

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 15000121


Date Listed: 4/7/2015

Intercultural Council Houses
Property Name

Los Angeles CA
County State

Latinos in Twentieth Century California MPS
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

4/7/2015

Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Significance:

The nomination is amended to add *Ethnic Heritage-Hispanic (Mexican)* as an Area of Significance under Criterion A.
[This is consistent with the property's nomination under the Latinos in Twentieth Century California MPS.]

These clarifications were confirmed with the CA SHPO office.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Intercultural Council Houses

Other names/site number: "Neighbors, Inc."

Name of related multiple property listing:
Latinos in 20th Century California MPS

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: Bounded approximately by Blanchard Place on the north, Claremont Boulevard on the east, E First Street on the south, and Brooks Street on the west.

City or town: Claremont State: California County: Los Angeles

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,


I hereby certify that this x nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A ___ B ___ C ___ D

		<u>2-10-15</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:		Date
<u>CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION</u>		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	

Signature of commenting official:	Date

Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain:) _____


Signature of the Keeper

4/7/2015
Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>13</u>	<u>3</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u>3</u>	structures
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>14</u>	<u>6</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: single dwelling

Domestic: secondary structure

Commerce/Trade: professional

Landscape: parking lot

Landscape: park

Recreation and Culture: outdoor recreation

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: single dwelling

Domestic: secondary structure

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement:

International Style

Other: _____

Minimal Traditional _____

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Wood

Stucco

Concrete

Brick

Asphalt

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Intercultural Council Houses are located in Claremont, California, bounded approximately by Blanchard Place on the north, Claremont Boulevard on the east, E. First Street on the south, and Brooks Street on the west. The homes are a district of twelve single dwellings located on a single residential block in Claremont's Arbol Verde neighborhood. They were built in the International Style, most made of post-and-beam construction with single board plywood walls and 2"x4" posts for supports. The district retains all seven aspects of integrity.

Narrative Description

The Intercultural Council Houses consist of a group of twelve detached single-family dwellings. They were built between 1947 and 1952, and are located between Brooks Avenue, Blanchard Place, Claremont Boulevard, and E. First Street in Claremont, CA, a roughly two-and-a-half acre

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lot of land.¹ The Intercultural Council Houses are single story homes in the International Style, with two or three bedrooms and one bathroom each. Most were post-and beam homes, constructed of marine 5-ply plywood walls with 2x4 and 4x4 beams acting as supports, but one home is constructed of concrete blocks, three others were a combination of post-and-beam and concrete block construction, and several now have stucco or clapboard siding over their original plywood exteriors.² The walls were mostly a single board thick, and thus any electrical wiring was run over the walls through conduits. Roofs are flat, cantilevered, front- or side-gabled, and are clad in asphalt or rubber shingles. They feature high transom windows above large plate glass windows, though some homes have side-sliding windows. Because of their unique single-board plywood construction as well as their International Style design, these homes are distinguished from the Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Ranch Style, or Spanish/Mediterranean Revival Style homes surrounding them.

Originally, the twelve homes were arranged around a central yard that included a communal tot yard, communal drying yard, communal adult recreation area, communal washing room (which also served as the “Well Baby Clinic” for a number of years), communal phone, communal barbecue, communal incinerator, and communal play area. There were two parking lots for the use of all twelve homes.³ However, now all twelve homes are situated on long, narrow lots facing Brooks Avenue, Blanchard Place, or First Street. They each have separate, fenced-in back yards, though the communal barbecue still exists behind 615 First Street.

Some houses remain much the same as they were constructed. However, “others have been drastically renovated and added to over the years.” Though they were built cheaply and are subject to hot summers and occasional flooding, the homes have lasted over sixty years. However, several houses now have stuccoed exteriors, “due to the low ability of the marine plywood to repel the direct sun and wind.”⁴ These exterior alterations were due to complaints of wind blowing through the wood buildings and extreme heat in the summer because of the flat roofs. The house constructed of concrete blocks was preferable to the other homes in the summers, as it was less warm than its plywood neighbors.⁵

628 Blanchard Place: (Photo 2) One story, single-family house, built in 1948 by Roger Curtis, a local contractor, to the Crutcher plans. It was the first Intercultural Council House to be completed, and may have been a prototype for the other houses. It has a flat roof, and its walls are constructed of marine plywood and 2” x 4” and 4” x 4” beams. Small, single-light windows and a plain entry door exemplify the lack of detail characteristic of the International Style. A small, **freestanding studio** was added in 1951, and a carport was added in 1959.

¹ Paddy Slater, “‘Neighbors Incorporated:’ A Claremont Experiment,” *Claremont Chronicles* No. 2, p. 2, Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.

² “Notes from Henry Cooke’s Oral History on the Intercultural Council and the Barrio,” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.

³ Slater, “Neighbors Incorporated,” p. 2.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵ “Notes from Henry Cooke’s Oral History.”

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622 Blanchard Place: (Photo 3) One story, single-family house, built by the original owner's father with help from Roger Curtis between 1950 and 1952. The house is constructed of painted concrete blocks on a concrete foundation. The roof is low-pitched and front-gabled. Windows are single- and multi-pane casement, and the door is flush with the walls. There is a small, stone planter to the right of the entryway.

616 Blanchard Place: (Photo 4) One story, single-family house, built by the owner between 1948 and 1951 from the Crutcher plans, with occasional input from Crutcher. Exposed rafters and angled siting are characteristic of the Intercultural Council Houses. The house was built of materials from a deconstructed wooden boxcar, and covered with stucco. Windows are single-light picture, double-hung sash or side sliding, with transom windows set close to the roofline, and the entry is recessed under the extended roof. The original owners added a third bedroom after original construction, but it was always intended to be a third bedroom.

606 Blanchard Place: (Photo 5) One story, rectangular, single-family house, built in 1952. It has a low-pitched, cross-gable roof, and a stucco exterior, though the lower half of the east elevation is covered with stone. Windows are double-hung sash or side sliding, and the entry is flush with the walls. A concrete block wall surrounds the property at the sidewalk, and a pierced-concrete wall connects the house to a **non-contributing, detached garage** built in 1961.

150 Brooks Avenue: (Photo 7) One story, single-family house, built in 1949 to the Crutcher plans. It has a combination of flat and cantilevered roofs, covered with tar and crushed stone. Windows are fixed and double hung sash, with transom windows close to the roofline. The entry is on the north side. The Fodors, the original owners, built the home of batten board and cement blocks, beginning in the spring of 1948. The master bedroom was added in 1964.

140 Brooks Avenue: (Photos 9 to 12) One story, single-family house, built between 1948 and 1951. It was built to the Crutcher plans, and is angled on the lot so that the northwest side of the home faces the mountains. It has a flat and sloped tar and rock roof with extended eaves and a slanted cornice. Windows are single-pane fixed, with transoms set close to the roofline. Wide wood planks and stucco have replaced the original wood siding. A window replaced the original west-facing front door, and the front door is now on the north façade. A large metal chimney is at the rear of the house, which seems much larger than necessary. In the late 1980s, the Eckerts, then the owners of the house, renovated the home extensively. The current owners have renovated even more, and added on a rear wing with a cantilevered roof that blends in with the rest of the house. All of these additions and renovations are in keeping with the original character of the house. The **original Intercultural Council washhouse** (Photos 13 and 14) still stands at the back of the property, and has a sloped roof and a stuccoed exterior. It has a small addition in the front, and was used as a rental property in the past. It is now utilized as a playroom, workout space, storage, and laundry room.

130 Brooks Avenue: (Photos 15 to 20) One story, single-family house built in 1949 by the Alvarez family. It is in the International style, built to the Crutcher plans. The roof is flat, and covered with tar and white rocks. It is constructed of marine plywood and 2x4 and 4x4 beams on a concrete slab. Windows are louvered or fixed, with transom windows set close to the roofline.

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Mr. Cisneros, one of the home's former owners, added a concrete cement block living room. Another large room addition to the rear of the house, currently in use as a rental property, is constructed of marine plywood and 2x4 and 4x4 beams, has a cantilevered roof. These additions are consistent with the original character of the house.

122 Brooks Avenue: (Photo 21) One story, rectangular, single-family house, built in 1951 by the original owners and finished by their successors. It has a low-pitched, side-gabled roof, and a stucco exterior. Windows are multi-paned casement or fixed. Entry is slightly recessed, though a security door is flush with walls. It is set sideways on the lot, and a driveway was added after the park was divided among the homeowners. Frances Dieduch, the treasurer of the Intercultural Council, lived in this house from 1951 to 2007.

603 E. First Street: (Photo 23) One story, single-family house, built by Roger Curtis in 1948 to the Crutcher plans. It has a flat roof and very little exterior decoration. It has a stucco exterior, and a south-facing entry door with a setback stoop. Windows are double hung sash and single-pane fixed. A **non-contributing, detached garage** was added in 1959, on the site of one of the two communal parking lots just after this portion of the property had been divided among the residents. Also in 1959, a living room was added and the kitchen was relocated. The house is largely obscured from the street by vegetation. The house's original address was 110 N. Brooks Avenue, but the city of Claremont changed the address to 603 E. First Street in 1959.

615 E. First Street: (Photo 24) One story, single-family dwelling, built to the Crutcher plans in 1948. It has a flat roof, with very little exterior decoration. It currently has a stucco exterior, and single-light fixed windows with transoms located close to the roofline. The south-facing entry door is flush with the wall. The original owners added a third bedroom after original construction, but the current owner, John Dominguez, will remove it as he restores the home to its original floor plan. Mr. Dominguez will also remove the stucco from the exterior, as it was added after the Felix family moved in in 1972. The Intercultural Council Houses' barbeque, a circular brick structure, exists in the rear of this house. Mr. Dominguez constructed a **non-contributing 15-foot-tall garage** in the rear of the house within the last five years.

621 E. First Street: (Photo 25) One story, single family dwelling, built to the Crutcher plans in 1948. It has a flat and slanted roof, with very little exterior decoration. It is constructed of marine plywood and 2x4 and 4x4 beams. Windows are single-pane fixed, with transom windows set close to the roofline. It has an extensive addition, but John Dominguez restored the original rooms of the house between 1991 and 2004. A driveway was added after the period of significance ended.

627 E. First Street: One story, single-family dwelling, constructed to the Crutcher plans in 1949. It was slightly smaller than the other Intercultural Council Houses, and had a flat roof with no decorative detail. Beams were exposed under the roof, and a connecting carport was built to the east of the house, with a porch entry. The house was angled toward First Street, with trees camouflaging most of it. It was covered with stucco and redwood framing. Painted solid wood planks were located under a single light fixed window on the front façade. In the mid-1950s, a semi-open porch was added to the rear of the home. In the mid- to late-1960s, the house became

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a long-term rental, until it was sold to Claremont McKenna College (CMC) in 2000. All but one wall of this house was demolished by CMC between 2006 and 2007, and a **new, non-contributing house** was built in its place.

The **new single-family dwelling** and **two rental properties**, built between 2007 and 2009, are located at 670 Blanchard Place in what used to be untamed brush, called *chapparal* by the Mexican-American inhabitants of the Intercultural Council houses and the surrounding Barrio. These are the last of the district's extant non-contributing structures as of May 2014.

Integrity:

Location: The homes remain in their original locations, ensuring their integrity of location.

Setting: Most of the homes surrounding the Intercultural Council Houses remain in their original locations, and the area around the houses is zoned for residential use only, thus ensuring that integrity of setting remains intact. Two of the original oak trees planted when the Intercultural Council Houses were first planned are still living, also ensuring integrity of setting.

Materials and Design: The homes still retain their marine plywood or concrete block construction materials, and many retain their original footprints and modes of construction, with minor alterations and, in some cases, additions. *Association:* The history of the homes and the primary reason for their construction (discussed in the significance statement) is constantly discussed in Claremont. John Dominguez, one of the original residents of the community, who now owns two of the homes, will readily tell anyone the history of the Intercultural Council and the families that formed it, thus ensuring the homes' integrity of association.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Social History

Period of Significance

1947 - 1960

Significant Dates

1947

1960

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Crutcher, Lewis (architect)

Curtis, Roger (builder)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Intercultural Council Houses is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A at the local level of significance. Their cultural and historic significance is derived from their role in Latino civil rights and anti-segregation movements in greater Los Angeles. The houses were built beginning in 1947, when some of the Intercultural Council's founding members purchased the houses' 2.5-acre lot. The Intercultural Council heavily subsidized the Houses' construction. Lewis Crutcher, an architect and student of Millard Sheets, a noted Californian artist, drew plans for the homes, which were available for purchase. A local contractor built those homes built to Crutcher's plans, but some homeowners chose to design and build their own homes to lower costs. The homes were built around a central park that included a communal tot yard, communal drying yard, communal adult recreation area, communal washing, communal phone, communal barbecue, communal incinerator, and communal play area. There were two parking lots for the use of all twelve homes. The communal property was divided up in 1960, which ended the civil rights experiment as well as the Intercultural Council Houses' period of significance, which began in 1947. This property is nominated under the cover of the *Latinos in 20th Century California* Multiple Property Document, under the context of *Immigration and Settlement*, under the property type *Historic Districts*.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

As a district significant to the course of social history in Claremont, CA and, perhaps, to social history in the entire state of California, the Intercultural Council Houses meets National Register Criterion A at the local level of significance. The Intercultural Council Houses derive much of their significance from their historical importance. The district retains sufficient integrity of location, materials, association, feeling, and design for eligibility under Criterion A, with a period of significance of 1947-1960. The Intercultural Council's "Neighbors, Inc." experiment, which brought about the Intercultural Council Houses, was a pioneering civil rights effort to de-segregate Claremont, and, eventually, California.

Site History

In June 1947, ten members of the Intercultural Council, including Mrs. Bess Garner, Mrs. P.A. Ordway, L.C. Pitzer, and Mario Serna, each put up \$500, and together bought twelve tax delinquent lots on southern portion of the Arbol Verde tract in Claremont, California.⁶ The lots, collectively, comprise a piece of land totaling 2 ½ acres, and are bounded approximately by Blanchard Place on the north, Claremont Boulevard on the east, E. First Street on the south, and Brooks Street on the west. This was the designated site for the Intercultural Council Houses, an experiment dubbed "Neighbors, Inc." by those involved. At the time, Mexicans could not own land situated within the then boundaries of Claremont, so this portion of the Arbol Verde tract

⁶ Slater, "Neighbors Incorporated," p. 2.

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was one of the only places at which the Intercultural Council Houses experiment could take place.

The individual lots cost \$450, or \$600 for corner lots. Lewis Crutcher, a Claremont Graduate School attendee and student of Millard Sheets (a famous Californian artist and an art history professor at Scripps College in Claremont), drew up plans for one-story, two-bedroom, one-bathroom homes. Homeowners could purchase these plans for \$35. Six out of the twelve homes in the district were built according to the plans, and Crutcher “also gave individual help in some specific cases.”⁷ Many homeowners hired a local contractor named Roger Curtis to build their houses.⁸

The homes were each built on 5,500 sq. ft. lots, and angled on the lots so that they each had a mountain view. Waterproof glue, marine plywood, and other post-World War II materials were utilized in the construction of most of the houses, which cut down on construction costs while incorporating the avant-garde nature of the Intercultural Council’s social experiment into the fabric of the Intercultural Council Houses. The houses built by the local contractor to Crutcher’s plans cost \$5,000, not including the cost of the lot or the plans. If the owners built their own homes, the cost was cut to \$2,500.⁹ The Intercultural Council members, bolstered by an \$8,000 grant from the Columbia Foundation in San Francisco, gave the original homeowners loans at four percent interest to aid them in the construction of their homes.¹⁰

The houses associated with the Intercultural Council’s desegregation experiment took about five years to construct. Originally, the twelve homes were arranged around a central yard that included a communal tot yard, communal drying yard, communal adult recreation area, communal washing room (which also served as the “Well Baby Clinic” for a number of years), communal phone, communal barbecue, communal incinerator, and communal play area. There were two parking lots for the use of all twelve homes.¹¹ The Intercultural Council housing experiment was seen as an early example of condominium living, with a loosely formed Homeowner’s Association centered on the maintenance of the communal facilities, as well as the timely payment of the community’s telephone and water bills.

The spirit of community among the inhabitants of the Intercultural Council Houses was fostered by “the sharing of community facilities such as open, unfenced land between the lots where there was a neighborhood park.”¹² In 1959 and 1960, several events occurred that led to the breakup of the park into separate lots for each home. As the original owners moved out, “their replacements tended to prefer private backyards and tension arose over the communal garden, etc. [sic].”¹³ John Dominguez, a long-time Intercultural Council Houses resident, noted that the maintenance of the park began to waver at this time. Several of the people in the “Neighbors, Inc.” houses got

⁷ “History of the Intercultural Council Built Houses,” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA, p. 2.

⁸ “Notes from Henry Cooke’s Oral History.”

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ “History of the Intercultural Council Built Houses,” p. 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² “History of the Intercultural Council Houses,” p. 2.

¹³ *Ibid.*

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tired of having to volunteer to mow the lawn, and refused to pay the extra fee for the communal water bill. Additionally, Dominguez mentioned that various inhabitants of the Intercultural Council Houses were concerned that the “*pachucos*” from the barrio surrounding the houses would come into the park to make out, drink beer, and smoke cigarettes.¹⁴ However, Dr. Cooke related another reason for the park’s division. Paul Darrow, an original Intercultural Council Houses resident, successful artist, and Claremont Graduate University graduate, sold his home at 628 Blanchard Place to a gay couple in 1957. This upset several of the residents, who were reluctant or even completely unwilling to share facilities with them. The couple, Cooke remembered, complained that ““the ‘Mexicans’ would come [to the park] right at the back of [our] holding, beyond [our] fence, and make love.””¹⁵ They were so upset by this that they eventually asked the Intercultural Council’s attorney to have the park “surveyed and divided up among the residents. No residents raised meaningful objections to their actions and Neighbors Park vanished by 1960.”¹⁶ However, “Neighbors, Inc.” continued its efforts to be a community after its communal property was divided up. For example, in 1962, Marilyn Noble turned her Intercultural Council House into a Neighbors Youth Center and supplied tutors for Mexican-American children and a quiet study hall for teenagers in the Barrio.

Currently, all twelve homes are situated on long, narrow lots facing Brooks Avenue, Blanchard Place, or First Street. They each have separate, fenced-in back yards, though the communal barbecue still exists behind 615 First Street, and the communal washing room building still exists behind 140 Brooks Avenue. Some of the houses are in their original condition, while others have been renovated or had additions made to them over the years. Most still retain their original building materials, though some houses have covered the marine plywood and beams with stucco or siding. Roofs are still flat, cantilevered, front- or side-gabled, and are still covered in asphalt or rubber shingles. Most homes still feature high transom windows above large plate glass windows, though some homes now have side-sliding (original on some homes) or louvered windows. Thus, the Intercultural Council Homes have retained their integrity of materials. Though many homes have been altered over the years, they still retain much of their original floor plans, ensuring integrity of design. The homes remain in their original locations, and the area is much the same as it was between 1947 and 1960. The vegetation has grown, but the trees (including two large oak trees) are the same trees as were in the area when the Intercultural Council Houses were constructed. This proves that the homes retain their integrity of location and setting. Finally, though the period of significance for the Intercultural Council Houses ended with the division of the parkland, the homes retain their integrity of association, as even the modern homeowners are extremely aware of the purpose behind the construction of the Intercultural Council Houses and the idea behind the “Neighbors, Inc.” experiment.

¹⁴ John Dominguez, interview by author, Claremont, CA, April 3, 2014.

¹⁵ W. Henry Cooke, Interview by Georgenia Irwin, October 31, 1968, transcript at Claremont Heritage Foundation, Claremont, Calif., 14. Quoted in Matt Garcia, *A world of its own: race, labor, and citrus in the making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), p. 251.

¹⁶ Garcia, *A world of its own*, p. 251.

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Civil Rights and De-Segregation in Claremont and California

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In his book *A world of its own: race, labor, and citrus in the making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970*, Matt Garcia notes that “The Intercultural Council of Claremont (ICC) [...] developed out of the Anglo-led social reform movements during the first half of the twentieth-century.”¹⁷ Some of Claremont Church’s wealthier members, led by Ruth Ordway and Harland Hogue, formed the Intercultural Council shortly after the end of World War II.¹⁸ They dreamed of “a section of Claremont housing which would be a mixed Anglo Mexican community” to overcome racial inequality and racial privilege in Claremont.¹⁹ They planned to mix “Anglos,” mostly students attending Claremont Graduate School, with Mexican families who applied and qualified to own houses in the community.²⁰ This housing experiment came to be called the Intercultural Council Houses, or “Neighbors, Inc.” by Claremont residents.

With their “Neighbors, Inc.” experiment, the Intercultural Council Houses attempted to “build bridges of friendship and neighborliness” among the “Anglo” university students and Mexican-American laborers.²¹ According to Dr. W. Henry Cooke, a former history professor at Pomona College in Claremont and a member of the Intercultural Council, “it was the hope of the Intercultural Council originally that the presence of graduate students and Mexicans in the housing project would make for a good intercultural relationship and that they would be mutually helpful.”²² Millard Sheets discussed the work the Intercultural Council meant to do, saying, “It is time people in America learn to live together without respect to color, race, nationality and creed – we hope our efforts may help to bring about this fundamental achievement.”²³

The Intercultural Council Houses experiment invited a diverse group of families to live in harmony with each other, sharing communal amenities. “Each house has a story; like the Abundiz family who were brought from Mexico by the Garner’s to perform with the Mexican Players, and the Livingstons, who were the first African American students to be accepted to Pomona College, and artist Paul Darrow, a then graduate student, and his family who moved from Pasadena to join the neighborhood [sic].”²⁴ In the 1940s and 1950s, the Mexican-American families living in the Intercultural Council Houses threw fiestas for the neighborhood, introducing their Caucasian neighbors to Mexican culture. After the first ten years of the Intercultural Council Housing experiment, the “college-connected Anglos,” as well as some of the Mexican families, moved on to bigger and better houses, while other Mexican families stayed, or more Mexican families moved in. According to Dr. Cooke, when the original owners

¹⁷ Matt Garcia, *A world of its own: race, labor, and citrus in the making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), p. 14.

¹⁸ Slater, “Neighbors Incorporated,” p. 1.

¹⁹ “History of the Intercultural Council Built Houses, p. 1.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ “Notes about Intercultural Council,” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA, p. 7-2.

²² “Notes from Henry Cooke’s Oral History.”

²³ Millard Sheets, “Long Term Goals,” *ICC Plans*, (1948). Quoted in Matt Garcia, *A world of its own: race, labor, and citrus in the making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), p. 248.

²⁴ “Lou Crutcher & Whitney Smith,” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA, p. 2.

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moved out of their Intercultural Council houses, the Intercultural Council screened the homes' potential buyers.²⁵

The Intercultural Council Houses still retain their diversity, since they “now contain as varied ownership as they did originally [...] with some owned and some rented, some by Anglos and some by Mexicans.”²⁶ Though the Intercultural Council Houses' historic significance ended with the demise of the community park, the “Neighbors, Inc.” experiment was ultimately successful at integrating Claremont. They likely had an effect on the integration of neighboring Upland and Pomona, and, perhaps, on the integration of the rest of the state. The Intercultural Council Houses' current inhabitants are extremely aware of their homes' historic purpose, and readily discuss their community's history with any ask to learn more. The Intercultural Council Houses thus had an immense impact on social history within Claremont and the entire state, and upon the history of Hispanic ethnic heritage in Southern California.

Historically, the Intercultural Council Houses represent a large step forward taken by the Intercultural Council to “address the social injustice created by the segregation of Mexican-Americans.”²⁷ The “Neighbors, Inc.” social experiment represented an “expression of the high ideals [...] fostered by this intellectually rich community” in Claremont.²⁸ The Intercultural Council Houses are “early examples of what was to be one of the most significant architectural styles that California exported to the rest of the country” throughout the mid-20th century.²⁹ It was one of the earliest integrated housing experiments in the region, if not the earliest. It led to the creation or conceptualization of several other “Neighbors, Inc.” or Intercultural Council-style integrated housing experiments around Southern California.³⁰ The Intercultural Council Houses thus led the way for the rest of Claremont to be integrated, and provided an example for integration in all of California.

²⁵ “Notes from Henry Cooke's Oral History.”

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ “Notes about Intercultural Council,” p. 7-4.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ John Dominguez interview.

Intercultural Council Houses
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA
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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

- “122 Brooks Avenue.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “130 Brooks Avenue.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “140 Brooks Avenue.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “150 Brooks Avenue.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “603 E. First Street.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “606 Blanchard Place.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “615 E. First Street.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “616 Blanchard Place.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “622 Blanchard Place.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “627 E. First Street.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “628 Blanchard Place.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “History of the Intercultural Council Built Houses.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “Lou Crutcher & Whitney Smith.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA, p. 2.
- “Notes about Intercultural Council.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- “Notes from Henry Cooke’s Oral History on the Intercultural Council and the Barrio.” Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.
- Deeds for 628 Blanchard Place, 622 Blanchard Place, 616 Blanchard Place, 606 Blanchard Place, 150 Brooks Avenue, 140 Brooks Avenue, 130 Brooks Avenue, 122 Brooks Avenue, 603 E. First Street, 615 E. First Street, 621 E. First Street, and 627 E. First Street, Claremont, CA. Los Angeles County Recorder of Deeds, Norfolk, CA.
- Dominguez, John. Interview by author. Claremont, CA. April 3, 2014.

Intercultural Council Houses
Name of Property

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Garcia, Matt. *A world of its own: race, labor, and citrus in the making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001, p. 14, 225, 241-255.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

Slater, Paddy. “‘Neighbors Incorporated:’ A Claremont Experiment.” *Claremont Chronicles* No. 2. Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.

Intercultural Council Houses
Name of Property

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Special Collections, Claremont Heritage, Claremont, CA

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Intercultural Council Houses
Name of Property

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10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 2.5

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 34.09616N | Longitude: -117.70584E |
| 2. Latitude: 34.09608N | Longitude: -117.70438E |
| 3. Latitude: 34.09532N | Longitude: -117.70468E |
| 4. Latitude: 34.09513N | Longitude: -117.70581E |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The district is comprised of lots 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, and 51 of Tract 1008. Please see attached Assessor's Map of Tract 1008, County of Los Angeles, CA.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes all of the residential properties and land historically associated with the Intercultural Council Houses' "Neighbors, Inc." experiment.

Intercultural Council Houses
Name of Property

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Molly Iker
organization: Center for Historic Architecture and Design / Claremont Heritage
street & number: 330 Alison Hall, University of Delaware
city or town: Newark state: DE zip code: 19716
e-mail mriker@udel.edu
telephone: 302-831-8097
date: August 2014

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Intercultural Council Houses
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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Intercultural Council Houses

City or Vicinity: Claremont

County: Los Angeles

State: California

Photographer: Molly Iker

Date Photographed: 12/19/2013, 04/03/2014, or 04/04/2014 per individual listing

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0001)
View of Blanchard Place streetscape, looking west, taken 12/19/2013.

2 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InculturalCouncilHouses_0002)
View of 628 Blanchard Place, looking southeast, taken 12/19/2013.

3 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0003)
View of 622 Blanchard Place, looking southeast, taken 12/19/2013.

4 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0004)
View of 616 Blanchard Place, looking southeast, taken 12/19/2013.

5 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0005)
View of 606 Blanchard Place, looking south, taken 12/19/2013.

6 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0006)
View of Blanchard Place streetscape, looking east, taken 12/19/2013.

7 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0007)
View of Brooks Avenue streetscape, looking south, taken 12/19/2013.

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8 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0008)

View of 150 Brooks Avenue, looking east, taken 12/19/2013.

9 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0009)

View of 140 Brooks Avenue, looking northeast, taken 12/19/2013.

10 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0010)

View of living room at 140 Brooks Avenue, looking southeast, taken 04/04/2014.

11 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0011)

View of kitchen at 140 Brooks Avenue, looking southwest, taken 04/04/2014.

12 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0012)

View of transom windows set close to roofline at 140 Brooks Avenue, looking southeast, taken 04/04/2014.

13 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0013)

View of former community washhouse behind 140 Brooks Avenue, looking east, taken 04/04/2014.

14 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0014)

View of former community washhouse behind 140 Brooks Avenue, looking northeast, taken 04/04/2014.

15 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0015)

View of 130 Brooks Avenue, looking northeast, taken 12/19/2013.

16 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0016)

View of carport at 130 Brooks Avenue, showing construction materials, looking southeast, taken 04/03/2014.

17 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0017)

View of former exterior kitchen window at 130 Brooks Avenue from Cisneros addition, looking northwest, taken 04/03/2014.

18 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0018)

View of front door and plate glass, louvered, and transom windows in 130 Brooks Avenue's living room, looking northeast, taken 04/03/2014.

19 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0019)

View of electrical wiring run over the marine plywood walls in a bedroom at 130 Brooks Avenue, looking southeast, taken 04/03/2014.

20 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0020)

Intercultural Council Houses

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View of transom window over kitchen door and kitchen at 130 Brooks Avenue, looking southwest, taken 04/03/2014.

21 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0021)

View of 122 Brooks Avenue, looking northeast, taken 12/19/2013.

22 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0022)

View of Brooks Avenue streetscape, looking northeast, taken 12/19/2013.

23 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0023)

View of 603 E. First Street, looking northwest, taken 12/19/2013.

24 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0024)

View of 615 E. First Street, looking northwest, taken 12/19/2013.

25 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0025)

View of 621 E. First Street, looking northwest, taken 12/19/2013.

26 of 26 (CA_LosAngeles_InterculturalCouncilHouses_0026)

View of E. First Street streetscape, looking northwest, taken 12/19/2013.

Intercultural Council Houses
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Additional Documentation: Photo Key, Historic Maps, Floor Plans, and Sketches

Figure 1.

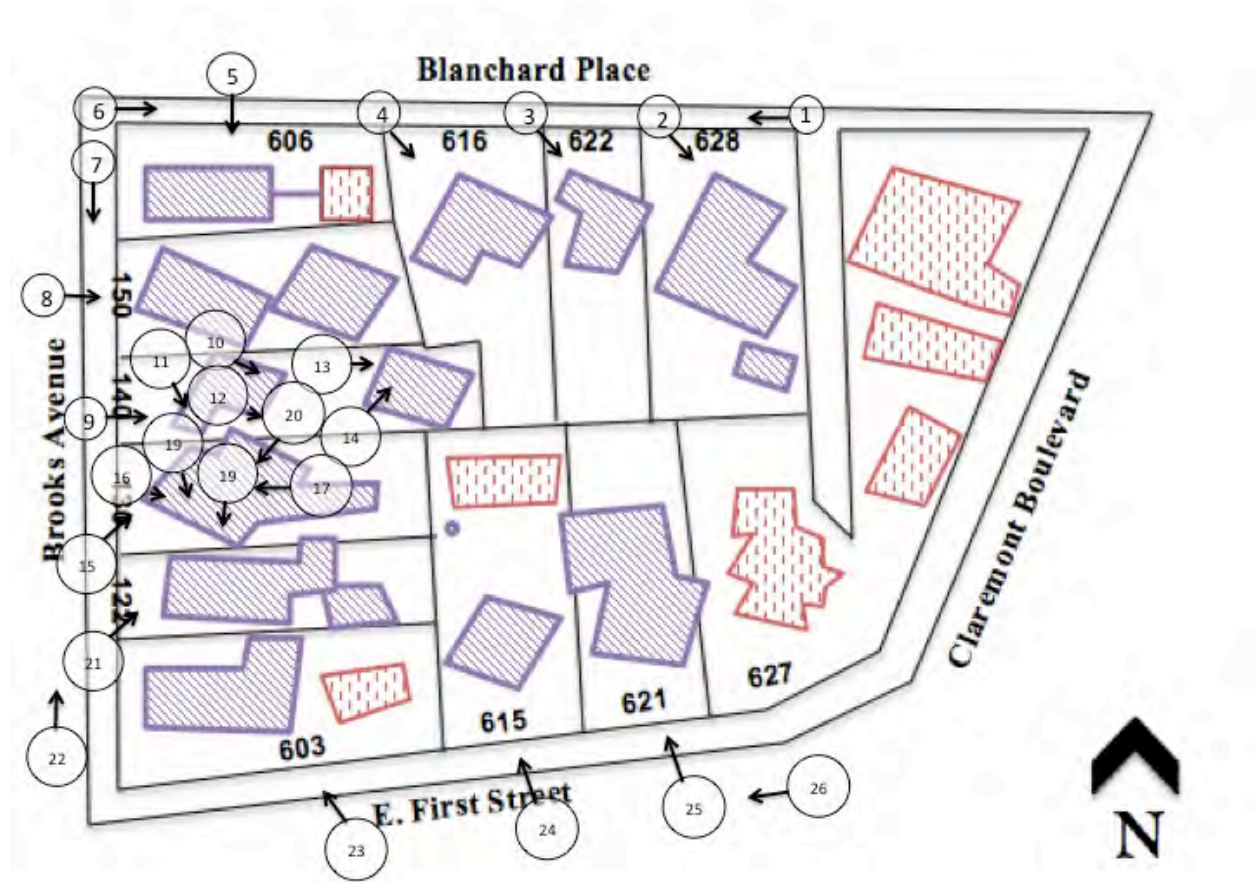
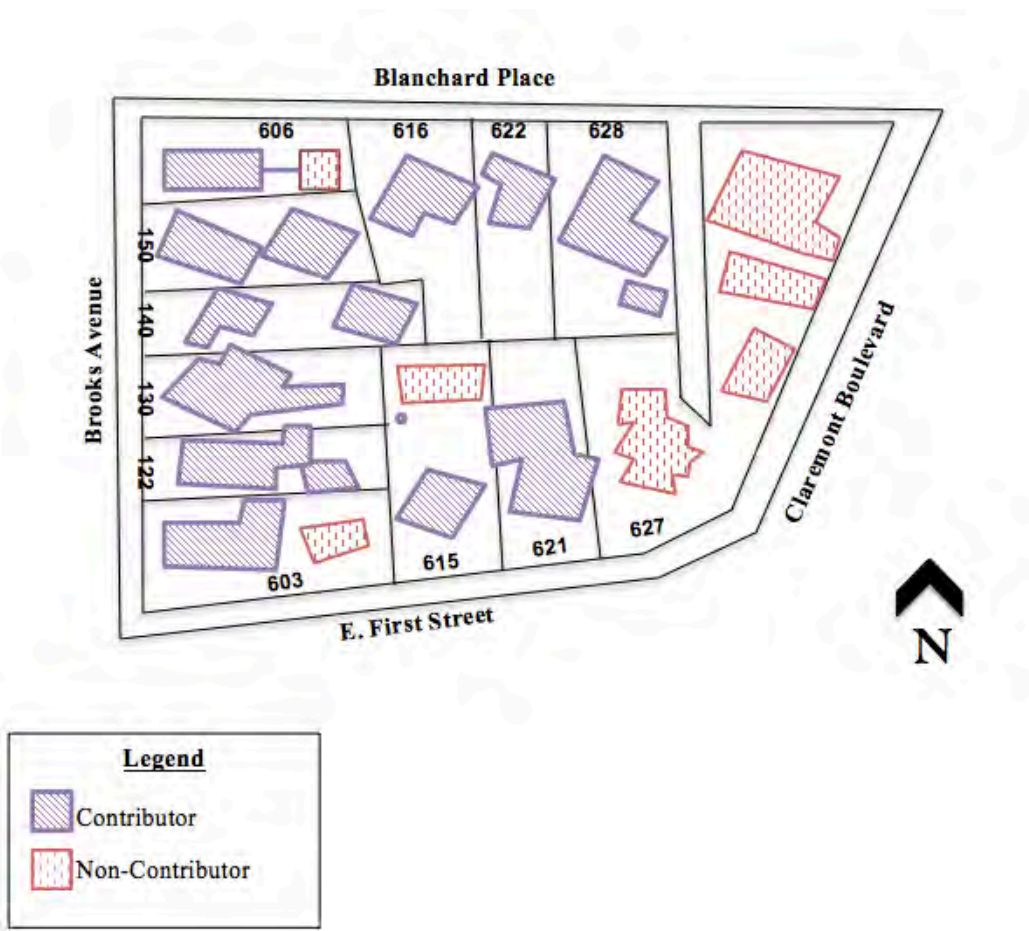


Photo Key, Intercultural Council Houses, Claremont, CA

Intercultural Council Houses
Name of Property
Figure 2.

Los Angeles County, CA
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District Site Plan, denoting contributors and non-contributors.

Intercultural Council Houses
Name of Property
Figure 3.

Los Angeles County, CA
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INTERCULTURAL COUNCIL HOUSES HISTORIC DISTRICT
BOUNDED BY BLANCHARD PL., BROOKS AVE, E. FIRST ST, AND CLAREMONT BLVD, CLAREMONT, CA, 91711
LOCATION COORDINATES: 34.09616, -117.70584



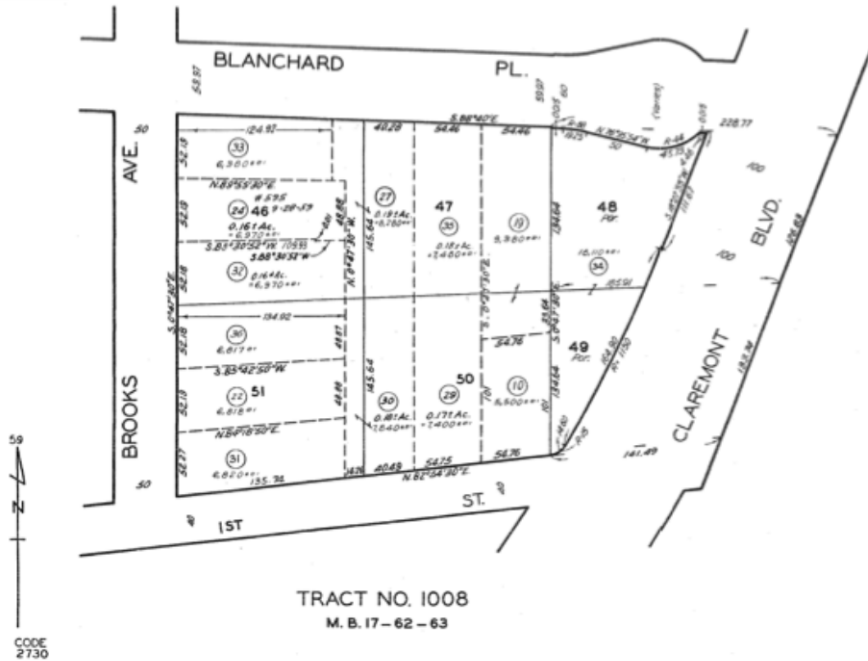
 DISTRICT BOUNDARY

Intercultural Council Houses
Name of Property
Figure 4.

Los Angeles County, CA
County and State

9314 II
SCALE 1" = 60'

4-27-63 REVISED
2020 1-18-60
440926 1-27-62
2-2-63
3-26-63
4-2-64
7-21-64
7-28-64



FOR PREV. ASSMT. SEE: 761 - 16

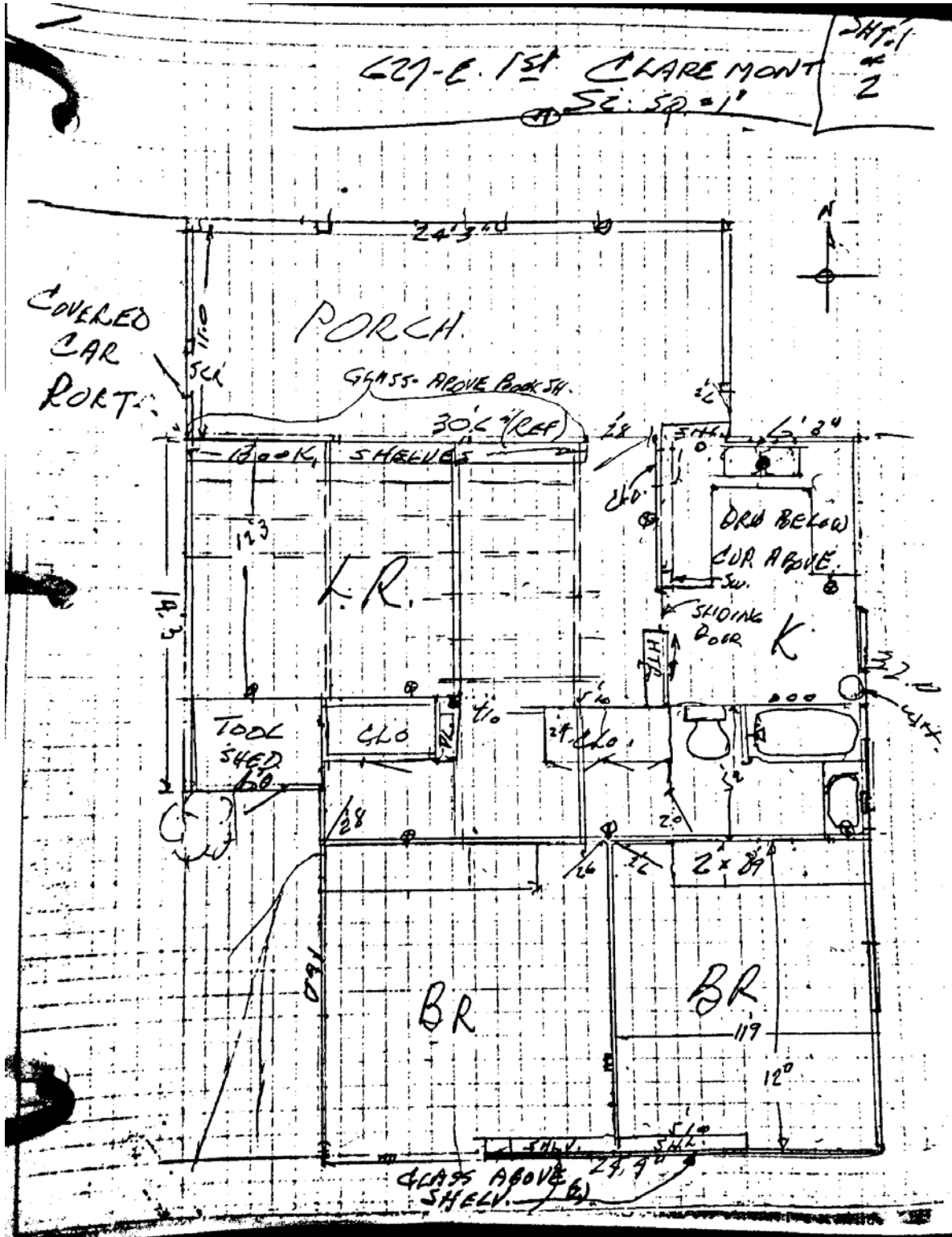
ASSESSOR'S MAP
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

Assessor's Map, Tract 1008, Claremont, CA, Los Angeles County Assessor's Office website.

Intercultural Council Houses
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA
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Figure 5.



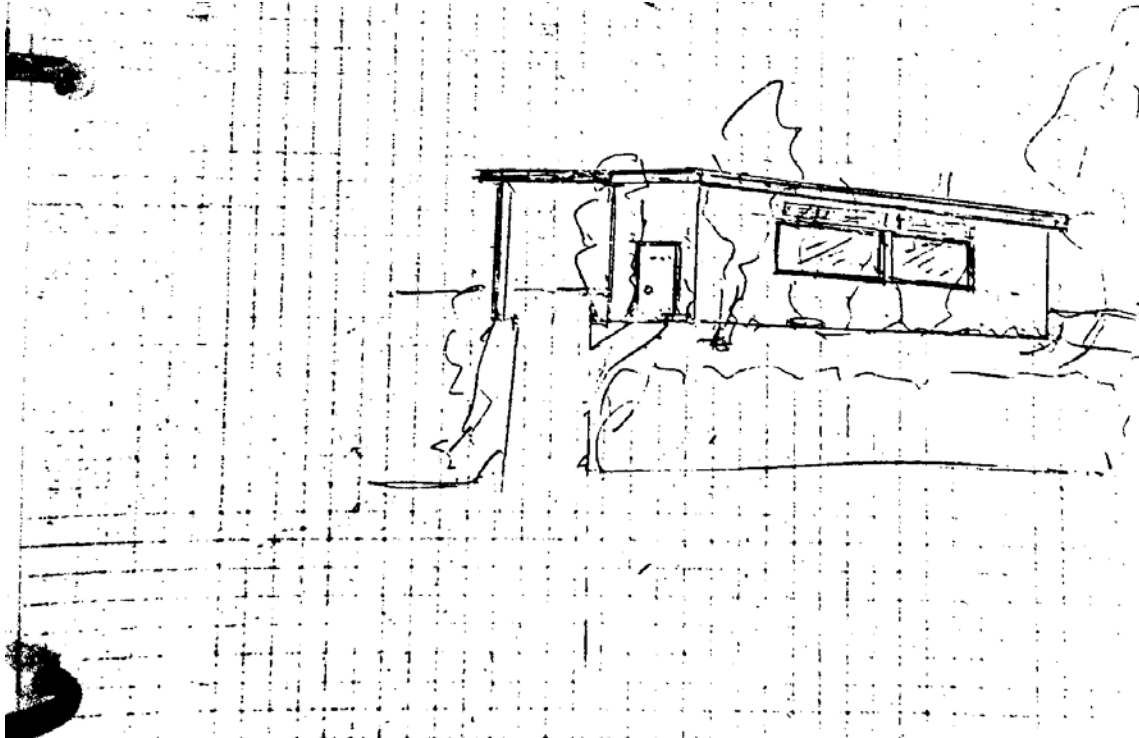
Intercultural Council Houses

Los Angeles County, CA
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Name of Property

Sketch floor plan of 627 E. First Street, Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA

Figure 6.

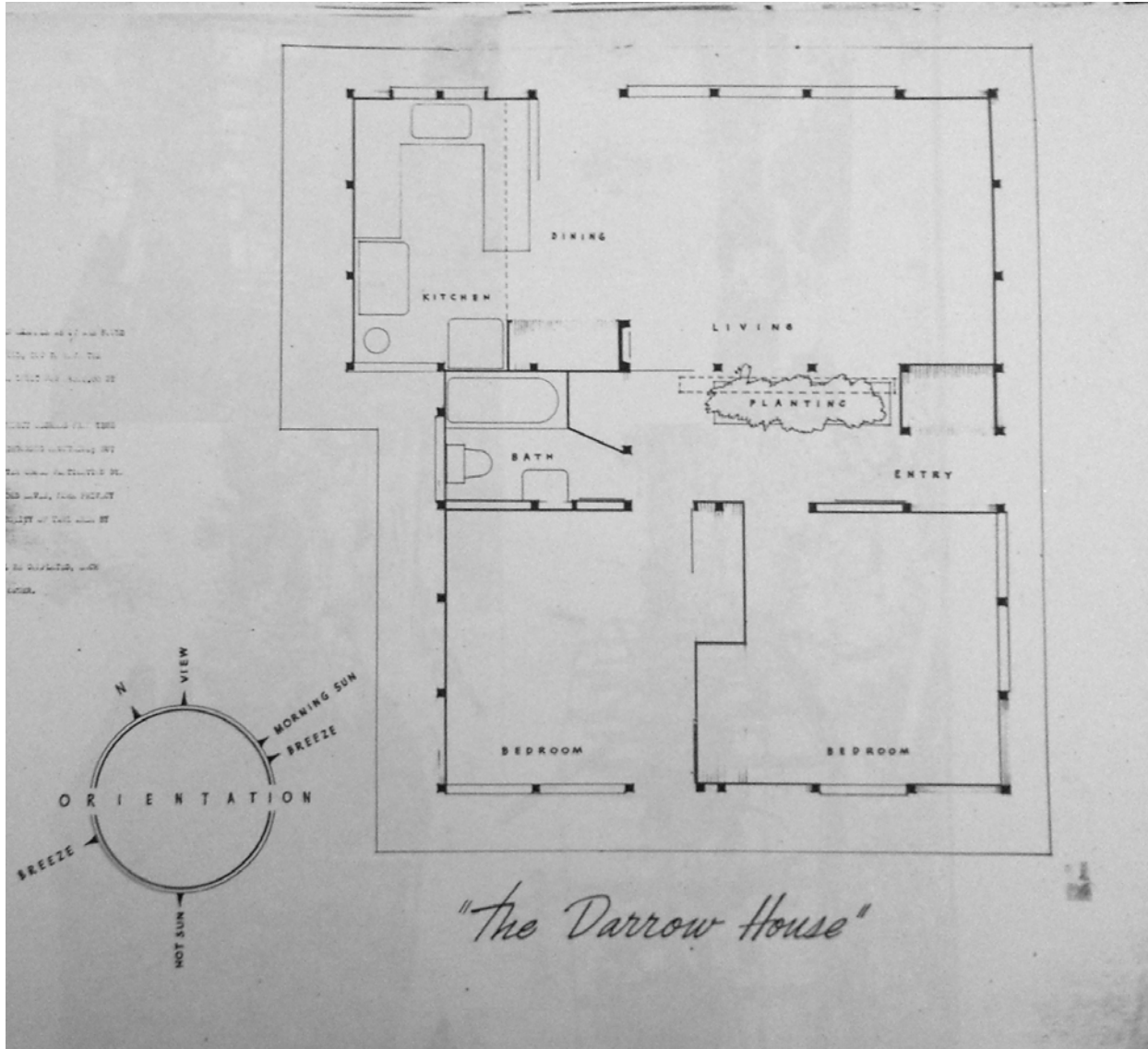


Sketch of 627 E. First Street, Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.

Intercultural Council Houses
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Figure 7.



Sample floor plan from the Darrow House, 628 Blanchard Place, Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.

Intercultural Council Houses
Name of Property

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Additional Documentation: Historic Photographs and Aerials

Figure 8.

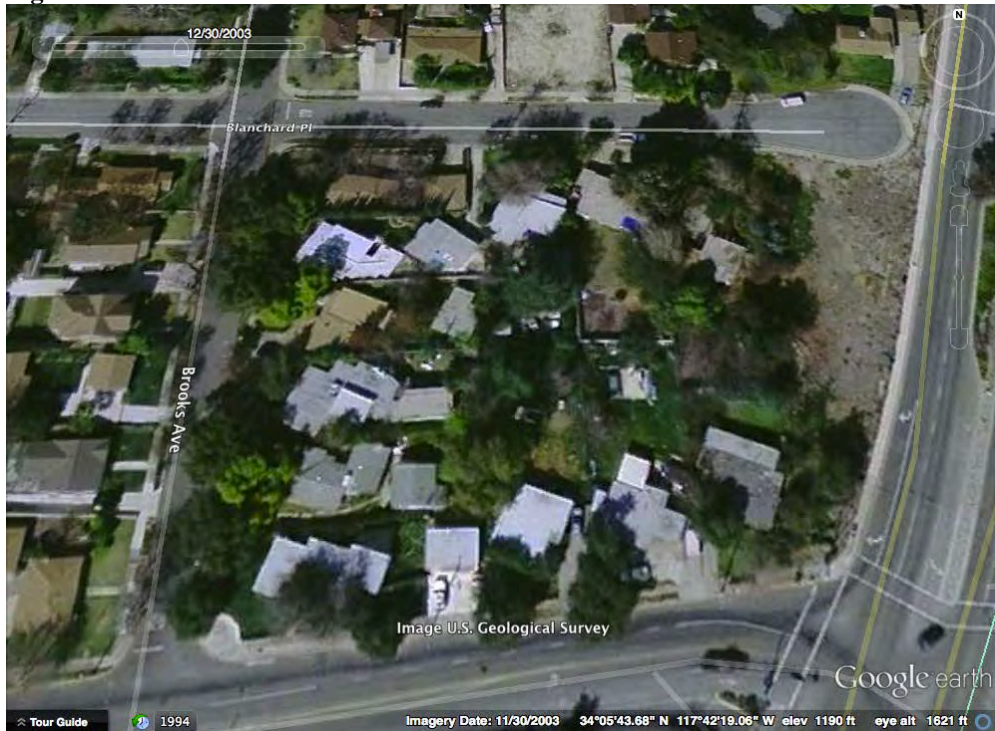


Historic photograph (c. 1950) of Intercultural Council Houses, E. First Street, looking west, Claremont Heritage Special Collections, Claremont, CA.

Intercultural Council Houses
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Los Angeles County, CA
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Figure 9.



Aerial photograph of Tract 1008 (Intercultural Council Houses), 11/30/2003

Figure 10.



Aerial photograph of Tract 1008 (Intercultural Council Houses), 03/30/2007.

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Figure 11.



Aerial photograph of Tract 1008 (Intercultural Council Houses), 10/23/2007

Figure 12.



Aerial photograph of Tract 1008 (Intercultural Council Houses), 11/14/2009

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Figure 13.



Aerial photograph of Tract 1008 (Intercultural Council Houses), 03/15/2013

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



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NO POST BOX

NO POST BOX



































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Intercultural Council Houses
NAME:

MULTIPLE Latinos in 20th Century California MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: CALIFORNIA, Los Angeles

DATE RECEIVED: 2/20/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/17/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/01/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/07/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000121

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT _____DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Intercultural Council Houses are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under NR Criterion A in the areas of Social History and Ethnic Heritage-Hispanic (Mexican). Crafted as an attempt to "address the social injustice created by the segregation of Mexican Americans," the Neighborhood Inc. housing project reflected the efforts of progressive minded Claremont residents during the late 1940s to encourage greater integration in local housing and foster a better understanding among local Anglo and Mexican residents. The work of the local Claremont Intercultural Council in the immediate post-World War II period was largely funded and directed by liberal Anglo residents and university intellectuals associated with various local established social action committees. The efforts of the Council included raising funds, purchasing land, developing project guidelines, and creating house plans for what was intended to be a model integrated housing development that could be copied in other Southern California communities. Envisioned as a communal residential enclave providing homes to a mix of Anglo and Mexican residents, the Intercultural Council Houses project was comprised of modest-scaled, vernacular Modernist homes built from standard plans sharing common infrastructure amenities such as washhouses and recreational areas. While the efforts of the Council would later be criticized by some in the Latino community as white paternalism, the Intercultural Council Houses offer an intriguing and unique example of post-war race relations in the Southland/Claremont/Los Angeles region. The district meets the Registration Requirements set out in the *Latinos in Twentieth Century California MPS*.

RECOM. / CRITERIA Accept CRITERION A

REVIEWER PAUL R. LUSIGNAN DISCIPLINE HISTORIAN

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 4/7/2015

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR (Y)N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Chattel, Inc. | Historic Preservation Consultants

December 17, 2014

VIA EMAIL

Paul Rohrer, Esq.
Loeb & Loeb LLP
10100 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 2200
Los Angeles, CA 90067

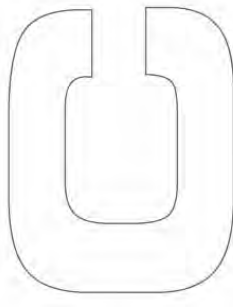
RE: Intercultural Council Houses Historic District Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places

Dear Mr. Rohrer:

Chattel, Inc. (Chattel) was retained by Claremont McKenna College's counsel to peer review the Intercultural Council Houses Historic District Nomination (nomination) prepared by Molly Iker (author). In Chattel's professional opinion, the nomination as submitted is incomplete, and may misstate or omit facts. Significant information about the true history of the Intercultural Council and the houses it constructed is missing from the nomination. Typically, for a nomination to be successful it should demonstrate significance under one or more of the four criteria, establish a boundary, and assess integrity to ensure requirements for listing have been met. It appears premature that the draft nomination is scheduled for consideration by the State Historical Resources Commission (Commission) at the meeting in January 2015.

We understand staff of the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), late in their review of the draft nomination, suggested it be considered for designation under the pending "Latinos in Twentieth Century California" Multiple Property Documentation Form (Latino MPDF) within the "Struggles for Inclusion" theme. This appears to be due, in part, to the fact the Latino MPDF and the first two associated properties are scheduled for hearing on the same agenda as the Intercultural Council Houses. As a potential residential district, the Intercultural Council Houses is not an identified property type and does not appear to meet the registration requirements for the Latino MPDF.

With additional information, the Intercultural Council Houses might qualify as significant under Criterion A because of an association with local early civil rights and anti-segregation movements; however, as submitted, the nomination appears to be incomplete and does not include essential facts needed to support a finding of significance. Prior to consideration by the Commission, the nomination could be revised to include additional information described below.



Nomination fails to analyze the Intercultural Council Houses Historic District under the four criteria

Author argues for significance under Criterion A; however, a discussion of criteria B, C, and D are necessary for the nomination to be complete.¹ Under the Latino MPDF, a property may be significant for its association with a person who played a prominent role in Latino civil rights history. The author should include information about possible eligibility under Criterion B.

Nomination fails to address the affect of alterations on all seven aspects of integrity

There are inconsistencies, omissions, and errors in the discussion of integrity. Only five of seven aspects of integrity are listed on Section 8 page 11. Section 8 page 13 includes a discussion of integrity in the wrong part of the nomination. The integrity discussion should consider effects of alterations, such as the subdivision of communal land into private, fenced parcels and the addition of stucco siding along with other alterations to the houses. The potential historic district may lack integrity of setting, feeling, design, materials, and workmanship.

Nomination fails to provide historic context for area(s) of potential significance

The nomination should incorporate scholarly research on the history of Latinos in Claremont and their struggles for inclusion. In A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970, Matt Garcia clarifies that the Intercultural Council was not a Latino community organization. Based on Garcia's research, the Intercultural Council consisted of a primarily Caucasian group of academics who pursued an experimental, interracial housing project in Claremont. The factual information contained in Matt Garcia's book and elsewhere is required to explain the history of the Intercultural Council Houses and their context.

More information is needed on segregation in Claremont at the time of construction of the Intercultural Council Houses. There is no discussion of the racial make-up of Claremont and/or surrounding region at the time of construction (available through Census data). More information is needed on early twentieth century segregation that led to the need for or desire to create an integrated community. The author argues that the potential historic district is significant for its association with the civil rights movement in Los Angeles and California. The author's argument is not justified as presented and needs to be strengthened by discussion of the context of the civil rights movement in Los Angeles regarding housing and deed restrictions.

More should be said to document ethnic backgrounds of owners/residents of the Intercultural Council Houses. Was the development for citrus workers, students, professors, and/or professionals? (Perhaps include a table listing the first residents of the Intercultural Council Houses to demonstrate how the potential historic district was diverse.)

¹ The nomination should evaluate the Intercultural Council Houses for significance under all four National Register Criteria for Evaluation. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of significant persons in or past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Nomination fails to discuss architectural style adequately

Use of "International Style" to describe the buildings may not be accurate. "Modern, vernacular" is likely more appropriate. Several of the houses exhibit minimal traditional design elements outside the described style.

Nomination lacks necessary documentation of district boundaries

A boundary map showing clear limits of the potential historic district with contributors and non-contributors identified must be included in the nomination. Recent construction to the east should not be included within the district boundary.

Conclusion

As submitted, the nomination fails to share key elements of the history and significance of the Intercultural Council Houses. After reviewing additional information which was not included in the draft nomination, Chattel believes the Intercultural Council Houses could potentially be significant under Criterion A for the experimental housing project created in an attempt to desegregate Claremont; however, the draft nomination does not currently include all of the information required for a finding of significance. There is extensive research and factual information on the Intercultural Council Houses that is not included in the draft nomination, and we would urge OHP staff and the Commission to require that the applicant include all necessary information in a revised nomination before findings of significance and integrity can be made.

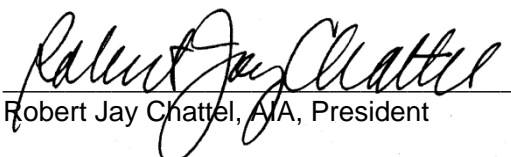
The draft nomination should be revised with additional information on the Intercultural Council Houses as they fit in the larger context of state and local desegregation and civil rights movements of the late 1940s and 1950s. The historic context of the Intercultural Council Houses is more fully described in the attached a chapter of Matt Garcia's book to illustrate some of the factual information that should be added to the revised nomination.

The history of the Intercultural Council Houses and its significance should be fully developed in a nomination to ensure the community understands the importance of the Intercultural Council Houses and their significance in development of the community.

We would strongly encourage OHP staff and the Commission to consider the lack of thoroughness of this nomination on its own and within the Latino MPDF, and to encourage the author to expand and support her nomination to address the above listed concerns before the nomination is considered.

Sincerely,

CHATTEL, INC.

By: 
Robert Jay Chattel, AIA, President

Enclosures: 1



PAUL ROHRER
Partner

10100 Santa Monica Blvd.
Suite 2200
Los Angeles, CA 90067

Direct 310.282.2270
Main 310.282.2000
Fax 310.919.2922
prohrer@loeb.com

December 22, 2014

William Burg
State Historian II
California Office of Historic Preservation
1725 23rd St., Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95816

Re: Intercultural Council Houses Historic District Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places

Dear Mr. Burg:

This firm is counsel to Claremont McKenna College, neighbor to, and owner of some of the Intercultural Council Houses. Please find enclosed, a letter containing a peer review (the "**Chattel Review**") by Chattel Inc., Historic Preservation Consultants of the pending nomination (the "**Nomination**") of the Intercultural Council Houses Historic District to the National Register of Historic Place. As submitted, the Nomination is incomplete and prematurely calendared for the State Historical Resources Commission's consideration in January. Therefore, we respectfully request that the Nomination be removed from the Commission's calendar until such time as the Nomination has been amended to address the deficiencies described in the Chattel Review.

As delineated by the Chattel Review, the Nomination is deficient because it does not completely address all elements of the application and it lacks sufficient evidence for the Office of Historic Preservation to perform a complete review of the historic significance of the Intercultural Council Houses District.

The College is generally supportive of historic designations, particularly ones that recognize the sometimes neglected contributions of the Latino community. However, to ensure the intellectual integrity of the historic designation process, it is important to ensure that nominations are complete and fully supported by available information and documentation.

At this time, the Nomination does not support the designation of the Intercultural Council House District as a historic place in the manner described in the Nomination. Consequently, we respectfully request that the Office of Historic Preservation take this off the Commission's January agenda and request that the author revise the Nomination to address the deficiencies set forth in the Chattel Review.



After reviewing this letter and the Chattel Review, please let us know whether you agree with Chattel Inc.'s determination or if any further information is required.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Rohrer", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Paul Rohrer
Partner

Enclosure

cc: Jay Correia
Matthew Bibbens
Robert Chattel



PAUL ROHRER
Partner

10100 Santa Monica Blvd.
Suite 2200
Los Angeles, CA 90067

Direct 310.282.2270
Main 310.282.2000
Fax 310.919.2922
prohrer@loeb.com

January 21, 2015

William Burg
State Historian II
California Office of Historic Preservation
1725 23rd St., Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95816

Re: Intercultural Council Houses Historic District Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places

Dear William:

This letter is a follow up to our letter dated December 22, 2014, in which we expressed concerns regarding the initial application for nomination of the Intercultural Council Houses Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places. Our earlier letter included a peer review by Chattel Inc., Historic Preservation Consultants with comments on how to improve the nomination. Since the date of our previous letter, the Office of Historic Preservation staff has worked with the applicant to revise the nomination to eliminate most of the deficiencies described in the peer review.

We appreciate the OHP's work in coordinating with the applicant to greatly improve the nomination. Claremont McKenna College now supports the nomination and the light it shines on the impact of Claremont's Latino residents on our city's culture and heritage. Nonetheless, we continue to have some concerns with the nomination, which, in the future, we may attempt to address by an amendment to the national register form.

We thank you and the applicant for the quick resolution to the issues raised in our prior letter. We look forward to working with you as you process the nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Rohrer", with a long, sweeping underline.

Paul Rohrer
Partner

cc: Jay Correia
Matthew Bibbens
Robert Chattel

**Intercultural Council Houses Historic District
Claremont, Los Angeles County, California
National Register of Historic Places**

The Intercultural Council Houses are a district of twelve single family homes located in Claremont, California, bounded approximately by Blanchard Place, Claremont Boulevard, East First Street and Brooks Streets. These dwellings, constructed between 1947 and 1952, were the first integrated housing development in the city of Claremont. The Intercultural Council was a civil rights organization interested in desegregating the city of Claremont and the state of California. The property is nominated under the cover of the Latinos in Twentieth Century California Multiple Property Document, as a historic district associated with the "Immigration and Settlement" historic context of the MPD.

The district is eligible under Criterion A at the local level of significance for its role in Claremont's social history as a social experiment intended to integrate the city via private development. The homes were principally designed by Lewis Crutcher, a Claremont Graduate School attendee, who made plans available for \$35. Approximately half of the original occupants of the Intercultural Council houses were Latino. The twelve homes were arranged around a central yard that included communal facilities including barbecue, phone, tot yard, playground and incinerator, and two parking lots. These facilities were included in the project to foster a sense of community. The last house was built in 1952, but the experiment continued until 1960 when the common areas in the development's center were divided into individual backyards on separate lots. The district retains a high degree of overall integrity despite the division of the property and construction of a limited number of new buildings. All of the original Intercultural Council houses, and some of the accessory buildings and structures, are still extant on the site and retain sufficient integrity to remain contributors to the district.

The nomination received letters of comment from an attorney representing Claremont McKenna College, one of the property owners, and Robert Chattel, a historian engaged by Claremont McKenna to review the nomination. After discussion and clarification between the applicant and the owner's representative, the nomination was revised to address areas of concern regarding architectural style and further clarification of district boundaries, contributors and non-contributors, and how the property relates to the Latinos in Twentieth Century California MPD, the property owner sent a letter of support for the nomination.

Staff supports the nomination as written and recommends that the State Historical Resources Commission determine that the Intercultural Council Houses Historic District meets National Register Criterion A at the local level of significance, with a period of significance of 1947-1960. Staff recommends the State Historic Preservation Officer approve the nomination for forwarding to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

William Burg
State Historian II
February 6, 2015

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

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February 10, 2015

J. Paul Loether
Deputy Keeper and Chief
National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl.
Washington D.C. 20005

Subject: **Latinos in Twentieth Century California MPS
Multiple Counties, California
National Register of Historic Places Nomination**

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the **Latinos in Twentieth Century California Multiple Property Submission (MPS)** consisting of the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) and two associated individual nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. On January 28, 2015 in Sacramento, California, the California State Historical Resources Commission unanimously approved the MPS and found two individual properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance: the Intercultural Council Houses Historic District under Criterion A and the Lydia D. Killefer School under Criteria A and C.

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nominations for the LATINOS IN TWENTIETH CENTURY CALIFORNIA MULTIPLE PROPERTY SUBMISSION (including the Multiple Property Documentation Form and two associated individual nominations for the Intercultural Council Houses Historic District and Lydia D. Killefer School) to the National Register of Historic Places.

Latinos in Twentieth Century California MPS has four associated historic contexts, each with one or more subcontexts: Making a Nation: Latino Immigration and Settlement, Latinos in the Media; Making a Life: Religion and Spirituality in Latino Culture, Latinos in Sports, Latinos in the Arts; Making a Living: Latinos in Labor History, Business and Commerce in Latino Communities, Latinos in the Military; and Making a Democracy: Latino Struggles for Inclusion.

Associated property types include headquarters and offices of prominent organizations, districts historically settled and occupied by Latinos, print media offices, radio and television stations, residences, offices, and studios of prominent persons, religious buildings, recreational facilities, performing arts venues, cultural centers, murals, sites of historic events, commercial buildings, social halls, and schools.

The geographic area of the MPS is the State of California. Properties are significant under Criterion A for their association with events and/or under Criterion B for their association with individuals. Many properties possess architectural merit and may also be eligible under Criterion C. Registration requirements are not provided for properties that may be eligible under Criterion C, because the context for evaluating their architectural merit is not included in this MPDF. The notable exception is for works of public art created by Latinos such as murals and sculptures, which may be significant for possessing high artistic value.

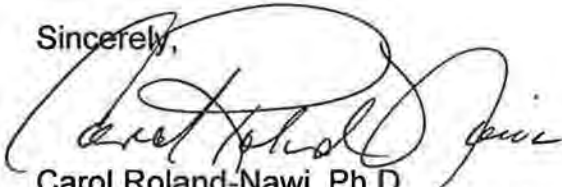
The MPDF was prepared under contract for the California State Office of Historic Preservation. The Intercultural Council Houses Historic District nomination was submitted on behalf of Claremont Heritage. The Lydia D. Killefer School was nominated by the (Orange) Old Towne Preservation Association.

The Intercultural Council Houses Historic District nomination received letters of comment from an attorney representing Claremont McKenna College, one of the property owners, and Robert Chattel, a historian engaged by Claremont McKenna to review the nomination. After discussion and clarification between the applicant and the owner's representative, the nomination was revised to address areas of concern regarding architectural style and further clarification of district boundaries, contributors and non-contributors, and how the property relates to the *Latinos in Twentieth Century California* MPDF, the property owner sent a letter of support for the nomination.

Orange Unified School District, a public agency, objected to the nomination of the Killefer School.

If you have any questions regarding the MPDF or Killefer School nomination, please contact Amy Crain of my staff at (916) 445-7009. If you have any questions regarding the Intercultural Council Houses Historic District nomination, please contact William Burg of my staff at (916) 445-7004.

Sincerely,



Carol Roland-Nawi, Ph.D.
State Historic Preservation Officer

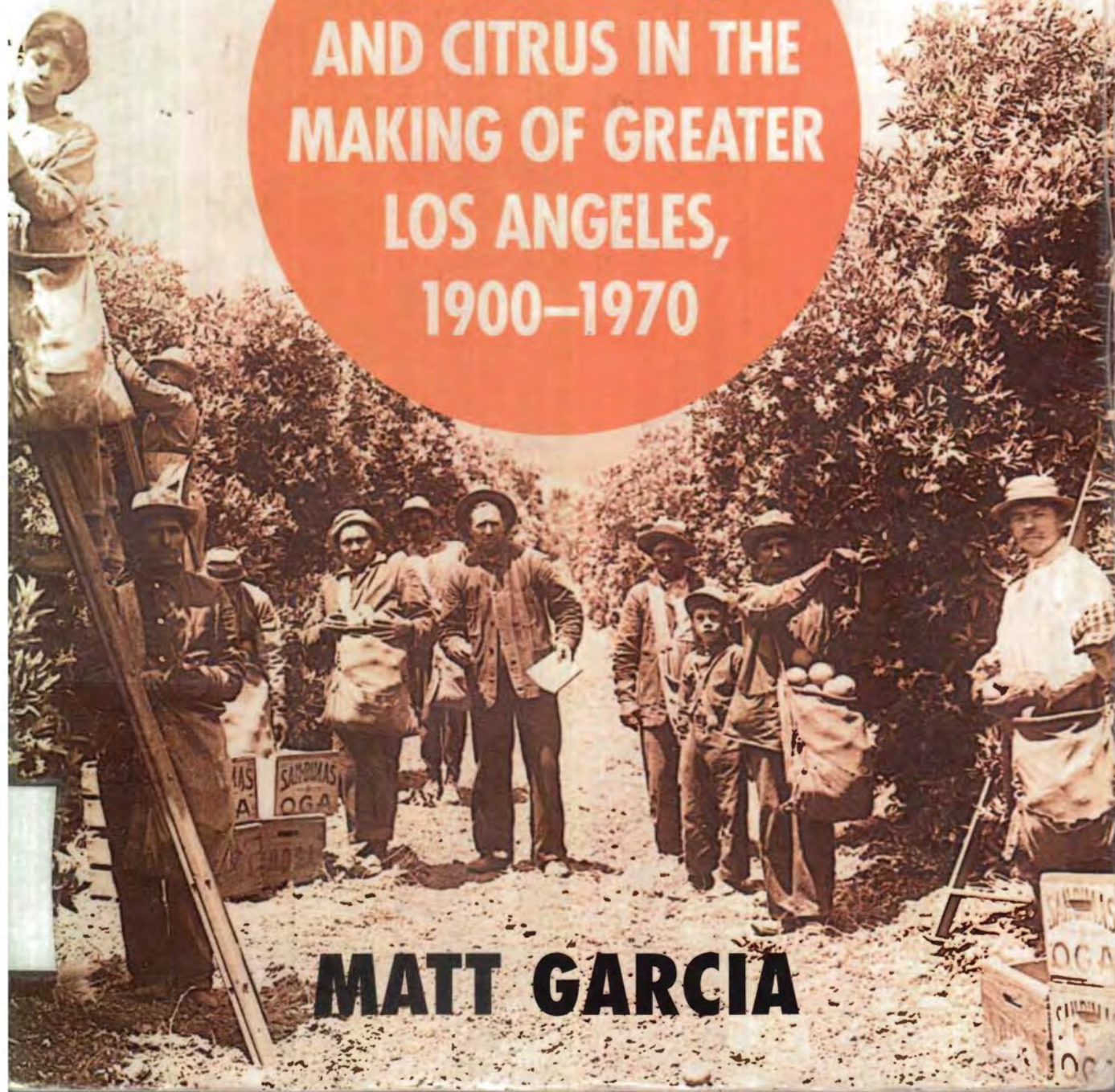
Enclosures

A WORLD OF ITS OWN

SO

RACE, LABOR,
AND CITRUS IN THE
MAKING OF GREATER
LOS ANGELES,
1900–1970

MATT GARCIA



by a cadre of white artists, community philanthropists, and college professors, the ICC's idealistic prescription for intercultural relations provided an alternative vision to the de facto segregation that came to dominate the cultural landscape of Southern California from 1950 to the present.

The Intercultural Council

In Claremont, the presence of the Claremont Colleges significantly influenced local thinking on segregation and the separation of the "races."⁷¹ Social scientists at the colleges interested in researching social relations frequently used the Arbol Verde community as a laboratory for understanding the conditions of Mexican Americans. Although these scholars and students sometimes approached their subjects with an attitude of sympathy, their studies often objectified Mexican residents by portraying them as impressionable, ignorant, and unorganized. For example, in her 1932 study, Helen O'Brien concluded, "the Claremont group is not organized" and found them "to be highly susceptible to social attitudes (in this sense, the attitudes which members of another race have toward [them])."⁷² Studies conducted by students and scholars did little to alleviate the social inequalities extant between Mexican Americans and whites in the community, while occasionally actions by college-sponsored organizations such as the Friends of the Mexicans generated distrust and resentment among local Mexican Americans.

During the late 1940s, however, a new attitude among a few scholars began to change the exploitative relationship that existed between the Mexican American and white communities in Claremont. First, the Padua Hills Theatre, an institution that depended on the support of many college professors and administrators, facilitated the development of friendships and mutual interest between some Euroamericans and Mexican Americans in the community. Although the institution and its plays often reinforced historical myths and Mexican stereotypes, the goal of "intercultural understanding" articulated by theater owners Herman and Bess Garner manifested itself in exchanges between audiences, managers, and players before and after the productions. These exchanges generated a general interest in Mexico and Mexican people among many faculty members working at the Claremont Colleges, including nationally renowned artists Millard Sheets, Milford Zornes, and Albert Stewart, who donated their time, work, and money to promote the Mexican Players.⁷³ Equally important, the increased activism of Mexican Americans throughout the citrus belt during the late 1930s and 1940s inspired some white scholars to become involved in organizations invested in the improvement of intercultural relations.

Among these scholars, Dr. W. Henry Cooke was recognized as the leader of intercultural studies at the Claremont Colleges. In 1918, an unspecified health problem forced Cooke to leave Lawrence College in Wisconsin for the promise of better weather and the chance to finish his degree at Pomona College. Under the direction of Dr. Sumner, Cooke successfully completed his Bachelor of Arts and stayed in California to earn a doctorate in history at Stanford University. Following the completion of his Ph.D. in 1925, Cooke returned to Pomona College where he became the secretary of the Honors Committee and eventually became a director of graduate studies at Claremont Graduate School in 1938.

Soon after assuming the position at Claremont Graduate School, Cooke attended a UNESCO Conference in San Francisco. In his graduate studies and the early part of his career, Cooke researched the history of diplomatic relations, or what he described as "world understanding, international understanding, and international relations." The San Francisco experience, however, significantly altered his perspectives. Cooke explained: "The strict international relations, in an academic sense, that I had been following, in connection with history, gave way in my mind to a study of the relation of peoples rather than governments." Cooke continued, "the relation of peoples to each other, in a formal sense, seemed to be almost completely based upon the cultural pattern of each people, and not upon the governmental, diplomatic maneuverings."⁷⁴ At the conference, he drafted a pamphlet outlining his new understanding of international relations that organizers copied and distributed to all registrants. In it, Cooke argued that meaningful peace had eluded nations primarily because understanding amongst people of various cultures had not first been achieved within the nations. Therefore, Cooke concluded, peace between nations could not be reached without first securing "cultural integration at home."⁷⁵

This new understanding led Cooke to focus on the problem of segregation of Mexican Americans in Southern California. Initially, upon first arriving in Claremont, Cooke paid little attention to the Mexican *colonia* of Arbol Verde during his undergraduate studies. His only contact with Mexican people was through his wife, Mary Miller Cooke, who held a position teaching at Sycamore School in Claremont in 1919. At that time, the Claremont school district did not practice segregation, and seven of her twenty-eight first grade students came from the Arbol Verde community. Informally monitoring the progress of these seven children, Henry Cooke noted, "these children went right into the grades with everybody else and were taught the same as everybody else." He added, "while they were weak on language, they took hold in no time; nobody knew a different way."⁷⁶

This early exposure to integrated education informed his criticisms of educational segregation during the 1940s. Cooke watched segregation in Claremont develop, as a local educator, Charlotte Merrill, first established what she called an "opportunity room" for Mexican children in a separate building on Sycamore's school grounds. Although he saw Merrill's actions as well-intentioned and "not real segregation," Cooke nevertheless disagreed with the practice of separating Mexicans from whites.⁷⁷

During the late 1940s, Cooke became active in countywide organizations and wrote articles that articulated his opposition to segregation and discrimination. In 1948, for example, Cooke published an article entitled "The Segregation of Mexican-American School Children in Southern California," in which he championed the recent decision in the *Mendez* case and implored Southland school districts to comply with the court ruling. Cooke acknowledged the importance of an educated and organized second and third generation of Mexican Americans. "They are now in large numbers 'Americans' in every sense of the word," wrote Cooke, and have "organizations for their own improvement and integration."⁷⁸ Cooke also recommended action against discrimination in housing and all other public facilities, and advocated "break[ing] down the superiority doctrine of the white race and . . . replac[ing] it with the idea of racial equality." In an article entitled "The Continuing American Revolution," Cooke assessed U.S. society, arguing that "our whole social pattern, be it relative to the armed services, the churches, the composition of our cities, or our universities, seems out of joint when considered in the light of full acceptance of racial differences." He therefore called to action "all fearless souls who organize to combat injustice in inter-group or inter-racial relations."⁷⁹

Following his own advice, Cooke founded a group in Southern California called the Committee on Community Relations of the Los Angeles Welfare Council. Meeting in the Chamber of Commerce Building in Los Angeles, the organization discussed incidents of ethnic and racial conflict in the county and strategies on how to resolve them. The council began by addressing a dispute in Los Angeles between African American residents and returning Japanese American internees. Before World War II, Japanese Americans had created a distinctive ethnic neighborhood in south Los Angeles known as "Little Tokyo." Due to the internment of Japanese families and the migration of African Americans for defense industry jobs, the area became a predominantly black community referred to as "Brownsville." When the war ended, Japanese Americans returned to the neighborhood intent on reclaiming their homes and businesses. The two groups clashed over control of the local economy and culture.⁸⁰

African American entrepreneurs and musicians fostered the development of

a lively jazz and art scene within the neighborhood. The Japanese, on the other hand, objected to black investments in liquor stores and nightclubs, which they believed caused a proliferation of crime and "vice" in the area. The Committee on Community Relations attempted to defuse the conflict by stopping new liquor licenses, controlling the spread of the "red-light district," and holding public meetings to discuss legal matters and religious differences. According to Cooke, the committee succeeded in resolving many differences fairly and peacefully by listening to both sides in the dispute. This even-handed approach, however, conflicted with the interests of the committee's supervising department, the Los Angeles Welfare Council, as Cooke explained: "[We] got so liberal eventually that the benefactors of the Los Angeles Welfare Council decided that we were too liberal for their support." He added, "they weren't so strong about settling the question with the Negroes; they were for kicking them out."⁸¹ The rift with the Welfare Council led the committee to disband and reorganize as a private, nonprofit organization known as the Los Angeles County Conference on Community Relations. Cooke helped write the constitution for the group and served as president for the first two years beginning in 1947.⁸²

Cooke assumed this position at a time of increased social action among a handful of liberal whites in Claremont. Two community residents in particular, Ruth Ordway and Harland Hogue, took the lead in renewing efforts to improve local white and Mexican American relations. During the 1920s, the Claremont Congregational Church contributed to the formation of *Su Casa*, a medical and hygiene program for Mexican women, and the Friends of the Mexicans.⁸³ Although the repatriations disrupted the relationship established between the church and the Arbol Verde residents, Ordway, a member of the Claremont Congregational Church, and Hogue, a Congregationalist minister and professor of religion at Scripps College, maintained an interest in improving the standard of living in the local *colonias*. Civic neglect, the discriminatory layout of county and city dividing lines, and depressed economic conditions among barrio residents allowed many of the structural problems to persist in Arbol Verde. The housing stock remained substandard in quality, while local discrimination and geographical separation kept Mexican American families segregated from the larger community in Claremont.

Around 1948, Hogue and Ordway had an informal discussion about how to remedy the situation in a meaningful way. During the conversation, Ordway mentioned to Hogue, "I understand that there is a tract of ground near the Mexican area of Claremont that is being sold for taxes. Why don't we see if we can buy it?" Both had faith that they could raise the necessary funds due to their significant connections in the community. Ordway served as chair for the So-

cial Action Committee in the Women's Fellowship of the Claremont Church, while Hogue directed the Congregational Church Social Action Committee. Together, they developed the plan to purchase the land and provide affordable home loans to Mexican American families interested in settling in the area.

Ordway and Hogue decided to first consult Henry Cooke for guidance on the project. Cooke, a member of the Social Action Committee, also had been planning ways to unite his countywide organization with the local group in an effort to desegregate Claremont. Cooke first thought of trying to move the county lines that divided Arbol Verde, so as to bring all the local Mexican households within Los Angeles County and Claremont city boundaries. The plan proved to be impossible due to the excessive cost of redrawing government maps. Ordway and Hogue's idea provided a useful alternative; however, Cooke suggested one major alteration in the plans.

Cooke recommended that they change their focus. Instead of helping just Mexican Americans, the project would create an integrated neighborhood of Mexican and white families. In addition, the project would be governed by an association of concerned white citizens and serve as an exercise in intercultural cooperation. First, the governing body, known as the Intercultural Council (ICC), would not only raise the money for the purchase of land and help secure the promise of loans from local banks, but would also hold seminars and banquets to discuss strategies for integration and the improvement of race relations in Southern California. Second, Hogue, Ordway, and Cooke envisioned the actual construction of the houses as a cooperative effort, whereby future residents would join in the building of their own homes and get to know one another as the community took shape. Cooke explained the original plan: "The whole plan was to establish private homes in a tract with a uniform pattern of houses with a central space in the middle of the block for a common park area in which there was a big fireplace. The thought was that the Anglo families would help each other and the Mexican-Americans build their houses, decorate their houses, take care of each other's kids when there were some, and so forth—which they did—and that the Mexican-Americans would do the same."⁸⁴ Agreed on the plans, Ordway, Hogue, and Cooke returned to their respective groups intent on making the ICC and the intercultural community a reality.

The first step involved securing the land. Ordway and Hogue successfully persuaded the owner of the property, Realtor Claude Bradley, not to sell the land until the Social Action Committee could raise the money to buy it. Court- ing wealthy and influential members of the community, they got ten people to loan the committee \$300 a piece at 3 percent interest, which enabled them

to buy a square block adjacent to the Arbol Verde neighborhood. Ordway convinced the Women's Fellowship of the Claremont Church to put up an additional \$200 to plant street trees, while the newly formed ICC paid a local surveyor to survey the tract and put in lot lines. The survey resulted in twelve lots to be parceled out to potential buyers by the Intercultural Council.⁸⁵

In order to make the houses as affordable as possible, Ordway, Hogue, and Cooke sought out private funding to subsidize the construction plans. Cooke also enlisted the support of an interested and willing Millard Sheets, who joined the ICC and drew up architectural plans with a group of graduate students at the Claremont Graduate School (CGS).⁸⁶ Based on these plans, the ICC secured a grant of \$5,000 from the Columbia Foundation of San Francisco, and later received \$3,000 more. In addition, the ICC got an agreement from the local Citizens-National Bank and Security First National Bank to grant loans of between \$3,000 and \$6,000 at a low 4 percent interest to potential buyers considered "high-risk" by the Federal Housing Administration.⁸⁷ The entire ICC Board of Trustees served as cosigners to these loans, as did individual members including Bess Garner, Ruth Ordway, and a local nurse, Margaret Goff, who ran a health clinic for mothers and babies in the Arbol Verde *colonia*.⁸⁸

Cooke worked to secure the intellectual foundations of the project by eliciting the support of renowned urban theorist and cultural historian Lewis Mumford. Cooke offered Mumford \$1,000 to come to Claremont and produce a report that would "transmit the vision of what the project might mean to American life."⁸⁹ Although no record of Mumford's response exists, Cooke's letter to the fellow historian articulated his ambitious plans for the ICC. Cooke clearly expressed his intentions when he wrote:

We have organized an Intercultural Council to work at the question of making it possible for Mexican Americans to improve their living conditions and to spread out into the residential areas from which they are now largely restricted [by racial restrictive covenants]. Our larger purpose is to start a change in the attitude of the community toward any or all outsiders of non-caucasian culture. We should be able to use our college-community character to take the lead in intercultural social and residential patterns for this whole area [of Southern California].⁹⁰

Cooke thought of the ICC as a regional think tank and action committee for Greater Los Angeles, and hoped to produce in Claremont a model in intercultural living that other Southland communities could follow.⁹¹ He spread the news of the project throughout the county through his position with the Conference on Community Relations. By 1948, the Los Angeles County Board of

Supervisors took special notice of the project and expressed their sincere interest in the ICC plans. In a letter of congratulations, a consortium of community organizations organized by the Board of Supervisors wrote: "It is hoped that your undertaking may serve as the pilot project to guide other communities in solving their problems."⁹² Sheets shared this optimism, which he expressed in the community blueprints. Sheets wrote, "We want to prove that something can be done about segregative living in our area and in our own day." He concluded, "It is time people in America learn to live together without respect to color, race, nationality and creed—we hope our efforts may help to bring about this fundamental achievement."⁹³

In practice, however, the community and the council's efforts exhibited both the problems and the promise of intercultural relations in Southern California. To fill houses designated for white residents, the ICC invited graduate students studying at the Claremont Graduate School to join the new community. Paul Darrow, an artist and resident of the ICC community, remembered, "all the caucasian families were graduate students on G.I. Bills [studying] Psychology, Political Science, history and Fine Arts."⁹⁴ Most were newlyweds and in their mid-twenties, and active in liberal politics on a local level. Darrow believed that most whites bought into the community "because it was a good deal and part of the deal was the inter-cultural situation."⁹⁵

Mexican Americans, however, joined the ICC community with greater hesitation. Their experiences with Friends of the Mexicans, the repatriations and deportations, educational segregation, and general discrimination cast shadows of doubt over the project. Mary Palos, a resident of the ICC community recalled, "there were [Mexican] people who didn't trust those gringos, gabachos, or Americanos because of what they had done."⁹⁶ She also recounted an offense committed by the Intercultural Council against her brother when he tried to buy the land set aside for the community: "He had put in money, not the whole thing but he was already buying [the property]. . . . And then came these people [ICC], and they told him that they were buying it and that he should just as well get his money back."⁹⁷

Paul Darrow also remembered that the ICC had difficulty persuading Mexican families to join the community and heard that some council members "semi-leaned on" potential Mexican American residents by threatening not to hire them for local jobs.⁹⁸ In spite of Mexican American distrust and allegations of white coercion, the Intercultural Council finally settled Mexican families in half the homes in the tract.

In addition to the six Mexican and five Caucasian families, the original settlement included the first African American homeowners in Claremont.⁹⁹ Isaac

and Ann Livingston, graduate students in the Education Department at CGS, lived next door to the Palos family. Mary Palos commented that "bring[ing] blacks [into the neighborhood] was important to me and for us to live close together and learn about one another."¹⁰⁰ Although the Livingstons stayed only two years in the community, Bruno and Mary Palos forged a meaningful relationship with the couple. In later years, the Paloses visited the Livingstons in San Francisco where the two Claremont graduates found jobs teaching in public schools.

Once settled, community relations functioned like most suburban neighborhoods in postwar America. "We were just a bunch of young families in a unique social situation," commented Paul Darrow. He added, "like all neighborhoods there are several you relate to, more you chat with and most you nod to."¹⁰¹ Mary Palos recalled having "potluck" parties and hosting neighborhood meetings at her house. Since the community shared washing machines, barbecues, and a park known as Neighbors Park, the residents conducted monthly meetings to regulate use and maintenance of these facilities. Mary recalled only one dispute among the residents. "The Felixes didn't want to participate in paying to keep up the park, [and] I had to go up there and speak to them."¹⁰² Darrow remembered these meetings as some of the "rough" but "most successful times," commenting, "we argued as equals and most often sides on issues were mixed racially (terrible word)."¹⁰³

Although disagreements arose between families, new understanding and genuine friendship also evolved. Paul Darrow commented that relationships "were not artificial," and believed that the personal and cultural exchanges within the neighborhood benefited his family. "My kids spoke Spanish as a result of growing up there," Darrow remembered. In addition, Darrow's son Chris forged a lifelong friendship with Roger ("Rogie") Palos. The experience also contributed to Darrow's development as an artist. Darrow recalled, "My first series of acceptable non-student work was the result of abstracted paintings of the gravel pits, the abandoned machinery, railroad cars and broken trucks behind El Chisme [the local market]."

Painting the *colonia* sensitized Darrow to the problems facing Mexican Americans. Occasionally, Darrow would invite students to his house to paint the community. "They would say 'hello' to Mary, and she would ignore them," remembered Darrow. Later, she explained to Darrow that their paintings "embarrassed her" and that she felt "condescended to" by their actions. Darrow discovered that this created a "strange kind of feeling of resentment," which he then respected after the exchange with Palos.¹⁰⁴

Living together also shaped Mexican Americans' perceptions of whites, as

Mary Palos explained: "In my thinking before I started mixing with them and living with them . . . I had in my mind that over there [downtown Claremont] they were so clean because they were so white. [Shakes her head 'no,' and laughs] And then I learned that some of us are not as clean as others! I learned that it's not true."¹⁰⁵

The experience of intercultural living dispelled some popular myths about whites and allowed Mexican Americans to counter white popular notions concerning Mexicans. Mary Palos remembered, "I thought it helped to show that we were not as ignorant as I thought that they thought we were." She also revealed, "I learned that the Caucasians get more opportunities . . . like the professors we were dealing with in the Intercultural Council . . . that was the big difference—and the money—you know, they had more money."¹⁰⁶

These differences also manifested themselves among the twelve families. As the white (and black) graduate students finished their studies and moved out of the *colonia*, the ICC found it difficult to maintain the racial "mix" originally established in the community. Cooke explained: "We got graduate students who were interested in Spanish, in art, and in city planning courses and so forth, to buy some of the places, and Mexican-Americans of what I would call laboring class to buy the others. This made a little community that was bifurcated and never quite wholesome because there were two kinds of people in it, some with a temporary interest as they went through college, others with a more permanent interest."¹⁰⁷

Paul Darrow recalled a conversation with Bruno Palos that illustrated this fact. "Bruno told me, 'for you, this is temporary, but for me, this is as good as I'm going to get.'" Palos added, "You're not going to stay here." Like many of the graduate students, Darrow fulfilled Palos's prediction, as his art career took off and his need for space increased. Although Darrow lived in the ICC house for a few years after graduation, he eventually moved to a larger home in a white neighborhood in north Claremont during the late 1950s.¹⁰⁸

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the Intercultural Council labored to maintain the mixed-race community and to keep alive the dream of intercultural understanding. Private ownership complicated this ambition, as most white but few Mexican American families sold their property. Frequently, the ICC would locate new families, replacing Mexican Americans with Mexican Americans, and whites with whites. After the Livingstons moved, no African Americans lived in the community until the late 1950s. Finding replacement families proved to be extremely difficult and taxing for the ICC. As Darrow recalled, "capitalism took over," as residents sold their properties for much higher prices than they originally paid.

For the families who stayed in the community, privacy within and around individual homes became increasingly important. The washing facilities became obsolete as families attained better incomes and bought their own washers and dryers. Moreover, the upkeep of Neighbors Park, an issue that troubled the Felix family from the beginning, came to be viewed as a burden by other families as well. Cooke recalled: "They didn't want the rest of the neighborhood—even their friends—using that park. The 'neighbors' did not want the park open to the public right at their back doors. . . . You could have a small golf course there and everything else, but they didn't want that."¹⁰⁹

Maintenance and the shared expense of the park troubled many poor Mexican American families who refused to pay the \$2.00 per month to water the area. In 1957, Paul Darrow sold his house to a gay couple, which he remembered "upset" many residents who refused to share facilities with them.¹¹⁰ The couple, on the other hand, complained, "the 'Mexicans' would come [to the park] right at the back of [our] holding, beyond [our] fence, and make love."¹¹¹ Eventually, the two men went to the ICC attorney and had the park surveyed and divided up amongst the residents. No residents raised meaningful objections to their actions and Neighbors Park vanished by 1960.

For Cooke and the ICC, arguments among the residents shattered their idealistic vision of community relations. Cooke found the community irritatingly "clique-y" and not as united as he had hoped them to be. However, Claremont elites associated with the Intercultural Council required community residents to bear the unrealistic burden of representing positive intercultural relations. Cooke invited county officials and members of the Conference on Community Relations to the neighborhood, while Ordway often conducted weekend tours with college visitors to highlight the ICC's accomplishments. Paul Darrow, for example, recalled one Saturday when Mrs. Ordway called and asked if he would go outside and talk with Bruno Palos while she brought by a group of visiting scholars from the colleges. "When she arrived," Darrow explained, "she got out of an expensive car wearing a fur, and asked, 'Are we being intercultural today?'"¹¹²

Material issues and class differences affected the community, while the attitude of white elites in the ICC further complicated relations between the council and the residents of the *colonia*. The council expanded its activities in the 1960s by offering college scholarships to Mexican American high school students, creating a "well-baby clinic" for Mexican American infants and their mothers, and contributing funding to a "Children's Center" and "Teen Post" for Mexican American youth. Within each of these projects, Intercultural Council members contributed much personal time and money to the venture;

however, their focus began to shift from integration and community interaction to voluntarism.¹¹³

Although Mexican Americans appreciated these efforts, some also despised the condescension that often accompanied these programs. For example, Daniel Martínez Jr., a recipient of the Intercultural Council Scholarship in the 1950s, thankfully accepted the funding, but found some of the benefactors "more interested in clearing their own consciences, rather than helping the Mexican people."¹¹⁴ During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Chicano Movement intensified Mexican American criticisms of white paternalism in the barrio. For example, at the Children's Center, controversy erupted in 1970 when the director, Albert Gutiérrez, resigned his position due to "the intrusion of what he considered alien values."¹¹⁵ Blaming the Intercultural Council and Mexican Americans sympathetic to the organization, Gutiérrez complained, "[the center] had become a white middle class charity house rather than a beacon of identity for the Chicano community."¹¹⁶ In the wake of this conflict, ICC community resident Rey Contreras explained the problem with the Intercultural Council: "They were good people with good intentions. They were honest people but there is always a hazard trying to be the mind and body of someone else. It develops a kind of dependency. . . . Some times the social differences are too great."¹¹⁷

From the ICC's inception in 1948 to the Children's Center controversy in 1970, social and class differences between Mexican Americans in Arbol Verde and white elites in the Intercultural Council manifested themselves in very obvious ways. First, not one leading member of the Intercultural Council chose to make Arbol Verde their home. Second, though the purchase of available land in the Arbol Verde tract made it a target area for the project, the council did not consider other neighborhoods as potential sites, before, during, or after the formation of the community. The idea of integration appealed to white Claremonters, but only in areas inhabited by Mexican Americans. An attempt by a Mexican American family to move into an all-white neighborhood in the early 1960s illustrated this point. Cooke remembered: "Now, there was a time when one [Mexican American] family wanted to move over here on 12th and Indian Hill and there was trouble. Even Dr. Blaisdell [ex-President of Pomona College] told me that the neighbors didn't want them. He said, 'They wouldn't fit in there. They will be different. They'll have a road full of cars and everything else.'" ¹¹⁸

Like Claremont neighborhoods outside of Arbol Verde, the Intercultural Council remained predominantly a white organization, with token participation granted to a few Mexican Americans. During the founding of the council

and the construction of the community, Henry Cooke commented, "there was no Mexican in on the planning of his own original house."¹¹⁹ This pattern continued after the establishment of the community, when Intercultural Council conferences and neighborhood meetings took place separately. Although Mexican American residents attended the annual banquet and paid their dues, few went to the regular monthly meetings of the council. Occasionally, Mexican American representatives from the neighborhood attended these larger gatherings only to report on conditions within the community. As Cooke recalled, "the backbone of the Intercultural Council was obviously Anglo."¹²⁰

During the 1950s, the council made efforts to include Mexican Americans, but the general attitudes of many members offended Mexican participants. Former Paduano and post office worker José O'Beso remembered joining the council briefly during the late 1950s. O'Beso believed "they want[ed] a Mexican on their council so that they could show they were not prejudiced." At his first meeting, a white council member asked O'Beso, "you work in the post office and you're Mexican. I want you to tell me why the Mexican people don't open their letters." O'Beso responded, "I don't know what you are talking about, or why you would say that." "Well," the man answered, "this [Mexican] guy owes us so much money. And every month we mail him the bill and he never answers. Evidently, he doesn't open the letter." O'Beso, angered by the interrogation, responded, "Well, that shows you that the Mexican people are very smart. They know what's in the letter, so why bother to open it?" At the conclusion of the meeting, O'Beso resigned his position, announcing, "I'm sorry, but I don't want to be part of your entertainment and I don't like this group."¹²¹

The Intercultural Council represents in a microcosm an intriguing and illustrative example of race relations in Southern California after World War II. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, a shift in the ICC's focus from integrated living to social services troubled many Mexican American participants. Moreover, the emergence of the Chicano Movement generated a backlash among younger Mexican Americans who believed self-determination was paramount. Commenting on the fight over the Children's Center, Mrs. Donald Bray, a member of the ICC, admitted, "there seemed to be an isolation of the policy board from the community—there seemed to be a rift developing—a failure of communication." According to Albert Gutiérrez, "the policy board wanted a white middle class thing—they wanted to make middle class kids from Mexican kids."¹²²

Events surrounding the Children's Center reflected larger problems with white philanthropy in Claremont. Although Cooke had originally hoped "to

start a change in the attitude of the community toward any or all outsiders of non-Caucasian culture," the Intercultural Council (and its many satellite organizations like the Children's Center policy board) defeated this purpose by focusing their attentions on the transformation of Mexican Americans.¹²³ Ruth Ordway demonstrated this attitude when she considered the legacy of the Intercultural Council in a 1978 interview: "[ICC] changed the attitude of the Mexican-Americans about the kind of housing they should have. When we went in there, I think there weren't any houses with running water and there were no bathrooms. Sometimes three or four houses used one outside toilet. I think the Organization changed the attitude of Mexicans about what housing should be."¹²⁴

Ordway's comments reveal a common belief among many white philanthropists that Mexican "attitudes" caused the material deprivations suffered by Mexican Americans living in the citrus belt of Southern California. Although Ordway and other Claremont philanthropists mentioned "intercultural understanding" as an objective of the Intercultural Council, few whites involved in this and other similar ventures changed their subjective positions to see the world from the point of view of Mexican Americans. Even fewer altered their geographic and social positions to join the Arbol Verde neighborhood and live the dream of "intercultural living." Still others, such as Dr. James Blaisdell, endorsed "intercultural understanding" and integration as long as it happened in prescribed locations such as the Padua Hills Theatre, or in marginalized neighborhoods such as Arbol Verde.

The shortcomings of the Intercultural Council also provide some insight into why Ignacio López stressed self-help and political empowerment for the Mexican American community. Although López came from a relatively privileged background, he used this position to foster a civil rights movement among Mexican Americans. Operating between the white world and the Mexican *colonia*, López attempted to shape both communities into compatible entities within a pluralistic society. Ultimately, neither one conformed. Whites, by and large, eventually accepted Mexican American civil rights; however, the majority of Euroamericans resisted López's call for residential integration. Mexican Americans, on the other hand, mobilized behind López's movements; however, not all shared his enthusiasm for discipline. López's battles with Andrés Morales demonstrated that political factions existed within the Mexican American community during the 1940s and 1950s. In the 1960s, a generation of Chicano activists rejected López's accommodationist politics in favor of a more aggressive, antiestablishment message.

The limitations of the Mexican American civil rights movement in the San

Gabriel Valley, and the defects of the Intercultural Council, demonstrated the persistence of social and economic inequalities in Southern California after World War II. Although individual and collective efforts by Mexican Americans and whites successfully desegregated public and private institutions, those serious about improving race relations discovered residential integration to be an impossible dream. Ignacio López, for example, died while serving as the Spanish-Speaking Coordinator for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under President Richard Nixon in 1973.¹²⁵ The mixed results of the Intercultural Council sobered the once idealistic Cooke, who found the goal of transforming white attitudes in Claremont, let alone Los Angeles County, a daunting task. In 1968, a beleaguered Cooke conceded, "I don't believe that Claremont as a whole has yet learned anything about integration."¹²⁶

Yet, in spite of the ICC's limited vision of fair housing, and the inability of the Unity Leagues to achieve an equal place at the table for Mexican Americans, both their efforts contributed to the improvement of intercultural relations in post-World War II Southern California. Mexican Americans, more than any group, forced the transformations in citrus belt race relations. The maintenance of independent *colonias*, the creation of social spaces within society such as Rainbow Gardens, and the development of political groups and movements such as the Unity Leagues, boycotts, and protests all led to the advancement of Mexican American civil rights. Moreover, some Mexican Americans, such as Ignacio López and the Mexican Players of Padua Hills Theatre, successfully identified and collaborated with white allies to create "intercultural understanding" and promote cultural pluralism.¹²⁷ Through their own actions, Mexican Americans gained the attention and the respect of many whites who formerly ignored issues of social justice and equality.

The persistence of discrimination against Mexican Americans required a more forceful and less cooperative movement of Chicano students, laborers, and community groups during the 1960s and 1970s. Nevertheless, the advance of Mexican American civil rights in the name of cultural pluralism, integration, and intercultural understanding prior to the dawn of the Chicano Movement must be remembered. Following the repatriations and deportations of the early 1930s, Mexican Americans and progressive-minded whites worked together and separately for the improvement of race relations in Southern California. As a result of their efforts, citrus belt society moved from an era of Jim Crow and strict segregation in the 1920s, to modest but substantial gains in Mexican American civil rights by 1960.