

**APPENDIX E**

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**HISTORIC PROPERTY TREATMENT PLAN  
FOR THE ELYSIAN PARK-DOWNTOWN WRP**

## Memorandum

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Date: July 23, 2012  
To: Irene Paul, LADWP  
From: Sara Dietler and Christy Dolan, AECOM  
Subject: Historic Property Treatment Plan for the Elysian Park -  
Downtown WRP

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This memo presents a brief description of the Olympic Boulevard Bridge and Elysian Park, as well as criteria that should be used during the design of the Elysian Park-Downtown Water Recycling Project (WRP).

### **Olympic Boulevard Bridge**

The Olympic Boulevard Bridge (originally the Ninth Street Viaduct), built in 1925 is a reinforced concrete open spandrel bridge of the Beaux-Arts bridge design. The bridge is located on Olympic Boulevard as it crosses the Los Angeles River between Downtown Los Angeles and Boyle Heights (Figure 1). The bridge is part of a monumental bridge building program executed in 1909 through 1932 and involved the construction of a series of 12 bridges spanning the Los Angeles River.



**Figure 1. Olympic Boulevard Bridge**

The Olympic Boulevard Bridge is LA Historic-Cultural Monument (LAHCM) number 904 and has been assessed as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the California Register of Historic Places (CRHR). The bridge (Caltrans Bridge Number 53C0163) was first determined eligible for listing on the NRHP during the California Historic Bridge Inventory (Caltrans 1990) under Criterion C as one of the series of City Beautiful bridges that span the Los Angeles River. As the Los Angeles Department of City Planning recommendation report (2007) states, the bridge “...exhibits character-defining features of Beaux-Arts bridge design.” It is also associated with notable engineer Merrill Butler and the structure has strong associations with the development of Los Angeles and the history of the Los Angeles River.

The bridge rests on four vertical piers in an open spandrel arch form and in a T-beam form on several smaller vertical piers. It exhibits a sculpted concrete railing with heavy double-bellied Classical-style balusters separated by perforated round forms with incised S-shaped foliate petals. Nine pairs of octagonal decorative light fixtures (Figure 2) surmounted by large engaged globes sit atop monumental decorative pylons. Alterations to the bridge include a remodeling in 1985 that removed the decorative pierced balustrade. Seismic work in 1998 to upgrade sections of the pylons and girders also included the restoration of the balustrade (Los Angeles Department of City Planning 2007).



**Figure 2. Olympic Street Bridge-view of Decorative Light Fixtures**

While the proposed activities for the current project (putting a water line under/alongside the bridge) are not likely to impact the bridges’ historical associations, placement of the pipe could have a visual impact to the architectural elements that exemplify the Beaux-Arts style. This can be avoided through appropriate design, described in more detail below.

In order to preserve the historic character and integrity of the Olympic Boulevard Bridge, the placement of the pipeline should follow the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (36CFR68.3), specifically, the guidelines (NPS 2012a) and standards (NPS 2012b) relating to rehabilitation of historic properties.

The rehabilitation guidelines recommend first identifying the architectural materials and features that define the structure's historic character. In this case, these would be the Beaux Arts architecture which is characterized by classical forms, symmetry, rich ornamentation and a grand scale. These defining features are well documented in the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) prepared in 1996, prior to seismic retrofit of the bridge. They include the massive four-sided columns ornamented with acanthus scrolls and topped with four-armed light fixtures and lanterns; the double-light fixtures and fluted columns at the bridge approaches; the spandrels; and the elaborate hand rail, which was rebuilt as part of the mitigation for the retrofit.

In addition to avoiding changes to those character defining features, the rehabilitation standards set parameters to avoid impacts to historic properties. The most applicable to this project are numbers 2, 9 and 10 as follows:

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

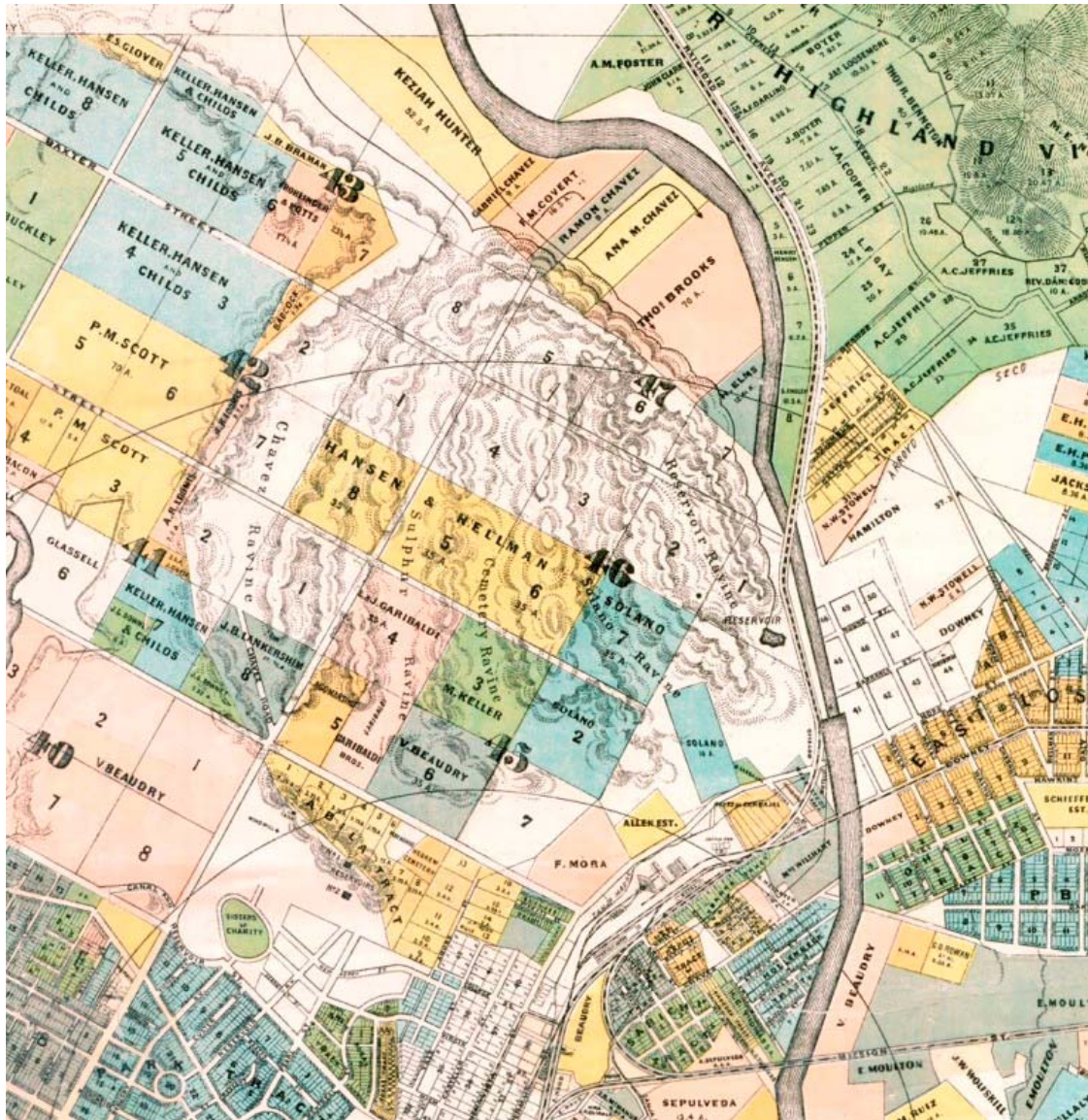
The following recommendations describe ways to avoid significant impacts to the bridge. The plans for the project should follow these recommendations, and preparation of these plans should also be reviewed prior to implementation by a specialist who meets the Secretary of the Interior standards for architectural historian or historic architect to ensure the design avoids impacts.

The pipe that is being proposed should be carried under the bridge where several pipes already exist, except for the areas from the approaches to each abutment, where the pipe will have to go on the side of the bridge. When the pipe reaches the area of the abutment, in order to avoid visual impacts to the spandrel, the pipe should enter the superstructure of the bridge as the other pipes already do. The pipe should always be placed in such a way as to avoid

intruding on the character defining features or otherwise causing a visual disruption to the Beaux Arts character of the bridge. This includes making the color of the pipe such that it does not impair the integrity of the bridge appearance. All clamps used for support should be made so they are removable without any permanent damage. If these measures are followed there should be no significant impacts to the bridge.

### **Elysian Park and Chavez Ravine Arboretum**

In 1781, the Pueblo of Los Angeles was officially established along the Los Angeles River. The original Pueblo consisted of a public land grant that included four square leagues, or 28 square miles (Gumprecht 1999). In 1883, city officials decided to create Elysian Park on a 746-acre piece of land west of the river (Gumprecht 1999) within a hill area known as the Rock Quarry Hills (Echo Park Historical Society 2008). The Rock Quarry Hills area was beyond the reach of the *zanjas* and the city's domestic water supply system, and as such, the land was considered worthless. At the time, land was valued based on the available water supply, not on the land itself (Gumprecht 1999:78). The Elysian Hills encompassed a series of rugged ravines: Chavez Ravine, Sulphur Ravine, Cemetery Ravine, Solano Ravine, and Reservoir Ravine (Figure 3). Reduced from its original size, Elysian Park currently covers approximately 575 acres, second only in size to Griffith Park. Elysian Park is the last remaining large piece of the original Pueblo of Los Angeles public land grant (Echo Park Historical Society 2008). Historically, Elysian Park has had an assortment of uses and currently still accommodates diverse needs.



**Figure 3. City of Los Angeles in 1894 by Stevenson, Detail of Elysian Park Vicinity (Library of Congress American Memory Collection)**

Mayor Henry Hazard was an enthusiastic supporter of Elysian Park. In the 1890s, he secured funding for over 100,000 planted trees as well as a road to access the park. The Mayor advocated that the park was crucial to the economic vitality of the city and compared the park to San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park (Los Angeles Times [LAT] 1893).

In 1893, the Los Angeles Horticultural Society established the arboretum, as well as botanical gardens within the park. In 1967, the Chavez Ravine Arboretum was declared Los Angeles City Historic-Cultural Monument (LAHCM) No. 48. The Avenue of the Palms was

planted on what is now Stadium Way, with a rare specimen of wild date palms in 1895 (Echo Park Historical Society 2008).

The Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park (CCSEP) was formed in 1965 in an attempt to thwart plans to develop the park. Prior to CCSEP's founding, the Pasadena Freeway split the park, Dodger Stadium had been constructed within portions of the park, and several other developments including the reservoir system were constructed. The CCSEP is still active and has continued to stop development and preserve the Elysian Park lands as open space (Jamison 2008).

Elysian Park derives its local and regional historical significance from its role as the first park in the city of Los Angeles. Since its establishment in 1886, Elysian Park has formed an important part of the downtown landscape and has played a significant role in the social life of the city. It has provided open space and served the recreational needs of the population within a rapidly changing urban setting. The vicinity of Elysian Park has also been the locus of hard-fought battles over development and land exchanges. Most notably, the eviction of Chavez Ravine residents in the 1950s and the construction of Dodger Stadium in 1962 were contentious moments in local history.

The significance of Elysian Park is at the local and state level. It is recommended eligible to the CRHR under Criterion 1 for its association with events that have made a contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage. Elysian Park is the oldest park in the city of Los Angeles and the only remaining portion of the Pueblo of Los Angeles Public Land Grant. The establishment of the park at the end of the 19th century reflects changing views of urban life and a desire to create open spaces within rapidly growing cities. Over the course of the past 125 years, Elysian Park has played an important role in the community, providing space in proximity to downtown for leisure and recreation activities. Elysian Park does not seem to be associated with the lives of persons important to the past (Criterion 2), nor does it embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master (Criterion 3). At present, there is no evidence that the park as a whole is likely to qualify for the CRHR under Criterion 4 for its information potential. The park may be eligible under Criterion 1 as a district, but the evaluation of individual resources as potential contributing elements to such a district is not possible as part of the present effort, as most of these resources lie outside the present project area. The portions of the park that are encompassed in the present project area still retain their integrity and contribute to the overall significance of the park.

In addition, Elysian Park is also recommended eligible as a LAHCM for its significance to local history. Within the park, the Chavez Ravine Arboretum is considered to have local level significance and, as such, is listed as Historic-Cultural Monument No. 48.

***Potable Water Pump Station***

The potable water pump station and a portion of the potable water pipeline are proposed to be located within the grounds of the Chavez Ravine Arboretum. The following recommendations suggest preservation of the arboretum landscape during design and construction phases. In general, the design should be consistent with the historic landscape of the arboretum and should be carried out in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (National Park Service 2012c).

The installation of the pumping station and potable water pipeline within the arboretum shall be designed so as not to impact any of the tree plantings within the historic arboretum. Park staff with knowledge of the trees and their root systems should be consulted in order to avoid any impacts to trees or root systems that may lie within or adjacent to the project area. Lawn (grass) that will be removed during the trenching construction process should be replaced in the postconstruction phase.

If possible, it may be preferable to expand or adapt the existing pump station to meet the needs of the new potable water pipeline. If it is necessary to build a separate structure, visual impacts to the historic landscape design of the arboretum can be reduced if the new pump station building is similar in design and style to the existing pump station. The size and height of the structure should be minimized to the extent possible, and should incorporate a sensitive design including the color and construction style of the structure in order to create a low impact to the surrounding landscape.

Interested parties such as the Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park should be contacted to solicit input on the design of the potable water pump station.

***Potable and Recycled Water Tanks***

The potable and recycled water tanks proposed to be located at the intersection of Angels Point Road and Park Road shall be designed so as to be visually consistent with the landscape of Elysian Park. These proposed water tanks will be located adjacent to the existing steel water tank in this location and, as part of the visual mitigation measures for the proposed project, the tanks are proposed to be painted a neutral color and to be visually obscured by vegetation. In general, the design should be consistent with the historic landscape of the park and should be carried out in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (National Park Service 2012c). Interested parties such as the Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park should be contacted to solicit input on the design of the potable and recycled water tanks.



### ***Recycled Water Pumping Station***

The recycled water pumping station shall be designed to be visually consistent with the landscape of Elysian Park and should be carried out in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (National Park Service 2012c). This station will be located adjacent to an existing pumping station in this location and, as part of the visual mitigation measures for the proposed project; the station housing will incorporate sensitive design, be painted a neutral color, and be visually obscured by vegetation in order to create a low impact to the surrounding landscape. Interested parties such as the Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park should be contacted to solicit input on the design of the recycled water pump station.

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