reached down to city level, the list above is only using Van Nuys as a reference.



Source: County of San Bernardino, Department of Public Work: <http://www.sbcounty.gov/dpw/land/>



Source: Los Padres Forest Watch: <http://lpfw.org/our-region/wildlife/mariposa-lily/>

Source:
California Natural Diversity Database, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb>

TREE INVENTORY



Indian Laurel Fig ¹
Ficus microcarpa

Evergreen

Size: 50'-80' tall

Water: Drought tolerant tree

Maintenance: Requires minimal maintenance once established, apart from periodic trimming to maintain the tree's appearance and health.

Growing Tips:

- Easily cause hardscape damage
- Generally hardy outdoors in the temperature range of 25F and to 115F



Evergreen Pear ²
Pyrus kawakamii

Evergreen

Size: 15' – 30' tall

Water: Moderate water needed

Maintenance: Prune the evergreen pear tree in late spring after flowering. Be careful not to over-prune or thin the canopy too much.

Growing Tips:

- Grow best in deep sandy or clay soils with good drainage.
- Require a fair amount of watering.
- Require alkaline soils

Liang,Weining, Feb. 4th, 2014



Italian Stone Pine ³

Pinus Pinea

Coniferous evergreen

Size: 30-60' tall and 30-50' wide

Water: drought tolerant tree

Maintenance: Can use fallen pine needles as a natural mulch to help water retention and keep weeds at bay

Growing Tips:

- Soil can be acidic, neutral or alkaline
- Needs good drainage
- Be aware it may take many years before cones are produced, and then an additional three years for them to mature



Gumball Tree ⁴

Liquidambar styraciflua

Deciduous tree

Size: 33-50' tall, can up to 150'

Water: tolerant some drought, occasional wetness

Maintenance: Prune after the flower blooms in April and May

Growing Tips:

- Soil should be neutral or acidic
- Planting is best done in the spring as opposed to autumn
- Easily caused hardscape damaged

Liang, Weining, Feb. 4th, 2014



Deodar Cedar ⁵
Cedrus deodara

Coniferous evergreen

Size: 40-70' tall, 20-40' wide, can up to 200'

Water: drought tolerant tree

Maintenance: Low maintenance tree

Growing Tips:

- Make sure soil offers good drainage, since it cannot tolerate wet feet
- Needs to be acidic for proper growth



Foxtail Palms ⁶
Wodyetia bifurcata

Evergreen

Size: Around 33' tall

Water: Drought tolerant tree. No additional irrigation

Maintenance: Low maintenance tree

Growing Tips:

- Prefer a well-drained, slightly acidic soil
- Watch for nutrient deficiencies in high pH soils

Liang, Weining, Feb. 4th, 2014



Paperbark Maple⁷

Acer griseum

Deciduous tree

Size: 15-30' tall

Water: Can tolerate drought after an establishment period

Maintenance: Pruning can be done as soon as the tree enters dormancy

Growing Tips:

- The tree is able to thrive in a wide variety of soil pH conditions and textures.
- Best locations are moist with good drainage
- Is a good potential choice for areas with clay soil



Canary Island Pine⁸

Pinus canariensis

Coniferous evergreen

Size: 50-80' tall, can up to 100' tall

Water: Low drought tolerant tree

Maintenance: Little Pruning is needed

Growing Tips:

- A good choice for a street tree, since it gets sufficiently large enough to shoot past power lines
- The bark is red, which will add an extra color to your yard
- Need to have adequate water all the time

Liang, Weining, Feb. 4th, 2014



Monterey Pine⁹
Pinus radiata

Coniferous evergreen

Size: 50'-100' tall

Water: Low drought tolerant tree

Maintenance: Little Pruning is needed, may be pruned in the spring

Growing Tips:

- It is a fast growing tree
- Require deep, well drained, medium to coarse textured soils of medium fertility



Mexican Fan Palm¹⁰
Washingtonia robusta

Evergreen

Size: 60'-90' tall

Water: High drought tolerant tree

Maintenance: Little Pruning is needed

Growing Tips:

- Suitable for planting in dry urban landscapes
- Can tolerate poor soil and drought
- Can create a striking landscape
- Easily grows out of scale in most landscape with one-story building, because all of the fronds are at the top of the palm

Liang, Weining, Feb. 4th, 2014

CONCLUSION

- Valley Glen's established tree landscape is the strength of the community's character and future design. The tree's types are diverse in the community. Most of them are easy maintenance. Therefore, the trees in Valley Glen could be a good element to showcase. Future design and development decisions should continue to enhance this strength.

- The size, layout, amount of leisure, and athletic amenities of open spaces vary in Valley Glen. Also, the distribution of the open spaces is uneven geographically. There is potential for Valley Glen to improve and create new parks, which could be: 1) extend Tujunga Greenway; 2) Add Orange Line Greenway; 3) reuse the mini parks.

- Even though the streetscape of Valley Glen is impressive with its beautiful trees, the improvement of street tree still needed, especially for most east-west bound street, such as: Victory Boulevard, Vanowen Street, etc.

- There are several native faunas existing in neighboring Van Nuys. More emphasis could be placed on attracting some of those faunas such as birds to the Tujunga Wash to enhance the natural habitat environment and add to the community's identity.



Oustad, Courtney, Feb. 17th, 2014

Five Opportunities for Building Identity:

1) Tujunga Wash Greenway Beautification

Extend the Tujunga Wash Greenway, to let it become an anchor point for the community to help build identity.

2) Orange Line Greenway

Utilize the land adjacent to the Metro Orange Line to serve as potential green spaces. It may serve as an urban greenbelt to serve the community.

3) Create a Parktopia

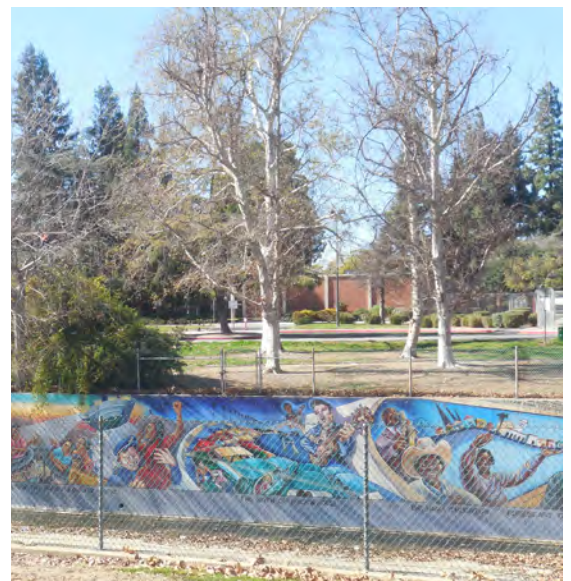
Identify current vacant lots as potential sites to become new community parks to fulfill the cities 50 Parks Initiative.

4) Median Beautification

Beautify the main corridors to strengthen the current landscape characteristics.

5) Habitat Preservation

Improving the environmental condition to become a community wildlife habitat along the Tujunga Wash.



Oustad, Courtney, Feb. 17th, 2014



Inkelaar-Cruz, Sean, Jan. 19th, 2014

TUJUNGA WASH GREENWAY

The Tujunga wash currently sits as an underutilized site within the community of the Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood that could serve as a focal point for the community and neighboring communities. Aside from Los Angeles Valley College the Wash has a high potential to serve as the anchor point for the community creating a true identity of an emerald necklace that runs up and down the Wash as it passes through the Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood Council. The Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan and the Tujunga Wash Watershed Project can serve as a blueprint to incorporate a river revitalization plan and project into the neighborhood. The community can look to The River Project and the Council for Watershed Health as organizations actively seeking watershed improvements and river revitalization projects within Los Angeles County. Additionally, the community can look at a nearby community in Pacoima, which is an underserved community looking to establish a river revitalization project with their Pacoima Watershed Project.



Source: The River Project, Retrieved from: <http://www.riverproject.org/>



Orange Line Woodman Station, Chester Paul Sgroi, Flickr, Oct. 13, 2011, Retrieved from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/sgroi/6239905345/>

ORANGE LINE GREENWAY

Currently only one side of the Metro Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is developed. It currently has a bike path and jogging path adjacent to the busway. However, more can be done to expand upon this area. Although the main function of this area is a BRT that connects the East San Fernando Valley with the West and North-West San Fernando Valley it seems short sided that only one side was developed. Currently there is brush overgrowth on the residential facing side of the busway. Instead of overgrown shrubbery which could be a fire hazard and area for transients to camp out in making it dangerous. The area could be better served to be landscaped into flat green space with benches, athletic equipment, and children play areas. Parts of New York's Highline can be used as a precedent and Philadelphia is also planning to incorporate green space into an abandoned viaduct. Both of these Projects can be used to gather ideas to incorporate along the Orange Line and maximizing the space available. With so few areas to develop green space the Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood Council will have to be creative with the existing infrastructure to find ways to expand their current inventory. This greenway along with the Tujunga Wash Greenway would do a lot in terms of identity and separating this community apart from it bordering neighbors. A November 2010 publication by the Rails To Trails Conservancy entitled *Rails With Trails: Design, Management, and Operating Characteristics of 61 Trails Along Active Rail Lines* may prove to be a useful resource in planning along the Orange Line moving forward.



Highline Park in New York, Jovare, Flickr, June, 10th, Retrieved from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/jovare/3614623149/>



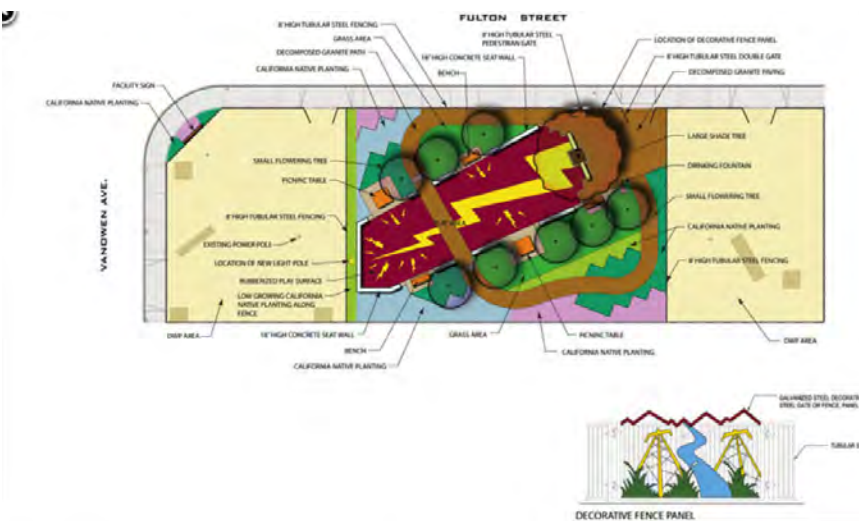
Inkelaar-Cruz, Sean, Jan. 19th, 2014

IMPROVE AND CREATE NEW PARKS

The space within the Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood to incorporate new green spaces is limited, however there may be an opportunity for green space expansion at the corner of Burbank Blvd. and Bellaire Ave. It is currently zoned RD 3-1 and R1-1 which provides an opportunity for the development of a park, playground or community center, provided that it is owned and operated by a governmental agency (Zimas.lacity.org). Potential exists to work with non-profit organizations like The City Project to work towards designing and building a new park for the community. Additionally, talks with the local government and the City's Department of Recreation and Parks will be critical to moving forward with any future park development.



Kittridge St. Mini-Park and Hartland St. Mini-Park, Source: Google Map



FULTON / VANOWEN POCKET PARK CONCEPT

Brasuell, James, Much-Needed Pocket Park Breaks Ground in NoHo, Curbed Los Angeles, May 17, 2012
Retrieved from: http://la.curbed.com/archives/2012/05/muchneeded_pocket_park_breaks_ground_in_noho.php

The Existing Mini-Parks at Kittridge and Hartland are not much more than extended sidewalks and it is difficult to see how much added value these spaces actually bring to the community as the Hartland Mini-Park lacks any sitting space and neither offer any true amenities for the surrounding community. Although there is plenty of space to offer a small jungle gym or swing set. Understanding how to maximize the space and gathering community input are critical to creating a green space that the community will use and respect. The City's push for corner parks and parklets would be a great start into seeing what types of amenities can be incorporated into smaller spaces. This would go a long way in making sure there is green equity within the borders of The Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood Council.

MEDIAN BEAUTIFICATION

As previously mentioned, the streetscape of Valley Glen is a strong element of the community. However, some improvements are still needed along the main corridor, such as Victory Boulevard and Vanowen Street, as shown in the “Corridors Lacking Street Trees” diagram. The main corridors are the first images representing the community to visitors of Valley Glen. Therefore, it is critical to the reputation of Valley Glen that a priority of effort is placed in beautifying the main corridors. Median beautification will help to build a proud identity for the community. The diagram on the left shows existing streets with medians in Valley Glen. According to it, there is little portion of streets in the community which currently with medians. Therefore, there is a high potential to use median to beautify the community. One precedent of the street median beautification project can be Huntington Drive in Arcadia. The median island in the street creates various layout of the landscape, which can enhance the pleasing both for the pedestrians and the drivers.



Victory Boulevard, Liang, Weining, Feb. 4th, 2014



Huntington Drive in Arcadia, Source: Google Map Streetview



Minch, Michelle, Peacocks in Arcadia, April, 21th, 2010, Retrieved from: <http://activerain.com/blogsview/1610931/arcadia-peacocks-are-good-feng-shui>

COMMUNITY WILDLIFE HABITAT

There are several beautiful native flora and faunas that exist in the Van Nuys region, such as: the Coastal California gnatcatcher, Plummer's Mariposa-Lily, and San Fernando Valley Spin-Flower to name a few. If Valley Glen can enhance its habitat to attract those faunas, that could be an identity for the community. One precedent for it is Arcadia, where residents improve their lawn as well as community's environment, to attractive peacocks in the community. Peacocks has become one of the unique identities for Arcadia. Also, there are organizations that can help the community to create the community wildlife habitat, and certify it, such as the National Wildlife Federation. Becoming a certified community wildlife habitat could help Valley Glen to brand itself and build a unique identity.



Source: National Wildlife Federation, Retrieved from: <https://www.nwf.org/Who-We-Are.aspx>

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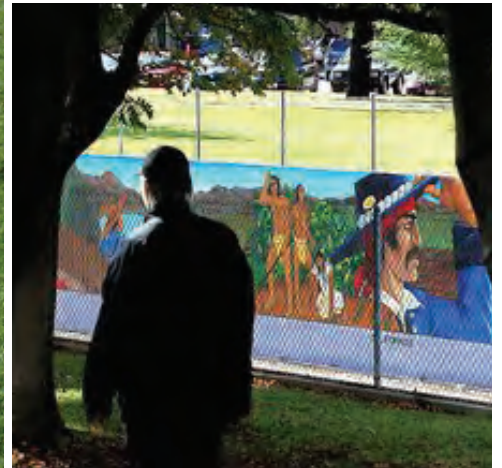
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Source: "Ainslie Wood/Westdale Community Association", <http://beta.awwca.ca/wp-content/gallery/churchill-park-activities/playinthepark.jpg>
 Courtney _____

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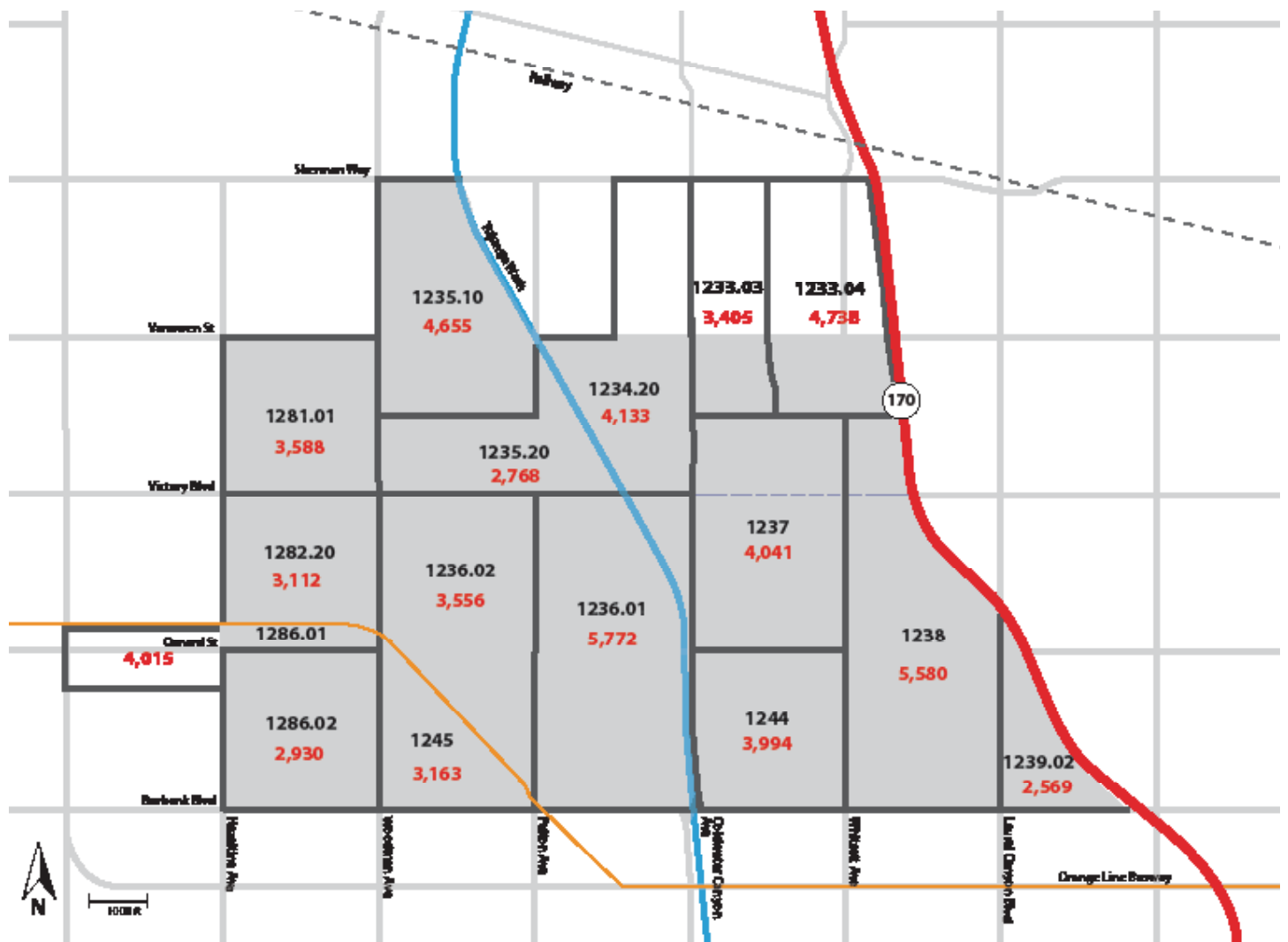
"The Modesto Bee", <http://media.modbee.com/smedia/2011/12/10/20/06/SE0r1.AuSt.4.jpg>
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SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT | SOCIAL LIFE IN VALLEY GLEN

INTRODUCTION

Valley Glen's social environment is a key contributor to community identity. The social environment includes demographic characteristics, such as the ethnicity, age, educational attainment, household income, and household size of Valley Glen's residents, as well as the community organizations, educational institutions, and religious institutions in which residents and visitors participate. Valley Glen is a comparatively safe community, with a lower crime rate than surrounding neighborhoods. The community is home to a diverse range of residents, with varying ethnic, linguistic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

CENSUS TRACTS



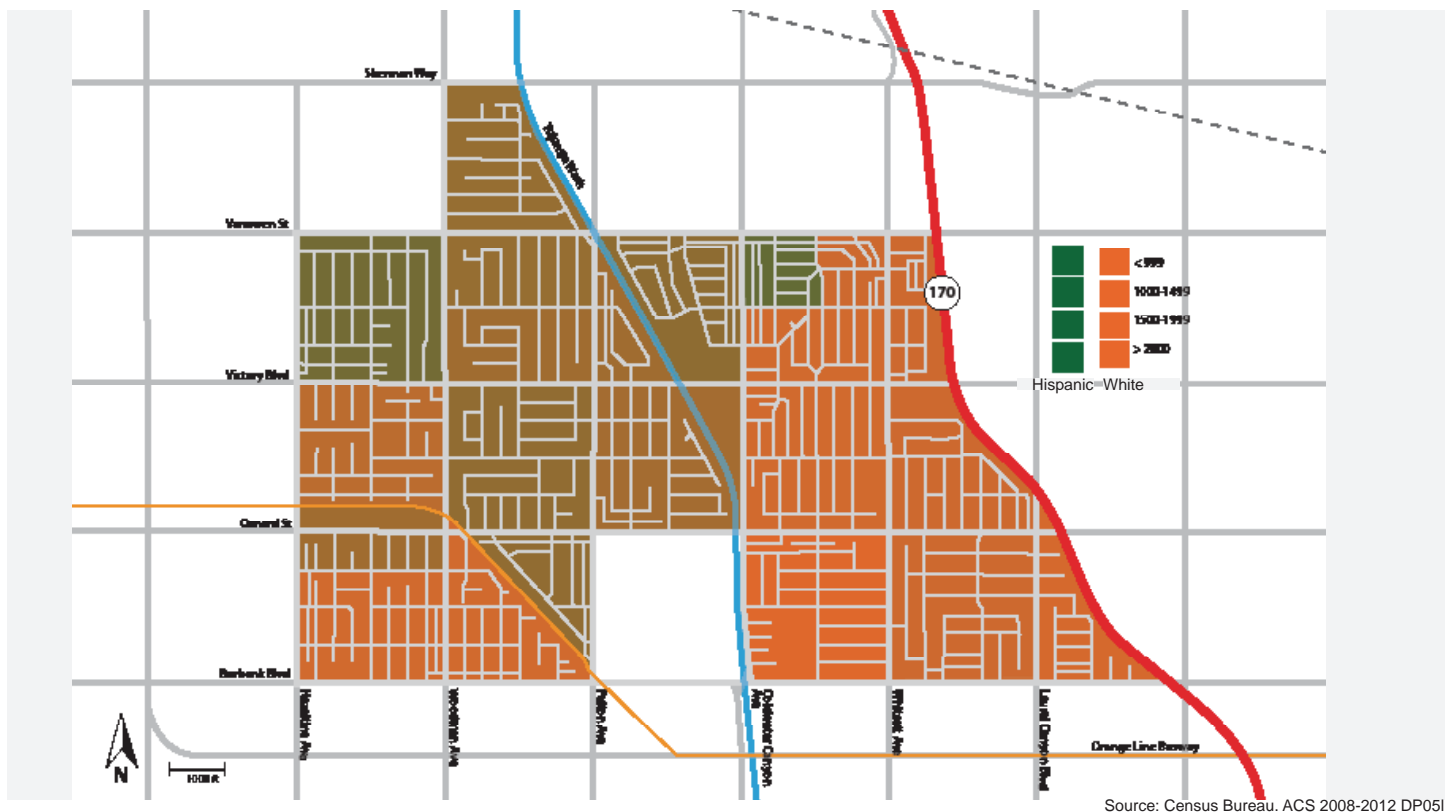
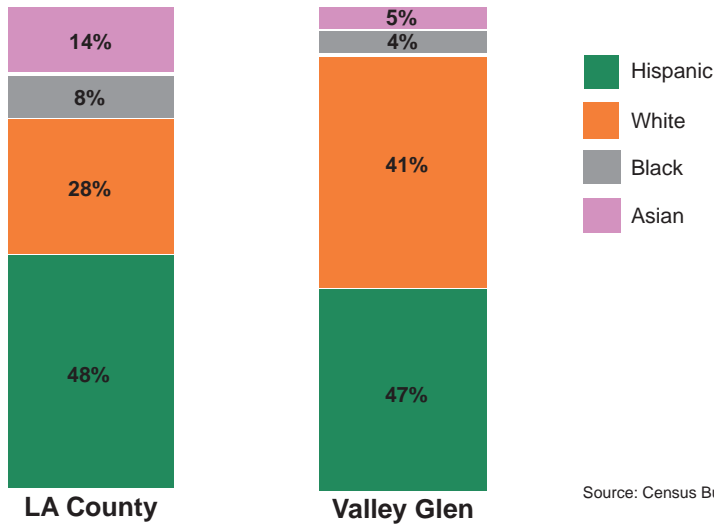
Census Bureau. www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/maps/2010tract.html

Demographic characteristics were modeled in Valley Glen based on Census and American Community Survey (ACS) data, available by census tract. Valley Glen is composed of 16 census tract numbers, which we overlaid onto the community's street grid. While the census tracts do not correspond perfectly with the street grid, they relate close enough that we can begin to describe the spatial distribution of community traits based on information available by census tract. The population of each census tract is as follows:

- 1233.03: 3,405
- 1233.04: 4,738
- 1234.20: 4,133
- 1235.10: 4,655
- 1235.20: 2,768
- 1236.01: 5,772
- 1236.02: 3,556
- 1237.00: 4,041
- 1238.00: 5,580
- 1239.02: 2,569
- 1244.00: 3,994
- 1245.00: 3,163
- 1281.01: 3,588
- 1282.20: 3,112
- 1286.01: 4,015
- 1286.02: 2,930

ETHNICITY

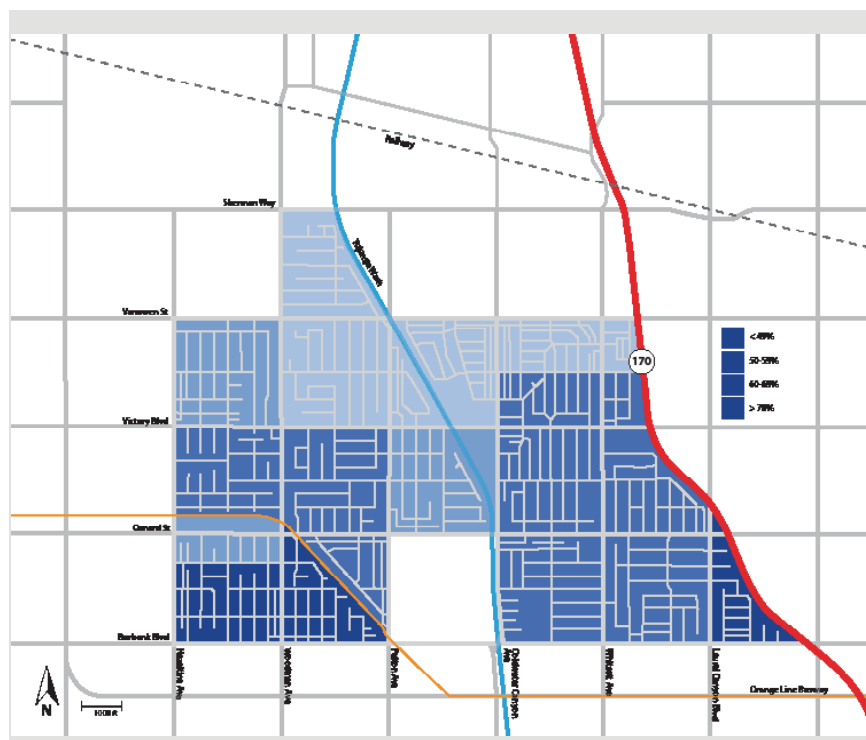
Ethnicity in Valley Glen and LA County



Distribution of Hispanic and White population

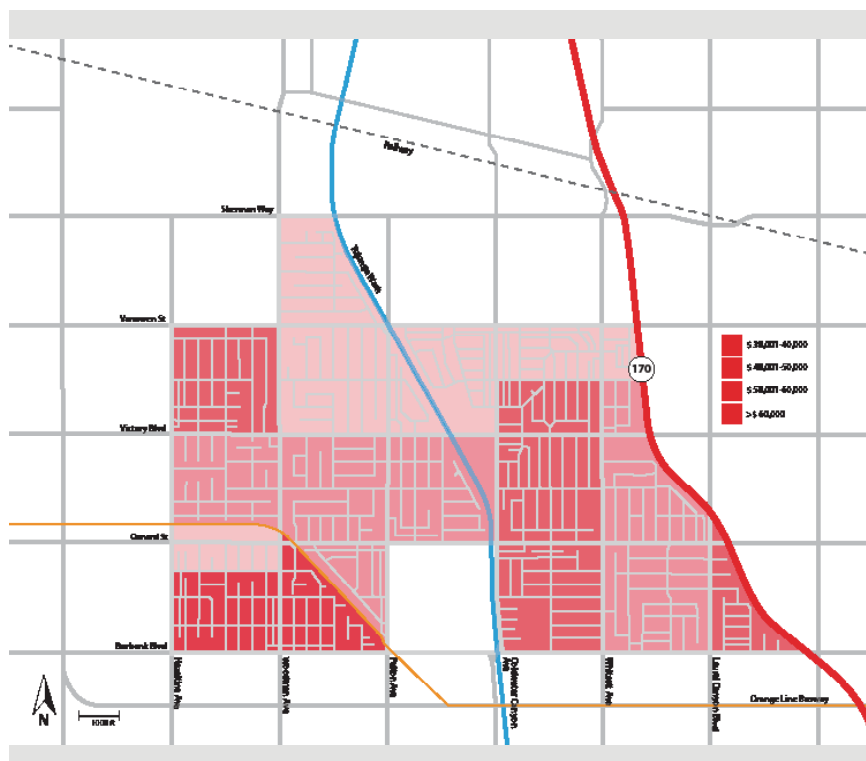
The ethnic composition of Valley Glen is 47% non-Hispanic White, 41% Hispanic, 5% Asian, and 4% African American. This composition is distinct from the Los Angeles County as a whole; Los Angeles County's Hispanic population is almost 50%, and White population is about 30%, while Valley Glen demonstrates a much higher White population and lower Hispanic population. In Valley Glen, the Hispanic population is higher in the northern part of community (averaging 56.2% of the population in northern Valley Glen.)

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



Residents in the southern part of Valley Glen tend to have higher educational attainment (measured as the proportion of residents over age 25 holding a Bachelor's degree) than residents in the northern part of Valley Glen.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



Educational attainment is closely correlated with household income: median household income also tends to be higher in the southern part of the community than in the northern part. The distribution of income may be a significant factor influencing residents' varying needs and interests.

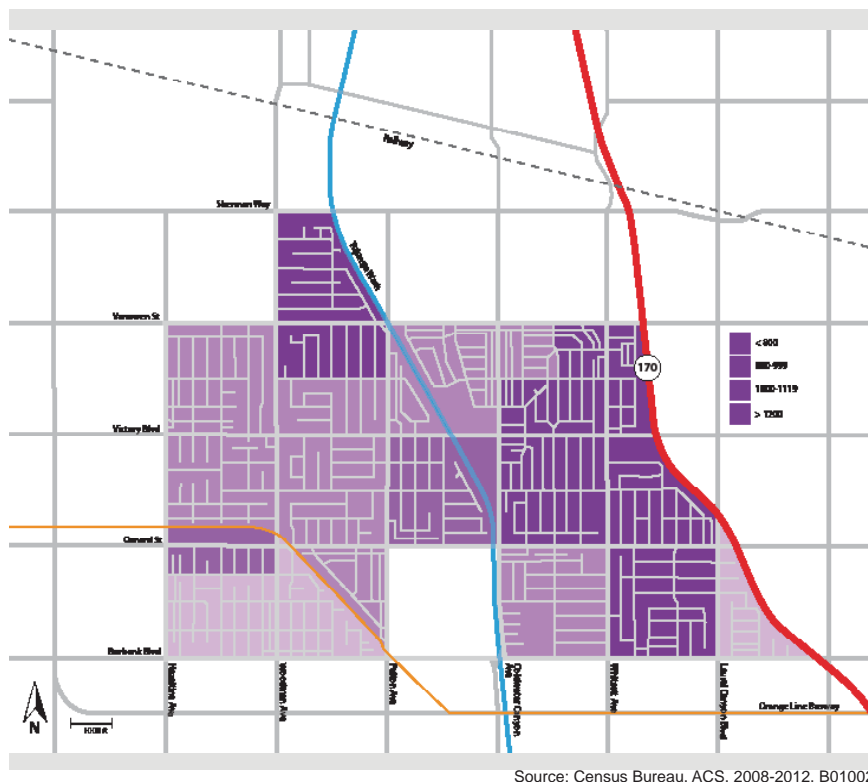
Source: ACS, 2008-2012, B19013, ACS, 2008-2012, S2301

MEDIAN AGE



The median age in Valley Glen is 37 years, slightly higher than country's median (34.8 years). This suggests that the community has a higher percentage of empty-nesters (adults with grown children) and seniors than the county as a whole.

YOUTH POPULATION



The youth population (defined as all residents under age 19) is slightly higher in the north-western part of the community than elsewhere. These areas may be designated as spaces with more family-based uses and needs.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE



Most of the tracts in Valley Glen have an average household size of about 2.5 people, which is comparable to the national average of 2.59. However, the tracts in the center of the community have notably higher average household sizes. Although large household size typically suggests families with young children, the tracts with the highest average household size correlate only loosely with the youth population, suggesting instead that households in these tracts may be intergenerational (grandparents, parents and children living in the same household).

CRIME: JANUARY 12 – JANUARY 26 2014



Within the 2-week period beginning Sunday, January 12, 2014 and ending Sunday, January 26, 2014, 51 crimes were reported in Greater Valley Glen. Most crimes were property crimes (theft, burglary), and occurred along thoroughfares. Valley Glen's six-month crime summary of 118.4 crimes per 10,000 people is lower than that of neighboring communities.

DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC SPACES



Source: Site Visit, 1/16/14; Google Maps, 2/4/14
LAUSD, Erwin Street Elementary Bell Schedule 2012-2013
<http://erwines-laUSD-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1320734845523/1113863518887422715.pdf>
Los Angeles Valley College, Visitors, <http://www.lavc.edu/visitors.html>

Public spaces (parks and schools) in Valley Glen serve as potential spaces for community programming or events. These spaces range in size from .09 acres to 200 acres, and serve a variety of uses. Most public space is clustered in a linear distribution in the center of the community, loosely aligned with the Tujunga Wash.

Public parks are open dawn to dusk and offer open space for community use. Public school campuses include facilities and open space possibly available for community uses outside of standard school and afterschool hours (7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.). Valley College currently offers public access to campus for concerts, performances, exhibits, athletic events, and community events, as well as community classes (on topics such as ESL, citizenship, business & careers, and exercise & fitness), and community resources (including a Family Resource Center and summer/winter camp for kids).

Map of Los Angeles showing the distribution of religious groups. The map includes a legend: purple dots for Christian groups, blue dots for Jewish groups, and orange dots for Other. Major roads like the 101, 10, 5, and 105 are shown. Numerous religious institutions are labeled, including the Church of Spiritual Technology, St. Paul Armenian Cathedral, and the Church of Scientology. A scale bar and north arrow are in the bottom left.

Google Maps, 1/27/14

Sources: Google Maps, 1/27/14
Yelp, 2/17/14

Sources: Gogle Maps, 1/27/14
Yelp, 2/17/14

CONCLUSION

- Two major ethnicity groups, White, 47 percent of total, and Hispanic who share 41 percent of total, tend to live separately by group: Hispanic group gathered in the northern part of community but White live more in southern area. A common community identity could be an effective tool to encourage groups to mingle.
- Educational attainment and household income are closely correlated and vary considerably across the community, and likely are foundational influences in residents' varying needs and interests.
- Combined demographic data suggests that households in the central part of the community may be more commonly intergenerational (grandparents, parents, and children living in the same household).
- Valley Glen residents can take pride in neighborhood safety: the community has a lower crime rate than surrounding neighborhoods, and most crimes are property crimes (non-violent) occurring along thoroughfares, demonstrating that the residential neighborhoods are very safe.
- Based on the prevalence of Jewish religious/spiritual institutions, Valley Glen seems to have a larger Jewish population than the national average, contributing to its unique social identity.
- Valley Glen has many sites of arts production, likely important community gathering spaces and sites of collective identity and creativity.
- Valley Glen already contains several core public gathering spaces, including parks and schools, which are linearly distributed in the center of the community (loosely aligned with the Tujunga Wash). These spaces may be key resources or starting points for community identity projects.

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES

1. Think strategically about the use and identity of existing community spaces (e.g. Valley Glen Community Park, Tujunga Wash Greenway, Valley College)
2. Highlight and enhance achievements in community safety
3. Celebrate intergenerational connections
4. Acknowledge and celebrate cultural multiplicity
5. Think strategically about the role of youth and schools in the community and its future

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES



Source: Crandall. "Movies in the Park 2010 Season," <http://www.carfreechicago.com/blog/614>
"Essex Daily News", <http://essexnewsdaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/SO-free-park-concert3-C.jpg>
"The Architects Newspaper", http://archpaper.com/uploads/03-CO_LAVC-118_Canfield.jpg
"Greater Valley Glen Council", <http://greatervalleyglencouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/sparcbridgenew01-thumb-630x360-67991-600x300.jpg>

1. Think strategically about the use and identity of existing community spaces (e.g. Valley Glen Community Park, Tujunga Wash Greenway, Valley College)

Valley Glen already contains several key community spaces, including the Valley Glen Community Park, Tujunga Wash Greenway, and Valley College. These spaces, which are centrally located in the community, have already been features of investment and community pride. In further developing community identity, these features could be strategically leveraged to engage residents in identity programming and expression.

Possible projects include: Regular programming or events in core public spaces to enhance and increase the visibility of community identity and allow the production of identity to be an ongoing collective process.

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES



Source: "People Street Website", <http://peoplest.lacity.org/l-a-s-pocket-parks-are-flourishing-supporters-say/>
"I Am Moving LA Website", <http://www.immovingtola.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/garrettmurray.jpg>
"Iowa Food & Fitness", <http://iowafoodandfitness.org/wegrow/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Postville-students-walk-to-school-on-October-3-2012.jpg>

2. Highlight and enhance achievements in community safety

With a lower crime rate than surrounding communities, Valley Glen is a comparatively safe community, a point of pride for many residents. As safety is already an acknowledged component of community identity, it could be further enhanced and elaborated as an element of identity projects.

Possible projects include: Celebrating and enhancing the community's "eyes on the street" through community or block-group interaction and events.

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES



Source: "Times Unions", <http://ww2.hdnux.com/photos/23/04/73/5000913/3/628x471.jpg>
"Virginia Tech News", https://www.vtnews.vt.edu/articles/2012/09/images/M_091112-clahs-jarrottandneighbors.jpg
"Living Branches", <http://www.livingbranches.org/filebin/images/lifeatlivingbranches-intergenerational-banner.jpg>
"Simple Living Institute", <http://www.simplelivinginstitute.org/kids-fest.html>

3. Celebrate intergenerational connections

The age range of Valley Glen residents spans the life cycle, and demographic data suggests that in some areas of the community, families may live in intergenerational households. These strong intergenerational relationships can be celebrated and enhanced through targeted identity and design efforts.

Possible projects include: Developing intergenerational public art projects celebrating the range of life and growth in the community.

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES



Source: Manecke, Kirt. "Ann Arbor Street Art Fair 2010," <http://www.carlsams.com/inthewoods/2010/07/ann-arbor-street-art-fair-2010-come-visit-carl-and-jean/>
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James Q. Jacobs, http://www.jqjacobs.net/photos/oregon/farmers_market.jpg

4. Acknowledge and celebrate cultural multiplicity

Valley Glen residents come from a wide variety of backgrounds, bringing together many cultural practices in art, food, and tradition that can be celebrated and shared. Creating a space for cultural sharing could engage residents in coming together to develop and express a unified community identity.

Possible projects include: Community events, such as farmers' markets, food festivals, art fairs, or religious celebrations, sharing the cuisine and/or cultural production of the community's various ethnic groups.

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES



Source: "YMCA of Columbia-Willamette", http://ymcacw.org/sites/default/files/styles/basic_page_banner_image/public/pages/Westside_Flag_Football_Boys_1_WEB_7.jpg
"Diversitat", http://www.diversitat.org.au/images/stories/Diversitat_News/bike%20ed.jpg

5. Think strategically about the role of youth and schools in the community and its future

Valley Glen contains 10 schools, both public and private. The students at these schools can be engaged to develop and express community identity, actively contributing to the future of home.

Possible projects include: Facilitating programming focused on community identity development and expression at schools or existing youth programs.

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Source: Winnie Fong. Feb 10, 2014

ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Valley Glen community consists primarily of residential and commercial land uses. The busy corridors of Burbank Blvd. and Victory Blvd. are lined with suburban strip malls and neighborhood centers. These strip malls face major arterials, and their parking lots cater to the automobile, making them far less inviting to pedestrians. There is a diversity in the styles and types of housing in Valley Glen. The community ranges from 1950s traditional valley ranch style single-family homes to flamboyant 1960s dingbat apartment complexes. Multi-family homes align major corridors, such as Burbank Blvd., and Fulton Blvd., whereas the smaller and intimate quaint single-family homes are tucked within the quiet cul-de-sacs throughout the community.

SHOPPING CENTERS

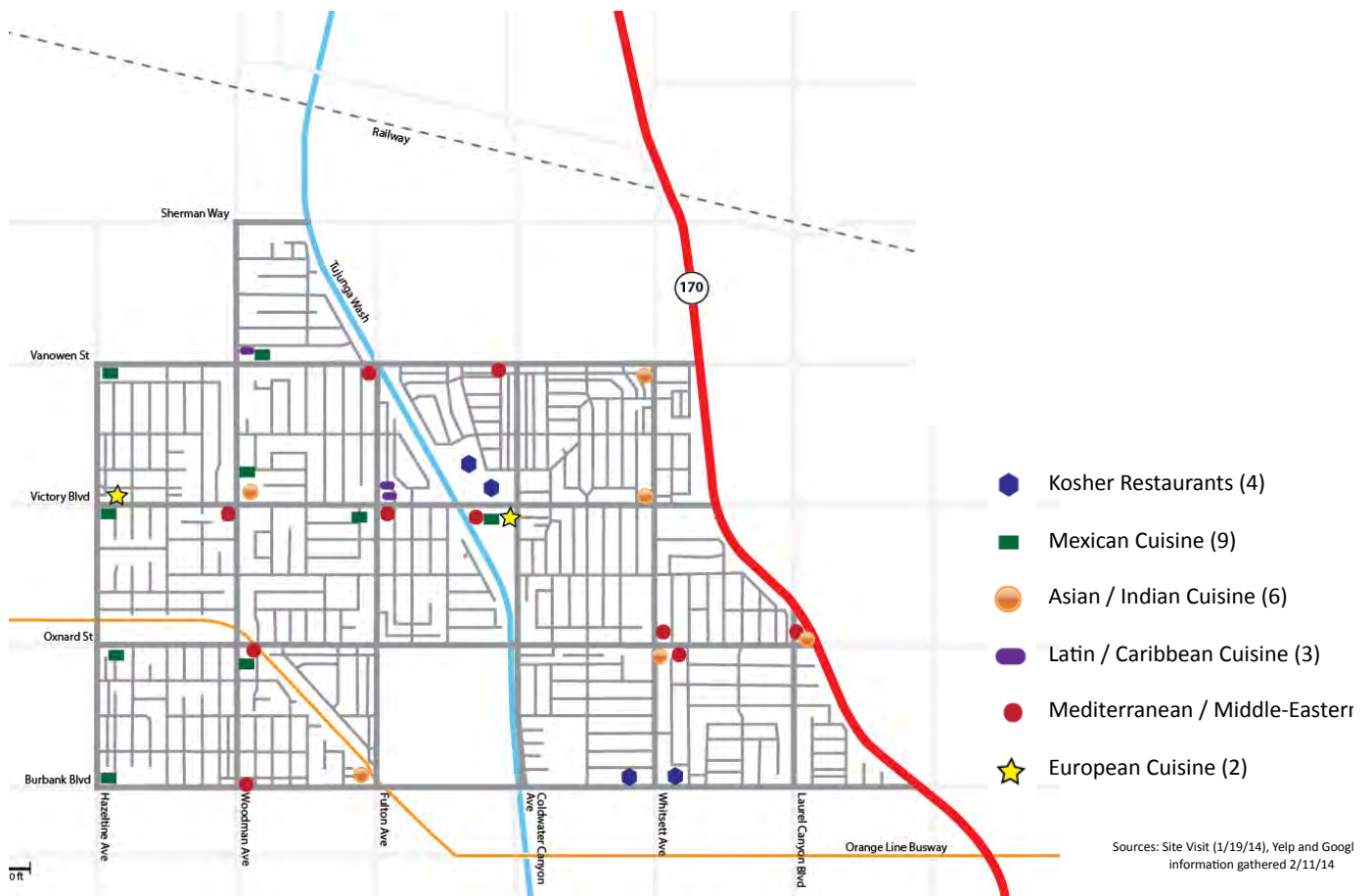


Valley Glen's commercial corridors, especially Victory Boulevard, are filled with shopping centers. Many of the tenant shops, stores, and restaurants, within these shopping centers offer valuable services to the residents of Valley Glen, but unfortunately the design of most of the strip malls and neighborhood centers currently does little to create a memorable identity. The creation of unified signage or design elements along these commercial corridors would help residents and visitors understand when they're in Valley Glen as well as make the shopping centers more attractive to the eye.

Takeaway

There are 45 shopping centers in Valley Glen and 1 power center, the Victory Plaza. Nearly every commercial intersection is dominated by shopping centers. Nearly all commercial activity takes place along the major thoroughfares, which is unfortunate because these roads that most visitors see as they drive through Valley Glen, little intervention of the shopping center design helps people identify with Valley Glen or distinguish it from neighboring communities.

ETHNIC RESTAURANTS



An astounding 34 ethnic restaurants are located in Valley Glen. While this is very telling of the community's welcoming attitude, many of them are unfortunately hidden in strip malls that don't do much to attract the eye or help visitors and residents identify with the neighborhood. Creating a unifying design among the strip malls would help the restaurants "pop" a bit more, making them memorable and helping visitors and passersby remember Valley Glen's fantastic variety in cuisine.

Takeaway

There are 34 ethnic restaurants in the community, speaking to Valley Glen's diversity. The majority of these ethnic restaurants are located in strip malls and other shopping centers along the neighborhoods commercial streets. Capitalizing on the wide array of cuisines available in the neighborhood could help Valley Glen develop a reputation for catering to people of all backgrounds.

FOOD ACCESS



As the diagram shows, there are portions of Valley Glen, particularly the southwestern area of the neighborhood, that doesn't have easy access to full supermarkets or grocery stores. Even worse, with the prevalence of fast food in the area, it is often more convenient for residents to get fast food than go shopping and cook for themselves. With the exception of the Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Market located just north of the boundaries of Greater Valley Glen, most of the Grocery Stores are surrounded by parking lots. The construction of more grocery stores and supermarkets within a pedestrian-oriented development (perhaps near the stops on the Orange Line, where food access is a problem) would be much more helpful in helping residents and visitors identify Valley Glen.

Takeaway

While there are a number of small markets, liquor stores, and convenience stores in Valley Glen, there are only 3 full supermarkets. Most residents need to drive out of the area to Van Nuys, North Hollywood, or Valley Village to get all of their groceries in one stop. The southwest areas of Valley Glen are particularly isolated in terms of food access.

FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS



The fast food restaurants are located at very visible spots within Valley Glen, often at busy commercial intersections. This means that fast food restaurants may be what visitors passing through Valley Glen in their cars remember once they leave, contributing to the neighborhood's lack of distinguishable identity. Exacerbating this problem, there are a number of fast food restaurants near Valley College and the Tujunga Wash, two of Valley Glen's greatest sources of pride. Keeping fast food away from the community's main attractions would ensure that visitors to the Wash and Valley College remember the area in a positive light.

Takeaway

There is no dearth of fast food in Valley Glen, with 8 chain fast food restaurants within the neighborhood's boundaries. Fast food is perhaps too easy an option for families on a budget, considering there are only 3 full supermarkets in the neighborhood, and healthier restaurants may be too expensive. Furthermore, fast food restaurants only add to the car-dominated culture of Valley Glen, and most locations are an eyesore. This hinders Valley Glen's ability to create a recognizable identity.

RETAIL PROPERTY FOR LEASE



The main corridors of Valley Glen, such as Burbank, Oxnard, Victory, and Vanowen, are characterized by strip malls that house various personal services and ethnic restaurants. According to Loopnet, Valley Glen appears to experience low rates of vacancy. As of February 2014, there were a total of 14 commercial property available for lease listed in Loopnet. These retail spaces range between less than 1,000 to 2,000 square feet. Most of the available retail property for lease are located along the heavy corridors, such as Victory Blvd., and in strip malls. There are a lot of vacancies in the Victory Plaza Power Center. These spaces may remain vacant as the entire site has been acquired by the real estate investment company Kennedy Wilson with plans for redevelopment. Therefore, these vacancies were not reflected in this map.

Takeaway

The low vacancy rates signifies that there is demand for commercial activity in this area and these businesses appear to be performing well and are adequately serving the community. It also does not appear that there are any new commercial development project in the pipeline, with the exception of the pending development plans for the Victory Plaza Power Center.

RETAIL LEASE RATES PER SQUARE FEET



The strip center rates are slightly higher compared to the rest of the Los Angeles County. According to Collier's 4th Quarter Retail Report for the Los Angeles County, the average asking lease rate for strip centers is \$1.60 square feet per month. There are 3 retail properties which rates are over \$3 per square feet, whereas the majority of the other properties are leasing at a rate between \$1.00 and \$2.99 based on Loopnet.

Takeaway

The lease rates are higher in Valley Glen compared to the rest of the Los Angeles County. This shows that one of Valley Glen's greatest assets is the commercial corridors. Valley Glen should continue to strengthen its corridor through infrastructure and landscape improvements to welcome patrons from residents within the community as well as others from outside of the community. Though, the area should acknowledge that high lease rates may drive potential businesses to other parts of the valley where rates are lower.

PERSONAL SERVICE AMENITIES



Valley Glen is a one-stop shop for people to complete their errands, such as beauty services, exercising, and picking up the dry-cleaning along the major corridors of Burbank and Victory at busy intersections, which may make these establishments within walking distance from the surrounding residential areas if the streets were more pedestrian-friendly, such as offering more shaded trees and wider sidewalks. Most of these businesses are locally-owned and are situated within a strip center of a neighborhood center. There is only one power center in Valley Glen, which houses a major super market and a large fitness center.

Takeaway

The large amount of personal service businesses may mean that people come to Valley Glen and stay temporarily and they do not linger around the area after their errands are complete. Valley Glen should strategize if this is the identity it wants to continue to pursue or develop a new strategy to encourage people to congregate and stay in the area longer through more amenities associated with social gathering.

APARTMENTS FOR RENT



Many of the apartments for rent have 1-2 bedrooms. There are relatively few studios for rent. As the shaded area indicates, apartments for rent are often clustered. It might be an opportunity to create some public art within the clustered shaded areas to build a welcoming atmosphere, perhaps attracting more tenants and creating images characteristic of Valley Glen.

Takeaway

Many of the apartment for rent are 1-2 bedrooms. There are relatively few studios for rent. As the shaded area indicates, apartments for rent are often clustered. It might be an opportunity to create some public arts within the clustered areas to build a welcoming atmosphere in order to attract more tenants and the character of Valley Glen.

HOUSES FOR RENT



There are not many houses for rent in Valley Glen. 3 bedroom houses are the most popular type. They are more closely distributed between Victory Boulevard and Oxnard Street to the west of Valley Glen. In spite of the scarcity of houses for rent, we could work on properties within the shaded area to make it more people friendly, more beautiful and more welcoming to connect the tenants to the community as well as adding to a distinguishable identity.

Takeaway

There are not many houses for rent in Valley Glen. 3 bedroom houses are the most popular type. They are closely distributed between Victory Blvd and Oxnard St to the west of Valley Glen. In spite of the scarcity of homes for rent, we could work on the shaded areas to make it more people-friendly, more beautiful, and more welcoming to connect the tenant as well as adding characteristics to Valley Glen.

MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING



Takeaway: The prices of multi-family houses do not vary greatly per unit. Most of them are between 2-6 units, which offers good opportunity for families to live nearby and get to know each other. There are relatively few houses with over 10 units and these are located near or outside the border of Valley Glen. There is potential for Valley Glen to create an identity of small multi-family friendly houses neighborhood known for being close with your next-doors.

Takeaway

The prices of multi-family houses do not vary greatly per unit. Most of them are between 2-6 units, which offers an opportunity for families to get to know one another. There are relatively few houses with over 10 units, which are located near or outside of the Valley Glen border. There is potential for to create an identity of small multi-family friendly houses neighborhood that is known for a tight knit community.

HOUSES FOR SALE



The most popular type of condos have 2-3 bedrooms with 2-3 bathrooms. Victory Boulevard has the largest number of condos for sale. Easy access to restaurants and supermarkets along Victory Boulevard might contribute to the popularity of condos. We could further illustrate the characteristics of Victory Boulevard to create identity in Valley Glen.

Takeaway

The most popular type of condos are 2-3 bedrooms with 2-3 bathrooms. Victory Blvd has the largest number of condo distributions. Easy access to restaurants and supermarkets along Victory Blvd might contribute to the popularity of condos. We could further illustrate the characteristics of Victory Blvd to create an identity for Valley Glen.

Findings and Conclusion

The amount of ethnic restaurants in the neighborhood shows that the community embraces its diversity. The implementation of design standards along the neighborhood's major commercial corridors could help the shopping centers—and the ethnic restaurants they house—more noticeable. The tendency of fast-food restaurants to locate in the most visible areas of the neighborhood ensure that visitors remember them when they leave, which is not a good sign. What should be the most memorable to visitors are the community's warm and welcoming nature, the wide variety of foliage, and of course, the people. Valley Glen should capitalize on the area within and surrounding the Victory Plaza Shopping Center. The location is a key area, which includes one of the entrances to the Tujunga Wash Greenway. Depending on the future plans of the Victory Plaza, Valley Glen should take steps to open up the developments surrounding the Wash to make it more visible. While this is a long-term investment, beginning to improve the aesthetics of the Wash before opening it up could be very beneficial in helping the community develop a distinguishable identity.

Opportunities

1. Signage

The numerous shopping centers in Valley Glen seem to have little coherency with each other or any other aspects of the neighborhood's build environment. Creating some sort of consistency would help Valley Glen become more identifiable to residents and visitors alike. Create a business district to develop new signs and make them consistent for the strip malls along Burbank Blvd. and Victory Blvd. to let visitors know they are in the Valley Glen area. Additionally, street lights and lamp posts could be adorned with banners along major corridors. Banners will display the Valley Glen's name, logo, and tagline, showing a sense of pride in the community.

2. Reinventing the Strip Mall

Valley Glen is an auto-centric neighborhood, which is unfortunate because the residents have so much to offer. Cars seem to be much more visible than people along the major commercial corridors. Reinvent the ubiquitous strip malls by adding landscaping, and take out a few parking spaces for outdoor seatings for the local restaurants as a way for patrons to congregate longer in the area.

3. International Food Hall

The high number of ethnic restaurants in Valley Glen indicate that the area is becoming a hotspot for international cuisine that may not be as readily available in other neighborhoods in Los Angeles. This provides an opportunity for the community to exhibit something about itself that sets it apart from neighboring communities. Identify an area of underutilized retail space or parking and encourage the establishment of ethnic restaurants, markets, and businesses in the center, creating a "hub" of different cultures.

4. Valley Glen Ethnic Food Festival

The number of ethnic restaurants in Valley Glen also speaks to the neighborhood's receptive attitude towards different cultures. The creation of an ethnic food festival to celebrate the diversity of the community would attract patrons both from within the community and outside of it. The neighborhood can invite local establishments to participate in the festival to showcase their food. At the same time, this will give Valley Glen the opportunity to build a reputation as a community catering to many different cultures. We envision the event to take place along a street temporarily closed down to vehicular traffic, if possible, so as to be as visible as possible.

5. Community Sharing Station

People from different backgrounds and ethnic groups are living together in rent or bought houses where they are physically closely related to each other. In order to celebrate the cultural and ethnic diversity and increase harmony in Valley Glen, we want to enhance the interpersonal connection and communication between neighbors. Valley Glen can set up several information stations in the neighborhoods where people can put up a notice, a thank you note, ask for help, post short anecdotes, etc. That way people have a platform to share information and have further interaction and understanding about each other in the near neighborhoods.



Liu, Kaili. "Residential Neighborhood", Photo, Jan 17, 2014.

MOBILITY | GETTING TO, AND AROUND, VALLEY GLEN

INTRODUCTION

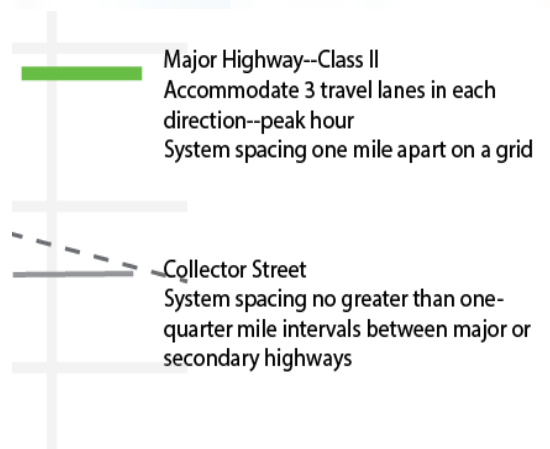
Mobility addresses the capacity to travel to and from destinations in a safe, efficient, and comfortable way. Currently, Valley Glen is a very vehicle-oriented community aimed at preserving a high quality of life for its residents. Creating a network of well-connected paths and convenient transit options will support community safety, health, and leisure. Furthermore, looking at mobility and place-making holistically in Valley Glen will allow for the minimization of intrusive traffic and nuisance in well-maintained residential corridors that are set apart from the major vehicular paths. Elements of mobility that are relevant to these goals are overall circulation, pedestrian-friendliness, public transit, biking, and parking. In order to address the identity of Valley Glen, mobility as a means to achieve accessible destinations--whether they are visual and historical landmarks, social and recreational activity nodes, or places to give and receive services--is important to convey the values of the neighborhood to the larger community.

Citation:
 Los Angeles classification system; <http://planning.lacity.org/PolicyInitiatives/Mobility%20and%20Transportation/LA%20Street%20Classification%20Final%20Report%20October%202010.pdf>
 Valley Glen: <http://valleyglen.org/map>
 Los Angeles City: <http://trafficinfo.lacity.org>
 Last Updated: 01/25/2014 23:02:12



CIRCULATION SYSTEM

The Valley Glen is well served by a circulation system of highways and collector streets. Like the rest area of United States, roads in the Valley Glen are arranged in the grid system, providing better access to anywhere in the community. In addition, the community addresses existing conditions of safety and maintenance occurring along major corridors, alleys and street ends. The lighting system along the streets can provide the basic needs for pedestrians and vehicles, but it also needs to promote. With a good lighting system, it can ensure the safety of the public. While there is a good circulation system in the Valley Glen, it still needs to reflect the specific needs of a community and its built environment, such as effectively addressing parking enforcement in residential areas.



WALKING

Walkability is an important concern for community health, neighborhood safety and accessibility, and quality of life which reflect many aspects of this Valley Glen. Factors that contribute to improved walkability include features of the built environment, such as sidewalk capacity and road connectivity, as well as design characteristics which includes visible crosswalks, legible signage and appropriate landscaping. According to Walk Score, a third-party source which determines walkability induces, Valley Glen ranks as the 45th most walkable neighborhood in the City of Los Angeles with a score of 63 (on a scale of 0 - 100 where 100 is the most walkable). Having a pedestrian-friendly environment renders the neighborhood more pleasant and safe, especially in areas where there is high vehicular traffic or little lighting. The abundance of trees and landscaping in most residential areas is salient as it contributes to shading against strong sunlight and plentiful space for those who walking and may own dogs. Walking is also an important facet in promoting public and environmental health, especially given the number of cars, amount of parking, and importance of ecological longevity for trees and other natural features contained within Valley Glen.



Ahn, Esther. "Valley College quad." Photo. Feb 8, 2014.



Ahn, Esther. "Incomplete sidewalk." Photo. Feb 8, 2014.

PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

Both private and public enterprises can help provide a more walkable neighborhood by contributing various amenities that enhance the pedestrian experience. Certain pedestrian-friendly policies include the implementation of shade-producing trees, outdoor furniture and adequate lighting, while other features can be more design-related such as visible crosswalks, on large streets especially, and signage to signal caution to drivers and bikers where there may be high foot traffic. The inclusion of pedestrian amenities not only promotes community health and vitality, but also creates a pleasant visual appearance which lends to a safer environment and the perception of such. Valley Glen strives to amplify its visual character while also protecting residents from crime and vandalism, thus the integration of pedestrian amenities can serve these multiple goals of the neighborhood.



Ahn, Esther. "Outdoor furniture at Community Park." Photo. Jan 25, 2014.



SIDEWALKS & CONNECTIVITY

On a larger scale, accessibility for pedestrians via sidewalks and crosswalks to and from destinations is an important consideration for ensuring a complete and cohesive neighborhood. It is common to see sidewalks and paved paths embedded in the neighborhood, but there are opportunities to enhance the walkability further in order to amplify the larger goals of safety, sustainability, and tranquility which characterize the neighborhood. Places for community gathering and other services should be convenient to engage with, which can be accomplished with well-connected streets and pathways. While much of the residential areas of Valley Glen are planned to be quite secluded to maintain a quiet and undisturbed environment, streets should be navigable in order to easily way find and access key locations, such as schools and parks, in addition to major arterials for those who need to reach commercial areas. Although residents of Valley Glen are largely vehicle-dependent, parking areas and transit nodes, which includes freeway ramps and public transportation stations, should intuitively connect to other functioning pathways for travel. Furthermore, obstructions of existing streets and sidewalks should be mitigated in order to provide clear view corridors and practical usage.



Ahn, Esther. Photo. Feb 8, 2014.

A unique stone sidewalk lines the front of a property in the residential area. This design promotes walkability as well as visual character that can be indicators of identity for residents and visitors alike.



Ahn, Esther. Photo. Feb 8, 2014.

Diverse vegetation fills the spacious front yard of a residential property which creates an impressionable visual quality, but the public space lacks sidewalks for pedestrians to safely cross without walking on the natural landscape.



Ahn, Esther. "The Sidewalk", Photo, Jan 17.2014



Ahn, Esther, "The Road", Photo, Jan 17.2014



Yuanyuan, Bian. "The Sidewalk", Photo, Jan 17.2014



Kailli, Liu "The Sidewalk", Photo, Jan 17.2014

In some areas, the quality of sidewalks needs repair and maintenance. Streetscaping can help achieve this, in addition to features that consider existing public transit options.



BIKING

Biking is an important mode of transportation for its practical, health-related, and mobility benefits. Though there are many streets and alleys in Valley Glen, bike lanes do not exist on the main streets. According to the map, the existing bike lanes are concentrated at Burbank Boulevard and Woodman Avenue which are the boundaries of Valley Glen.

Currently, there are three types of commuter bikeways in Valley Glen:

- Bike Path - off-street shared-use path for bicycles and pedestrians.
- Bike Lane - on-street striped and signed dedicated travel lane for bicycles.
- Bike Route - on-street travel lane shared by bicyclists and other vehicular traffic.

Whether for traveling to certain destinations or simply for recreation and exercise, biking occurs on shared roads, so the safety of all involved parties is a significant concern under the topic of mobility. The designation of bike paths, which exist minimally at present in Valley Glen, is one common way to address these considerations. These dedicated bike lanes can be delineated with various kinds of signage, or with particular colors, symbols, and lines drawn on the road. The designs of such bike-friendly elements can reflect the identity of Valley Glen, and the collective attention to issues regarding bicycle safety is in line with the neighborhood's core values promoting safety, quality of life, and principles of sustainability.



In Valley Glen, bus stops are located at the junctions of streets, increasing accessibility for the public. These local lines can satisfy the needs of commuters in Valley Glen.



There are very few bike lanes in major streets. Bike lanes can create safety benefits to road users by separating the spaces. It also can encourage people to ride a bike when they leave their homes.

FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

Circulation System:

- A typical grid street system, making people know the direction easily.
- The Valley Glen is well served by a circulation system of highways and collector streets.

Walking:

- Wide sidewalks and street, as well as large block sizes, make walking as a mode for short trips inconvenient.
- Consequently, most people do not walk, and drive or take the bus instead.
- Some residential areas lack sidewalks entirely while others are not well-maintained or obstructed which disincentivizes walking.
- The complex network of residential pathways further discourages walking to and from local destinations.
- Local residents who do walk, for leisure or for taking their dogs out, do so at the Valley Glen Community Park.

Biking:

- The primary bike lane is along the Metro Orange Line path.
- There are minimal designated bike lanes and existing ones are not well-connected.

Public Transit:

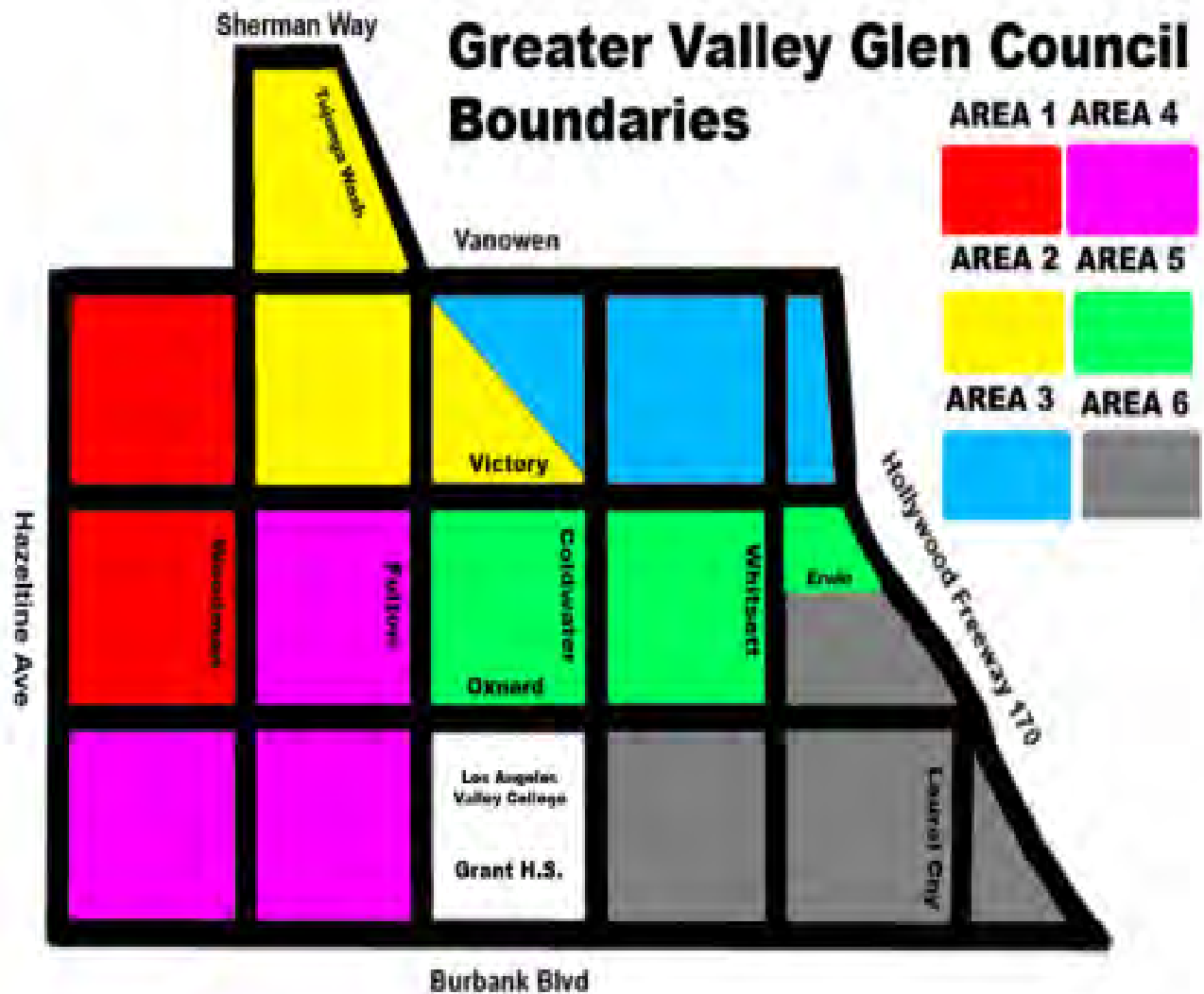
- A convenient public transportation system exists for people to commute within Valley Glen.
- The current system of public transit is insufficient to provide connections with the nodes and landmarks that define the Valley Glen community.

Parking:

- There is abundant surface parking available in Valley Glen, and street parking is also convenient.
- Existing parking structures are difficult to find and not well-maintained, so very few people use them.
- Some of the strip malls are vacant, leading to empty store fronts and unused space in retail surface parking.
- Schools own large surface-parking, but require permits for people to use them. Because they are not publicly accessible, the expansive space used for this private parking may be underutilized.

5 BEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR IDENTITY:

1. Organize Street Fixtures to Coordinate Multi-Modal Transportation
2. Ensure Pleasant and Well-Maintained Environments for Pedestrians
3. Designate Safe Areas for Bicyclists to Protect All Road-Users
4. Enhance Connections from Public Transit to Important Local Destinations
5. Utilize Overabundant Parking Space for Identity-Enhancing Programming



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REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT | COMMUNITY PLANS & PROGRAMS

There are several existing regulatory conditions that impact Valley Glen's natural and built environment. From citywide plans and policies like the City's General Plan and local ordinance, to local plans, such as the Los Angeles Valley College Facilities Master Plan Update, the community has a significant regulatory framework that guides current and future development in Valley Glen. In addition, there are several existing programs and potential partnerships that the community can use to leverage its resources to implement community improvement and beautification projects. The plans, policies and programs that currently shape the regulatory constraints and opportunities of the community's identity are included in this chapter.

EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES

The following is a list of important plans and policies identified that impact the identity of Valley Glen:

1. City of Los Angeles' General Plan and Zoning Code
2. Recent City Ordinances (including murals, farmers' markets, sign regulations, bicycle spaces, alternative paving materials and solar zoning)
3. Community Plans: Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks and North Hollywood-Valley Village
5. Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC) Facilities Master Plan Update

GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING CODE

Over the next year, the City will be working on their General Plan Update and will be developing a new Mobility Element, and adding a new chapter on health and wellness to bring together land use decisions and public health. The mobility element will be updated to implement policies that will help shift the predominantly auto-centric city to a transit-oriented, pedestrian-friendly city (What's Happening in Planning 2013).

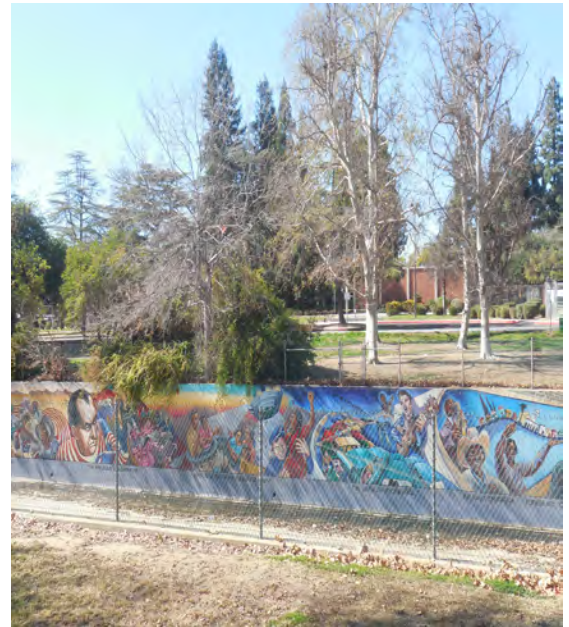
Along with the General Plan update, the City is embarking on a 5-year project referred to as Re:Code LA, that will be culling exemplary policies from existing specific and community plans, and applying them citywide to create a new Zoning Code for Los Angeles. The new Code will be more comprehensive, more user-friendly, and more-properly oriented toward the type of development that will improve quality of life in the twenty-first century.

RECENT CITY ORDINANCES

Over the past two years, nine newly adopted code ordinances have been processed by code studies. These ordinances include **bicycle spaces** to improve bicycle parking, **alternative-paving materials** and **solar zoning** to improve environmental sustainability, core findings and multiple approvals to improve legibility of planning and development process, CUP of FAR averaging and downtown mixed use exception to encourage the development of mixed-use development downtown, modified parking requirements to allow flexibility of parking requirements and the shopping cart containment to deter the removal of shopping carts from the establishment. In addition, the planning commission and the Planning and Land Use Management Committee (PLUM) have adopted the following ordinances that are expected to be approved by council: **sign regulations**, **farmers' markets** to expand access to healthy food, and **murals** to encourage the prevalence of murals. The Valley Glen area can benefit from the application of several of these ordinances to new design interventions in the area including the murals, farmers' markets, sign regulations, bicycle spaces, alternative paving materials and solar zoning (What's Happening in Planning 2013).



<http://greatervalleyglencouncil.org>



Oustad, Courtney, Feb. 1, 2014

Opportunities

- Public health should be used to inform land use decisions
- The City values interventions that increase opportunities for multi-modal mobility
- A new zoning code will elevate the regulatory standards and encourage better planning and development decisions
- New ordinances can be used as a tool to build the community's identity

COMMUNITY PLANS

The City has been in the process of updating its 35 Community Plans, and as of now, five of the 35 community plans have been updated. The two community plans in the Valley Glen area, North Hollywood-Valley Village and Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks have not yet been slated for updates. The North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plan was last updated in 1996 and the Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks Community Plan was last updated in 1998. Although these community plans have not been updated recently, they highlight community values that can be used to inform Valley Glen's community identity.

North Hollywood-Valley Village Community Plan Values (Community Plan 1996):

- "To preserve the stable single-family residential neighborhoods"
- "To encourage open space for recreational uses for the enjoyment of both local residents and persons throughout the Los Angeles region"
- "Providing neighborhood park and recreational facilities"
- "Ensure appropriate transitions between commercial (mixed use) and adjoining uses, especially residential"
- "To encourage the expansion and improvement of public transportation service"

Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks Community Plan Values (Community Plan 1998):

- "Protect existing stable single family and low density residential neighborhoods from encroachment by higher density residential and other incompatible uses"
- "Addition, expansion and/or improvement of needed local parks throughout the Community should be accelerated"
- "Establish appropriate transitions between commercial (mixed use) and adjoining uses, especially residential"
- "Need to improve transportation mode linkages between Metrolink future Red Line and bus system to develop a transportation network of activity center"



https://www.rentawreck.com/raw_images/northhollywood.jpg



http://www.yelp.com/biz_photos/valley-glen-community-park-los-angeles?select=VPtZuqH4rIK4bSxoBBd1fg#VPtZuqH4rIK4bSxoBBd1fg

Opportunities

- Preserving the residential character of the neighborhood is important to the community.
- There is a need for more open space in the community.
- The community values a multi-modal mobility structure.

LAVC FACILITIES MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC) has been viewed as an important treasure of Greater Valley Glen community. Throughout so many years, it kept serving the community as an educational leader, to facilitate the success of its students, to cultivate the life-long learners, to develop the critical thinkers (LAVC Master Plan Updates, 2010). More importantly, it contributes the diversity and economic vitality of the San Fernando Valley and beyond.

In 2001, 2003, and 2008, the voters of Los Angeles approved the passage of Proposition A/AA/J, which began the revitalization of LAVC (LAVC Master Plan Updates, 2010). Under the guidelines of LAVC's Facilities Master Plan, LAVC began a decade of renovation and construction to improve its facilities for future generations of students.

Throughout the decade, the LAVC Facilities Master Plan has kept updating, and the latest version is 2010's. One highlight of the latest version is the proposal of The Sustainable Park (Sustainable Mall), which will serve as the link to the academic and athletic zones within the campus (LAVC Master Plan Updates, 2010). This area will become a new green spot to the campus – with lots of native and drought tolerant plants. The park will provide an open space for students and community to gather, and strengthen the connection between the campus and the community (LAVC Master Plan Updates, 2010).

The Sustainable Mall focuses on regional natural and sustainable technologies. Currently the campus storm water and runoff drains run directly into the Tujunga Wash, which without any treatment (LAVC Master Plan Updates, 2010). This will exacerbate the water quality of the wash. In the LAVC Master Plan 2010 Updates, it proposed to unearth the storm water system, and creates the Valley College Creek, which will run from the north end of the campus to Tujunga Wash (LAVC Master Plan Updates, 2010). The new system will seek to treat and infiltrate all stormwater, to make it environmental friendly to Tujunga Wash.



<https://zh.airbnb.com/locations/los-angeles/valley-glen>



http://www.lavc.edu/revitalizingvalley/docs/LAVC_Facilities_Master_Plan_2010_Update.pdf

Opportunities

- The LAVC plan update can be used as a model for sustainable projects in Valley Glen.
- Valley Glen can seek to enhance and/or extend the Sustainable Mall beyond the campus.
- The proposed creek can extend the existing greenbelt along Tujunga Wash and provide more green space for the community.

EXISTING PROGRAMS & POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

The following is a list of important programs and partnerships identified that impact the area of Valley Glen:

1. Million Trees LA
2. Matching Grants: Community Beautification Program
3. Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan
4. Metro TOD Grants

Million Trees LA (MTLA)

The Million Trees LA (MTLA) is a public-private partnership organization between the City of Los Angeles, local non-profit organizations, community groups, residents and business (MTLA Website). The mission of MTLA is to improve Los Angeles' urban forest and leave a living legacy for future generation (MTLA Website). In MTLA, there are several free tree programs, which can benefit the community:

- Plant Trees in Your Yard: The residents who live or own the property within the City of Los Angeles are eligible to receive up to 7 free shade trees from MTLA in their yard (MTLA Website).
- Fruit Tree Adoption Events: The residents in City of Los Angeles can receive a fruit tree from MTLA to plant in the yard through the adoption events, which hosted by MTLA (MTLA Website).
- Parkway Tree: Los Angeles City residents are eligible to accept trees planted by MTLA in the parkway (MTLA Website).

Matching Grants: Community Beautification Program

The Neighborhood Council Community Beautification Program is an opportunity provided by Council District 2, for the Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood Council to come up with ideas to propose for small neighborhood beautification projects. The maximum award per fiscal year is \$10,000 and can be broken up into several projects. The project will fund physical and public facing beautification projects such as landscaping, signage, and benches (CD 2 website).



<http://www.milliontreesla.org/mtabout3.htm>



<http://marygrovealumnineews.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/campus-beautification-day-mark3.jpg>



<http://cd2news.tumblr.com/post/73547361796/ncbeautification>

Opportunities

- MTLA can be used as a tool to plant trees where they are needed or desired
- MTLA can also be used for community building activities
- MTLA can be used as an educating tool for sustainable development and the importance of the natural environment

Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan

The Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan (LARRMP) is a collection of over two decades worth of research aimed at revitalizing the Los Angeles River and its watershed. The plan also looks to green neighborhoods and capture community opportunities and value by making the river a focus of community activities and family gatherings. The plan calls for project sites along the river that create new parks and open space, bike and hiking trails, the creation of bridges and various street improvements to improve pedestrian accessibility and safety along the river (LA River website).

Of the nine identified project areas in the LARRMP the Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood Council can focus on sites 3: Sepulveda Basin to Tujunga Wash and 4: Tujunga Wash to Barham Blvd. as they are the closest to the community. Although the Tujunga Wash portion that runs through the Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood Council is outside of the boundary of the sites identified in the LARRMP there is still plenty of opportunity for the council to engage decision makers to consider adding portions of the Tujunga Wash that run through the Greater Valley Glen Neighborhood Council into a smaller project area. The non-profits that are engaged in the LARRMP are also excellent resources for the council to engage for smaller beautification projects.

Metro TOD Grants

The city has received over \$7.5 million from Metro Measure R grant funds and will be used to help prepare Transit Neighborhood Plans (TNP) for 24 stations (What's Happening in Planning 2013). There are two stations in close proximity to Valley Glen that are slated for TNPs, including Van Nuys and North Hollywood. This may create opportunities to link certain corridors and/or nodes in Valley Glen with these future TOD sites along the orange rapid transit line (below).



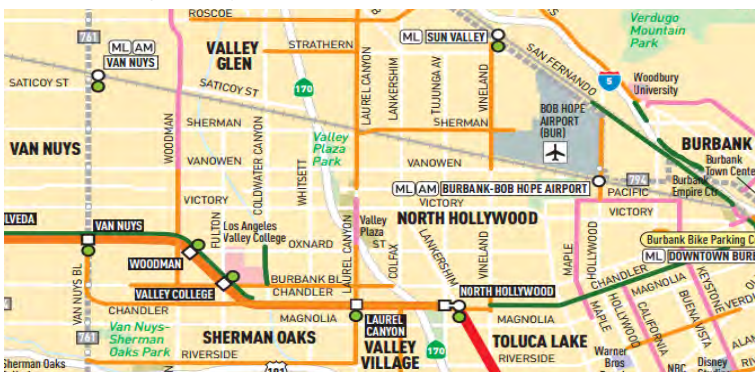
<http://boe.lacity.org/larivermp/CommunityOutreach/pdf/Workshop%20Introductory%20Boards/Study%20Area.pdf>



<http://boe.lacity.org/larivermp/CommunityOutreach/pdf/Workshop%20Introductory%20Boards/Project%20Purpose.pdf>

Opportunities

- There are many programs and partnerships that currently operate within the Valley Glen area that can be used to leverage local transit and/or beautification projects.
- Transit and beautification projects can both greatly benefit the community and strengthen the identity of Valley Glen.



<http://www.metro.net/riding/maps/orange-line/>

FINDINGS & OPPORTUNITIES FOR IDENTITY

The diagram below identifies the locations in the Valley Glen community where the regulatory conditions currently have or potentially have the most impact. As shown in the diagram, there are several areas that are governed or influenced by the policies, plans and programs previously identified in this chapter. From our research, we have identified five major areas of opportunity for identity:

1. **Community of Murals:** Valley Glen is home to “The Great Wall of LA”- a painted mural along the Tujunga Wash channel between Oxnard St. and Burbank Blvd. The community can capitalize on this existing asset by extending the presence of murals throughout the community. The mural ordinance can be used as a tool for the implementation of additional murals in Valley Glen.
2. **Sustainable Community:** The LAVC Facilities Master Plan Update has set a strong precedent for sustainable development in the Valley Glen community. The community can apply the sustainable technologies and design practices of the plan, such as the Sustainable Mall, to new projects and developments in the community.
3. **Green Community:** Given the dense tree population in Valley Glen, the community can easily adopt an identity that represents a “green community”. Businesses and residents can use the Million Trees LA program to plant trees in areas that lack sufficient tree coverage.
4. **Community Committed to Public Space:** The Valley Glen community is one that is proud of its residential neighborhood character and sense of community. The commitment to community provides an opportunity to enhance the quality of public space in Valley Glen. The neighborhood council could use the Beautification Program as a financial tool to implement beautification projects throughout Valley Glen.
5. **Multi-Modal Community:** There are three orange line stations that run through Valley Glen, one of which is adjacent to the Valley College campus. The community can take advantage of the rapid transit line stations by improving the pedestrian landscape and access to amenities near the stations, and possibly connecting the stations through multi-modal pathways. Although there are no Transit Neighborhood Plans approved for the stations within the community, the red line North Hollywood station to the east and the orange line Van Nuys station to west have received grant funding to develop these transit-oriented areas and can provide guidance for the design and development around the stations within Valley Glen.



Precedent Projects

The following precedent design projects can be used as a source of guidance and inspiration for potential projects that help reinforce a specific identity for the Valley Glen Community.

Murals

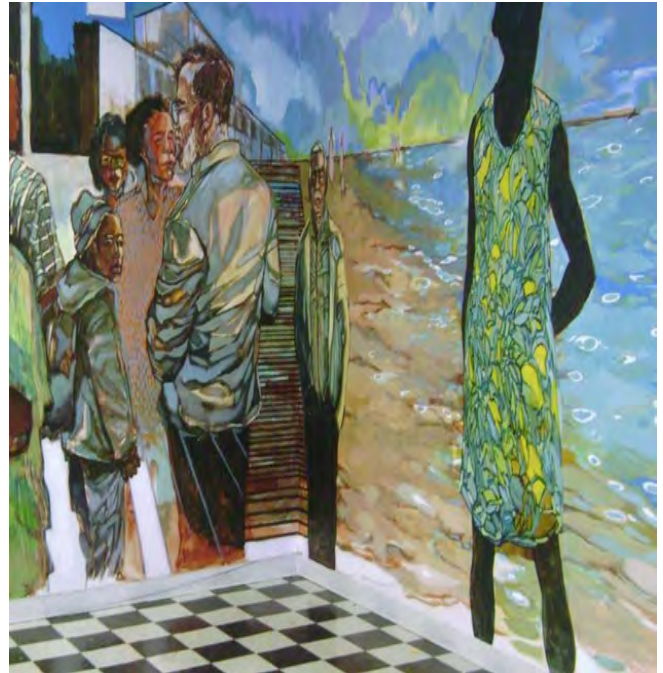
Groundswell Mural

Brooklyn, NY

1996-Present

Groundswell is a non-profit organization in Brooklyn, NY that aims to build community through collaborative art-making projects. Groundswell brings together youth, artists and community-based organizations to establish a strong community voice and identity in the public realm (Groundswell website).

The picture to the right is an example of one of Groundswell's most popular projects. The project titled, "South Brooklyn", was completed in 2008 and is located in the Coney Island neighborhood. The lead artists worked with the youth at the local community center to create a mural that expressed community, family and education (Groundswell website).



<http://www.groundswellmural.org/project/south-brooklyn>

Sustainable Development

LAVC Facilities Master Plan Update

Sustainable Mall Project

Los Angeles, CA

2010

The Sustainable Mall element of the LAVC Facilities Master Plan is an example of a project that was designed in nature. One of the unique features of the sustainable mall is that it transforms its existing storm water system into an uncovered infiltration system - Valley College Creek, that will be available to local vegetation and habitat (LAVC Master Plan Updates, 2010). The mall also features sustainable landscaping and park seating along the Valley College Creek.



http://www.lavc.edu/revitalizingvalley/docs/LAVC_Facilities_Master_Plan_2010_Update.pdf

Urban Forest
NeighborWoods
Austin, TX
2001

NeighborWoods functions as the main implementation program for the city's Urban Heat Island Containment Policy. The program distributes 3,000-4,000 trees to residents for the planting of street trees on public land (American Forest website). Neighborhood residents are responsible for the maintenance of the trees, therefore public outreach to gain neighborhood support is a key element of this program. The city also has programs like the Austin Community Trees Program to encourage tree planting on private properties that exhibit low tree canopy coverage.



<http://www.americanforests.org/our-programs/urbanforests/urban-forests-case-studies/austin-speaking-for-the-trees/>

Public Space
Grand Park
Los Angeles, CA
2012

Grand Park is a 12 acre public park located in the civic center district in downtown Los Angeles. As part of the downtown revitalization effort, Grand Park has helped activate the civic core of the city by attracting millions of visitors, downtown residents and downtown workers to the site. The park features pink movable furniture, retail, and large gathering areas for multi-scaled events and activities.



<http://la.curbed.com/places/civic-park>

Transit-Oriented Development
Mission Meridian Village
South Pasadena, CA
2005

Mission Meridian Village is a transit-oriented development adjacent to a light rail station, located between downtown Los Angeles and Pasadena. The mixed-use development consists of diverse housing, retail and two subterranean parking structures that lend itself to public transit riders. The project was awarded the "Best Transit Oriented Development" by the Urban Land Institute and the Congress for New Urbanism in 2006 (MPA architects website).



http://railrevolution.org/rv2012_pdfs/20121510_10a_TodayAndTom_Dieden.pdf

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