

PLACE, STORY & CULTURE

AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO PROTECTING LATINO HERITAGE SITES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Numerous sites dot our American landscapes and cities that tell a story about our diverse past - places that embody the architectural, cultural and deep historical roots of the Latino community. However, sites that commemorate Latino heritage are disproportionately excluded when it comes to officially designated heritage and conservation sites. This report provides recommendations to address the lack of representation of Latino heritage sites among protected area designations, by proposing a more inclusive designation system as well as a list of Latino heritage sites that currently lack official recognition.

Recommendations for inclusively protecting Latino heritage sites:

1. Update the Criteria for Evaluation into the National Register of Historic Places.
2. Provide institutional support in the form of community liaisons at the state level to facilitate and sustain community relationships with minoritized communities through the nomination process.
3. Develop a permanent committee or advisory group that sustains efforts to integrate Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion frameworks into Historic Preservation nominations and designations.
4. Provide solutions outside of the National Register process that promote and enable communities to protect places of significance, directly combating gentrification and other threats brought about from re-development.
5. Develop a professional pipeline in Historic Preservation for individuals from minoritized communities to obtain career opportunities that lead to decision-making roles.
6. Develop a theme study that specifically focuses on the U.S. Northeast and the Latino diaspora's histories in the region.

List of notable Latino heritage sites seeking recognition (alphabetical order):

Castner Range (El Paso, TX)

In the heart of El Paso, Texas, Castner Range provides a solid backdrop to the burgeoning city, which has grown around the range and has embraced it as a feature of the landscape. Castner Range not only works as an essential watershed, replenishing the aquifer that supports the life that surrounds it, but also has been historically the waypoint for many communities seeking rest from the harsh desert environment.

Chepa's Park (Santa Ana, CA)

Located in the Logan Barrio neighborhood of Santa Ana, California's oldest Mexican American neighborhood, Chepa's Park is more than a site for recreational activities—it is a landmark serving as a testament to the legacy of community leader Josephina "Chepa" Andrade.

Duranguito (El Paso, TX)

Downtown El Paso has a neighborhood called "Duranguito," named after Durango Street on its western side, with a unique and storied history. It is the oldest neighborhood in the city, from its beginnings as a conversion site of Spanish colonizers to its "zona libre" period during the U.S.-Mexico War to its continued binational, multiethnic community.

Fefa's Market (Providence, RI)

Fefa's Market in Providence is a notable site to the Latino community in Rhode Island. In the mid-1960s Josefina Rosario opened what became the first Dominican-owned bodega on Broad Street. Rosario, recognized by her nickname "Dona Fefa," became instrumental in the growth and evolution of the Dominican community that sprawled in Providence.

Friendship Park (San Diego, CA)

Located at the southwestern edge of the United States and the northwestern corner of Latin America, Friendship Park is not only a significant place to the history of the United States but is necessary to transborder cultural connectivity between San Diego, California, and Tijuana, Mexico. The construction of border barriers not only threatens the local ecology but also reduces the public use of these lands.

Gila River (New Mexico & Arizona)

The Gila River system is a valuable resource to all New Mexicans in that it provides a beautiful natural landscape to be enjoyed and appreciated by people from all over, a necessary environment for wildlife to thrive, an important window into the history of New Mexico, a significant agricultural resource, and an important place to further the study of our natural environment.

Hazard Park (Los Angeles, CA)

Hazard Park is an important historical site contributing to one of the most significant youth-led Chicano social movements, the 1968 East Los Angeles Blowouts. It is also among the few green public spaces in East Los Angeles, on which generations of families have depended for relaxation and recreation. Both the educational and social histories of overcoming racial discrimination and advancing civil rights contribute to the historical and cultural integrity of the park.

INTRODUCTION

This Latino Heritage Scholars report gives a voice to three young Latino academics who have collectively participated in the preservation of two important Latino sites — Chicano Park and Chope's Town Cafe and Bar — so that they can encourage the protection of other sites that celebrate Latino culture and history. The authors of this report are guided by the philosophy that the protection of historic sites constructs a fabric of physical places that embody the collective identity of the nation.

This report documents lessons learned from previous and ongoing efforts to identify, nominate and ultimately protect Latino heritage sites. Using the processes outlined by the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places authorized through the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966,¹ and subsequent policies regarding historic places, this report provides recommendations to address the "diversity deficit"² that plagues efforts to increase representation of Latino heritage sites. While this report focuses on the efforts to expand protection of Latino heritage sites, the recommendations provided address a lack of representation beyond Latino heritage sites and may be applicable to other minoritized populations.

The purpose of this report is to advocate for the preservation of historic sites that embody the architectural, cultural and deep historical roots of the Latino community within the shared national identity.

The purpose of this report is to advocate for the preservation of historic sites associated with Latino heritage. The sites listed embody the architectural, cultural, and deep historical roots of the Latino community within the shared national identity. The Latino heritage scholars developed this report with the future of Latino heritage preservation in mind, specifically with the questions; why is it important to tell the story of Latinos today? Why does Latina/o heritage matter? While this report does not capture all the sites that are part of the American narrative, it does give an insight into the vast amount of sites that merit historic nominations and deserve protection.

American Latinidad (Latino identity) is composed of many narratives, there is not one dominant story that can completely tell the history and the contributions of Latinos to the United States. Therefore, highlighting sites that represent the diversity within Latinos was an important factor in developing this report. Yet, we recognize that there are important historic sites with narratives that are not yet included or not yet identified.

The sites selected in this report are eligible for inclusion into local, state, and national historic registers. While some already possess historic designations, we propose further protection and greater recognition to underscore their significance and our fundamental obligation to honor them. Often times protected sites are still under threat. Our aim in this report is to highlight the significance these sites have on the Latino culture and American history and to create a dialogue around these sites that stimulates an interest with scholars, the conservation community, government, and the general public in seeking-out other sites that are important to Latino heritage and historical narratives of the United States.

TYPES OF PROTECTIONS

National Parks, Heritage Areas, and Monuments:

- National Parks and Monuments are federally protected areas managed by the Federal government. The protection of these places is guaranteed for their scenic, environmental, educational, historic, cultural, or scientific value.
- National Parks, Historic Trails, and Heritage Areas are established through an Act of Congress using legislative authority.
- National Monuments are established through Congress or by Presidential Executive Act through the Antiquities Act. In 1906, Theodore Roosevelt signed the Antiquities Act into law granting the executive office the authority to establish national monuments. Since then, 17 presidents – nine Republicans and eight Democrats – have used the law to protect our natural and cultural heritage. Through the Antiquities Act, U.S. presidents have been able to protect hundreds of millions of acres of land that have significant cultural and historical significance.

National Register of Historic Places

- The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. It is authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archaeological resources.
- The properties are selected based on four criteria of importance:
 - Site associated with a specific event, trend, or shift in history
 - Site is associated with a historically significant figure or individual
 - Site expresses distinctive architectural characteristics of a type, period, or form of construction
 - Sites that are of prehistoric and historic significance holding importance to the past or future.
- Listing on the National Register of Historic Places does not imply ownership or management of the site by the federal government.

National Historic Landmarks

- National Historic Landmarks are nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States.
- National Historic Landmarks follow their own set of criteria that differ slightly from the National Register of Historic Places, but they are two separate programs with different regulations and program guidance.

Traditional Cultural Property:

- Traditional Cultural Properties are cultural resources associated with cultural practices, traditions, beliefs, arts, or social institutions of a living community.
- Traditional Cultural Properties follow the same criteria for selection as other properties listed on National Register of Historic Places.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AS A MODEL FOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Latino heritage is disproportionately underrepresented on the National Register of Historic Places and as National Monuments, National Parks, National Historic Landmarks, and more. This fact is well-known and it has been long recognized as far back as the early 1990s, where lack of diversity on the National Register of Historic Places largely focused on African American historic sites.³

Less than eight percent of designated landmarks specifically represent the stories of Native Americans, African Americans, American Latinos, Asian Americans, women and other underrepresented groups.⁴ Yet, amidst efforts to expand nominations, designations and increase the diversity of stories told, lack of diversity remains.

To better understand the gaps that remain present in policies and processes, it is critical to assess Historic Preservation as a model for heritage conservation. Preservation refers to that activity or process of keeping something free from loss, damage or decay.⁵ In the case of Historic Preservation as upheld by the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is composed of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture.⁶ Thus, Historic Preservation is founded on principles that rely on the tangibility of place as a means to portray the Nation's heritage.

However, as outlined in Erica Avrami's introduction to "Preservation and Social Inclusion," decisions about physical places such as land-use, zoning, building codes and affordable housing are conduits for inequality.⁷ An abundance of research and literature exists depicting the disproportionate impacts Latino communities face as a result of such policies, and affirms that Latino sites continue to bear the brunt of said inequalities.

In its current form, the model of Historic Preservation fails to address heritage conservation needs for Latino places. Legal protections outlined by the National Park Service's programs disregard how past policies disenfranchised communities, causing distrust of government processes. Likewise, protections offered are less accessible to Latino communities, given the criteria for evaluation into the National Register of Historic Places, the inconsistent nomination processes among states and the institutional "red tape" that accompanies them. As it stands, Historic Preservation offers little alternatives for protecting places and preserving stories outside of the legal framework and nomination process. As a model, Historic Preservation needs to be a holistic effort that provides diverse mechanisms for protection not limited to local, state, and federal protection.

PART I:

THE PRESERVATION OF LATINO HERITAGE SITES

METHODOLOGY

Efforts to identify sites of significance to the Latino diaspora require full transparency and sensible outreach practices. In this section, we provide an outline of the decisions made and the lessons learned from talking with community members, organizations and fellow liaisons regarding the sites consulted for and listed in Part III.

The Criteria for Evaluation into the National Register of Historic Places

"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:

- That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- 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
- That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have **achieved significance within the past 50 years** shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the categories on the next page.

National Register Categories

1. A religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
2. A building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
3. A birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no appropriate site or building directly associated with his or her productive life; or
4. A cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or
5. A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
6. A property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or
7. A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.⁸

Applying the Criteria to Latino Historic Sites

After sharing the previous [Place, Story, and Culture](#) report with community leaders and preservationists alike, we learned that there were a lot of questions regarding how we came to the original ten sites listed in the first version when it was published in 2017.

The Criteria for Evaluation into the National Register was the basis of deciding whether sites would be listed in the first report. A successful designation of a site into the National Register or even a consideration for nomination means that a site meets the parameters set forth by the criteria. As a result, identifying sites for the report was onerous. From this experience we determined that the Criteria for Evaluation into the National Register contributes to the lack of nominations and designations of Latino historic sites.

Age & Integrity: 50 Years in the Making

The Criteria for Evaluation emphasizes age, using 50 years as a mechanism to determine whether a site is old enough to be listed on the national register. Exemptions outlined in the National Register Bulletin (cited above) refer to “exceptional importance.” Exceptional importance is arguably subjective. Exceptional to whom? Important how? Among the many debates that encourage a revision of the criteria, the 50 year rule is a prominent contender.

In 2010, the National Trust for Historic Places published a forum journal that captured the dialogue for and against the revision of the 50 year rule. The forum provides a summary of the key reasons to both keep the provision and disregard it completely. What the journal does not capture in detail is who is most affected by the decision to keep the 50 year rule and how zoning and planning decisions impact minoritized communities.

As documented by the Latino Theme Study’s essay “Demanding their Rights: The Latino Struggle for Educational Access and Equity,”⁹ Latinos have faced social, economic, and political barriers

embedded in their historic presence in the U.S. As a direct result of systematic oppression, Latino individuals and communities are at a higher risk of displacement, lacking the institutional and economic support to assert power over space. The Latino diaspora's physical presence in a place is contested in local zoning and ordinance laws that regulate the use and power over a place. Zoning practices not only subjected communities into higher density areas, but also lowered values of Black and Latino homes.

Significance

Significance is the basis from which sites are preserved and deemed worthy for the National Register of Historic Places. Ultimately, a site's significance is the compilation of tangibility and integrity. If a site exists and is in "good" condition, the significance is the root of why this site is worth preserving in the first place. Many factors contribute to a site's significance; below is a summary of lessons learned in our evaluation of the Criteria.

The Criteria for Evaluation (Criterion C) prioritizes tangibility and integrity as a mechanism to convey worthiness of a site's historic value. Architectural significance is prioritized, signaling an opportunity for preservation solely based on design and "high artistic value" - again, subjective to the evaluator. Architecture upholds notions of physical space that values "white communities" over others.¹⁰

"One of the criteria for preservation is architectural significance, meaning that modest buildings like slave cabins and tenement houses were long excluded from consideration. By the time preservationists took notice of structures like those, many lacked the physical integrity to merit protection. Destruction abetted decay, and some historically black neighborhoods were actively erased—deliberately targeted by arson in the years after Reconstruction or displaced in later decades by highway construction, gentrification, and urban renewal."

MOBILITY

Personal accounts as well as academic and census research provide a snapshot of Latino migration to and within the U.S. As the fastest growing population, research demonstrates how place and mobility influence where Latino communities live and thrive. Mobility, migration and displacement of Latino communities impact how and when historic preservation is necessary to prevent the loss of Latino stories and heritage.

There are three type of communities when looking at mobility:

- **Continuous communities** – those that have rooted history and have always been in a site. Many Latino people have indigenous ancestors and roots that have inhabited the Southwest since long before it became the United States. The Chicano identity comes from this mix of identities, culture, and race.
- **Discontinuous communities** – those who once dominated the history in a particular area, but for a particular reason were then displaced, migrated, or simply moved. These communities often face gentrification and displacement.
- **New community** – those who are in a place in which they have not previously been present.

Many U.S. sites, places, and cultures are transforming through the arrival of immigrants, migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers from different countries.¹¹

While some sites may already possess historic designations, further protection and greater recognition is necessary to underscore their significance and prevent their loss. Local and federal register designations have not proven sufficient to ensure protection from destruction, decay and gentrification.

GENTRIFICATION

Gentrification is the process of changing a neighborhood via economic investment, typically led by affluent residents and businesses.¹² For gentrification to begin, there needs to be an influx of real estate investment by new higher-income residents in a historically divested neighborhood. Latino communities are noted as having a higher rate of divestment. The result of gentrification is displacement of lower income residents and a change in character (affecting the tangible and intangible experience) of the neighborhood. Community participation in land-use, zoning and planning is a critical step towards ensuring that community needs and best interests aren't overlooked. Rehabilitation of historic buildings has economic consequences that affect real estate values and consequently result in the displacement of lower income, Latino, or other minoritized communities.¹³ It has been noted that the rehabilitation of historic buildings increases the values and therefore increases property tax in communities, thus driving prices up in otherwise affordable or low income areas. The link between historic preservation and gentrification lies in rehabilitation of existing historic buildings and the nomination of new historic sites.

Changes to neighborhoods as a result of gentrification continue to have disproportionate impacts to Latino communities and other minoritized communities. Systematic racism in the U.S. deliberately affects minoritized communities from gaining capital, access to (economic) equity and generational wealth. Therefore, it is common to see racial disparities between the communities negatively impacted by gentrification and the affluent investors benefiting from the changing infrastructure. Therefore, it continues to be essential that communities are engaged and given decision-making authority as it relates to land-use, zoning and planning changes that could result in displacement and impact the fabric of a neighborhood.

In order to ensure that Latino and other minoritized communities are not bearing the brunt of the negative impacts of economic investment decisions and the nomination process for historic sites, we recommend that an economic impact report and action plan be performed and assessed with community members at key decision points.

Into the Future

The breadth of Latino history in the United States extends far beyond what is captured in Part III. Trust and authentic relationships with community members must be formed before simply listing a site in this report. Moreover, we must respect when communities are uninterested in a National Register nomination, and together seek other avenues for preservation. Communities must be part of the processes of identifying sites and contributing to the National Register of Historic Places.

PART II:

RECOMMENDATIONS

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Authoritative Heritage Discourse (AHD) describes the tension between the places being preserved and the ideas they represent. AHD is the narratives about the places more than the places themselves. It focuses on the stories we tell and how they represent us. In an Australian case study, author Catriona Elder identifies how messages of national identity are conveyed by the choice of heritage preserved and how these can influence what Australians later view as un-Australian. In the U.S. the overwhelming preservation of white-colonial narratives over those representing minoritized communities would suggest that white-colonialism is American. Even among Latino heritage sites, the majority of the heritage representing the diaspora is relevant to colonial “conquistador” type narratives, further omitting intersectional Black, Indigenous, and other narratives.

The following recommendations are based on the discussions and research documented by this report. Efforts to address the “diversity deficit” must be met with sustainable change supported by institutional support and resources.

1. Update the Criteria for Evaluation into the National Register of Historic Places
2. Provide institutional support in the form of community liaisons at the state level to facilitate and sustain community relationships with minoritized communities through the nomination process. The nomination process provides little support for communities and needs to be revisited to provide a space for co-creation.
3. Develop a permanent committee or advisory group that sustains efforts to integrate Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion frameworks into Historic Preservation nominations and designations.
4. Provide solutions outside of the National Register process that promote and enable communities to protect places of significance, directly combating gentrification and other threats brought about from re-development.
5. Develop a professional pipeline in Historic Preservation for individuals from minoritized communities to obtain career opportunities that lead to decision-making roles.
6. Develop a theme study that specifically focuses on the U.S. Northeast and the Latino diaspora’s histories in the region. This theme study will provide a foundation to identify specific peoples and locations in the Northeast.

*** The history of place in the U.S. Northeast is cluttered with settler colonialism and a hierarchy of significance that does not reflect the diversity of the region. Yet, there are a great deal of grassroots, local and state efforts to document the stories of Latinos in the Northeast. Throughout our efforts to partner with community members, we experienced a need to coordinate and weave the stories together to reflect a holistic representation of the diversity that is the Latino diaspora in the Northeast. We believe that this recommendation will yield more notable sites.*

PART III:

NOTABLE SITES SEEKING RECOGNITION



PHOTO BY MARK CLUNE

CASTNER RANGE | EL PASO, TX

In the heart of El Paso, Texas, Castner Range provides a solid backdrop to the burgeoning city, which has grown around the range and has embraced it as a feature of the landscape. The range itself encompasses 7,081 acres and provides natural relief from the city sprawl. Castner Range not only works as an essential watershed, replenishing the aquifer that supports the life that surrounds it, but also has been historically the waypoint for many communities seeking rest from the harsh desert environment. The range offers a variety of historical and natural sites important to history.

Castner Range has been the ancestral home to the Comanche and Apache people, who have left evidence of their existence in the cracks and crevices and continue to conduct ceremonies on the range. The most prevalent evidence of early human habitation are the areas where indigenous peoples ground grain in the rocks, enough to create a depression known as a metates, and the rock carvings and pottery shards. Various Indigenous communities continue to see the range as sacred, including the Mescalero Apache who harvest the agave plant for ceremonies.



The proximity of the range to the military base of Ft. Bliss in El Paso made it a testing ground for artillery shells. In the mid-1920s, Fort Bliss acquired acreage and created the Castner Target Range. Because of the landscape, the range would be extensively utilized for training of anti-tank weaponry during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.¹⁴

For years the East side of the Castner Range was utilized as a firing range. Ironically, the unexploded ordnance (UXO) present on Castner Range has inadvertently kept the range from extensive vandalism, off-road recreational vehicle activities, and commercial, industrial, or residential development.¹⁵

Castner Range was highlighted in the 2016 white paper series, Place, Story, and Culture. At that time, Congressman Beto O'Rourke had re-introduced a bill seeking the designation of Castner Range as a National Monument. Since the late 1970's the community has worked to preserve Castner Range and today the effort is stronger than ever. On April 22, 2021, Congresswoman Veronica Escobar along with grassroots organizations like Frontera Land Alliance reintroduced a campaign and legislation to make Castner Range a National Monument. The range is a valuable resource historically, geologically, and culturally. It is a place where the majority Mexican community in El Paso, Texas go to recreate, venture, and explore.

Castner Range has been the ancestral home to the Comanche and Apache people, who have left evidence of their existence in the cracks and crevices and continue to conduct ceremonies on the range.





CHEPA'S PARK | SANTA ANA, CA

Located in Santa Ana, California's oldest Mexican American neighborhood, Chepa's Park is more than a site for recreational activities—it is a landmark serving as a testament to the legacy of community leader Josephina “Chepa” Andrade. Santa Ana's Logan Barrio neighborhood was once the most prominent Mexican American community in Orange County, California, dating back to 1886.¹⁶ In the early 1900s, the neighborhood was among the only areas in the city that did not have restrictive racial covenants, often known as redlining. It was among the few neighborhoods where people of Mexican descent could purchase a home, as the city did not see any value in the railroad bordered land. Today, the neighborhood is home to the second oldest Mexican food restaurant in Orange County,¹⁷ along with a mural honoring Chicano Veterans from World War Two and the Vietnam War.¹⁸

As with most Mexican American neighborhoods in Southern California, Logan Barrio came under threat of destruction with the Interstate-Five Freeway's construction. In 1969, Josephine “Chepa” Andrade, along with other community members, founded the park to respond to a proposed street extension freeway on-ramp that would ultimately destroy her home and neighborhood.¹⁹ Her efforts were not made in vain, as the park she helped establish did prevent the street extension. Ultimately, the park came to be known as Logan Park, but the city renamed it “Chepa's Park” in March 2008 to honor Andrade's community and neighborhood preservation activism legacy.

Through a grassroots effort, Josephina “Chepa” Andrade saved her neighborhood by creating a public park for everyone in the community and the City of Santa Ana to enjoy. Yet, Chepa's Park and the Logan Barrio neighborhood are under threat from encroaching urban transformations. Santa Ana, California, is among the most rapidly gentrifying cities in Orange County. Given its location near the Santa Ana train station, transportation-oriented development projects have sprung up, forcefully changing the cultural characteristics and demographics of the area. Ironically, a place that the city once considered a wasteland only suitable for “Mexican people” to live in, given its location adjacent to train tracks, is now sought and coveted by affluent and primarily white newcomers to the city. The benefits of including Chepa's Park on the National Register of Historic Places include honoring the contributions of Mexican American women to the making of Orange County neighborhoods and protecting public park space in a densely populated city.²⁰





PHOTO BY NORMA HARTELL

DURANGUITO | EL PASO, TX

Downtown El Paso has a neighborhood called “Duranguito,” named after Durango Street on its western side, with a unique history. It is the oldest neighborhood in the city.

Historical references detail how the site was once an “Apache peace camp.” Peace camps were established by the Spanish in the late 18th and very early 19th century near presidios (fortifications) for the purpose of religious conversion.²¹ The neighborhood also tells the story of El Paso during its formative and booming years, while showcasing the diversity that has been a part of El Paso since the beginning. Barrio Duranguito was at the center of many of El Paso’s early ethnic communities, housing Mexican, African American, and Chinese residents.²² Among other things, Duranguito has a history of railroad construction; the rise and fall of the Red-Light districts; and the turmoil of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920).

The Union Plaza district, of which Duranguito is a part, has been central to El Paso’s history from the early 19th century onward. It was originally part of “Ponce’s Ranch,” having been settled by Maria Ponce de Leon in 1827 when the region still belonged to Mexico. In the 1850s, possession of the ranch passed quickly from the Ponce family to Benjamin Franklin Coons, then to William Smith, and finally to the El Paso Land Company (a consortium of landowners including Smith), which platted the land and oversaw its emergence as a small village, first known as “Franklin” and later as “El Paso.” When the railroads reached El Paso in 1881, fueling fast-paced urban growth, Duranguito became home to El Paso’s first City Hall, located on the corner of San Francisco and Chihuahua Street.²³ In 1891, Duranguito also became home to one of El Paso’s first schools, Franklin School, which was located on the corner of the neighborhood on 215 Leon Street. By the turn of the century, Duranguito had become a neighborhood for businessmen

During the U.S.- Mexico war, Duranguito became a booming binational neighborhood due to the “zona libre,” a free trade zone.

to create and oversee several diverse businesses. The neighborhood became especially important after 1904, when construction of the Union Plaza began.²⁴ Duranguito was also part of El Paso's "illicit past" – its network of bars, gambling joints, and a brothel, most notoriously, "The Mansion," an elaborately designed building built circa 1900 as a modern boarding house.²⁵

During the U.S.- Mexico war, Duranguito became a booming binational neighborhood due to the "zona libre," a free trade zone. During the war, business profits in both US and Mexico border neighborhoods increased due to the businesses supplying the armed forces on both sides. After the abolition of the "zona libre" in 1905, the Mexican city of Juárez suffered an economic depression, which led to an increase of Mexican migrants to El Paso, Texas.²⁶ There had always been tension between the Anglo and Mexican communities, and by the mid-1930s during the Great Depression, those tensions flared, forcing many Mexican families with long established roots in El Paso to move to Mexico. By the 1950s to 1970s, following the sentiment of the civil rights movement, many Duranguito residents organized and created organizations like the Mexican American Youth Association (MAYA), the Mexican American Committee of Honor and Service (MACHOS), who preserved the culture of the Segundo Barrio while improving the neighborhood, and La Campaña Por La Preservación del Barrio (the campaign for the preservation of the neighborhood), which was founded around 1975 to stop the splintering of the community.²⁷

There has always been community organizing to preserve the neighborhood, due to the long history of displaced and uprooted residents. In 2006 El Paso business owners, elected officials, and other powerful people created a plan that would eventually lead to the city-approved bond of a multi purpose entertainment center and the decision to demolish Duranguito. The community organized and fought to preserve the neighborhood. In 2017, a demolition team went and partially destroyed some historic buildings, making them lose their historic integrity. A local organization, Paso del Sur, has been organizing, protecting Duranguito residents, and staying vigilant.

Due to its proximity to the border, Duranguito has always been an appropriate place where people on both sides of the US/Mexico border travel, work, and live back and forth between countries. The neighborhood is truly a binational place.





FEFA'S MARKET | PROVIDENCE, RI

Fefa's Market in Providence, Rhode Island is a notable place in the history of the Latino community. In the mid-1960s Josefina Rosario opened what became the first Dominican-owned bodega on Broad Street.²⁸ Rosario, recognized by her nickname "Dona Fefa," became instrumental in the growth and evolution of the Dominican community that sprawled in Providence. Dona Fefa, as she is affectionately known, and her husband Tony moved to Rhode Island as restaurant workers.²⁹ They later opened their own convenience store or bodega on what is today 1232 Broad St. This bodega and Dona Fefa herself became a hub for Latin American food and gathering.

Efforts to document and recognize the histories of the Latino communities in Rhode Island represent a growing urge to establish a sense of belonging. Rhode Island Latino Arts, led by Marta Martinez, continues to document the spaces that reveal the intricate identities and shared stories of people and place. Martinez's efforts continue with barrio tours on Broad St. and amidst her continued research of Fefa's Market. Fefa's Market and stories uncovered through the Latino Oral History Project of Rhode Island and many other Latino oral histories indicate a growing need to look at how Latino communities on the East Coast impact the built environment and culture of the region.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RHODE ISLAND LATINO HISTORY COLLECTIONS



FRIENDSHIP PARK | SAN DIEGO, CA

First-Lady Patricia Nixon addressed a crowd gathered in the United States and Mexico when she inaugurated Friendship Park and El Parque de Amistad in 1971. “[M]ay there never be a fence between these two great nations so that people can extend a hand in friendship,” said First Lady Nixon.³⁰ Fifty years later, her words of wisdom seem to have gone ignored.

Located at the most southwestern edge of the United States and the most northwestern corner of Latin America, Friendship Park is not only a significant place to the history of the United States-Mexican border, but is relevant and necessary to transborder cultural connectivity between San Diego, California, and Tijuana, Mexico. Transborder events put on by many human rights, community, and arts organizations often hold rallies or events at Friendship Park. From Sunday Mass to music events, like the annual Fandango Fronterizo, and even transborder yoga classes, Friendship Park embodies the spirit of transborder neighborly love.

Families and friends who are not able to cross borders depend on Friendship Park to meet and maintain social ties. Yet, they often have to view and talk to loved ones through the steel meshed border fences that divide the United States from Mexico. The border fences not only make it difficult for families and friends to enjoy each other’s presence, but they also disturb the local beach ecology.



PHOTO BY RIGHTCOAST

An amalgamation of transborder park facilities—including restrooms, cement picnic benches,

beach viewing areas, and parking lots—coexist with border security infrastructures, such as border fences, cameras, and Border Patrol agents. Friendship Park is where one of the many border fences that divide the United States from Mexico gradually sinks into the Pacific Ocean. Friendship Park is situated within Border Field State Park, a California State Park, and the Transborder Tijuana River Delta. The Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve is less than a mile away from Friendship Park. Endangered birds and marine life call this park home.

As a public space of transborder community ties, gatherings, conservation, and recreation, Friendship Park has witnessed the growth of border fences emerging from United States immigration politics onto its beach landscape. Border barriers, like the fences at Friendship Park, do not stop unauthorized migrations; they only deflect such migratory movements to regions with less or no border security barriers or infrastructures. Yet, these border security mechanisms are prevalent at this park. Such border security enforcement is uninviting and can feel threatening, especially to visitors of Mexican or Central American ancestry. The construction of more border barriers not only threatens the local ecology but also reduces the public use of these lands. It is, therefore, necessary to protect the park for future generations to enjoy the beach landscape without fear of being profiled or harassed.

Listing Friendship Park to the National Registry of Historic Places or the National Historic Landmarks Program will allow us to honor First Lady Nixon's words and finally extend a hand of friendship towards Mexico. In 1974, Monument #258, a historical boundary marker delineating the United States and Mexico boundary, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In August 2021, Friendship Park will turn fifty. Given the park's association with First Lady Nixon and its importance to the San Diego-Tijuana transborder communities, it is eligible for cultural heritage protection. Recently, The Friends of Friendship Park have been active in seeking further protection for the park and advocating for making Friendship Park and El Parque de La Amistad an actual bi-national park at the United States Mexican Border.



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GILA RIVER | ARIZONA & NEW MEXICO

For centuries, the Gila River, including its headwaters, the San Francisco River, its associated tributaries, and the surrounding environment, has been the lifeblood for numerous human civilizations, a host of endangered, threatened, and endemic species, agricultural and recreational activities, and a valuable and unique landscape for geological study. The Gila River system, which stretches over 600 miles from its headwaters in Southwestern New Mexico across Southern Arizona before joining the Colorado River, which ultimately spills into the Gulf of California, begins in the Gila Wilderness area in New Mexico, the first ever designated wilderness area in the world and the largest in New Mexico. Throughout the Gila Wilderness Area and a large portion of Arizona, the Gila River system flows freely, without man-made impedance or reservoir, making it the largest network of naturally free-flowing river segments in the Southwestern United States. A proposed amendment to the Wild and Scenic River Act will provide protection to segments of the Gila River in New Mexico, securing the myriad valuable benefits and uses that the river provides, while also preserving the natural beauty and significance the river system affords to its human and wildlife dependents alike.³¹

For hundreds of years, the waters of the Gila River system that fall within the designated Gila Wilderness Area have provided an important cultural and natural resource for a variety of human inhabitants. The Mogollon civilization became active in the area over 1,000 years ago, leaving behind evidence of the areas' significance and ability to provide the required necessities to sustain life and culture in the form of cliff dwellings and other artifacts. The Gila River system also provided and continues to provide significant natural and cultural resources to the Chiricahua band of Apaches who maintain to this day sacred ceremonial sites adjacent to the Gila River headwaters and its

For hundreds of years, the waters of the Gila River system have provided an important cultural and natural resource for a variety of human inhabitants.

tributaries. These indigenous inhabitants were later followed by Hispanic settlers, mountain men, fur traders, and farmers who all have relied heavily on the life-giving waters of the Gila River system and the environment that it supports.³²

The Gila River system is also home to a large contingent of varied wildlife, including endangered, threatened, and endemic species. Some of the area's inhabitants include Bobcats, Cougars, Mule deer, Whitetail, Pronghorns, Rattlesnakes, Sonoran King snakes, Turkey, Bald Eagles, the near-threatened Spotted owl, Brown trout, Rainbow trout, Catfish and Bass, to name a few. In 1988 the critically endangered Mexican Gray Wolf was reintroduced into the area, and as of 2006, there were four established packs within the Gila. Due to hunting pressure, Elk and Bighorn sheep were both pushed to extinction locally; however, in 1954 and 1958 respectively, both animals were reintroduced in the area and today continue to thrive. The River system is also home to an endemic species of trout known as the Gila Trout which is currently categorized as threatened.³³



Not only does the Gila River provide natural resources that allow wildlife and humans to inhabit the area, it also provides for recreational, agricultural and economic endeavors as well. Due to the variety of outdoor activities available in the area, including hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, and more, the Gila river and the associated wilderness area provide a significant economic resource for the inhabitants of New Mexico, as well as providing an environment full of shared history and natural beauty for any interested parties to explore. The river provides the water necessary for agriculture throughout the length of its body. These waters provide for the livelihood of many Hispanic farmers as well as seasonal farm workers, while supporting the local economies in these areas. The River also provides the opportunity for the study of unmolested geological features that are dated in the millions of years.

The Gila River system is a valuable resource to all New Mexicans in that it provides a beautiful natural landscape to be enjoyed and appreciated by people from all over, a necessary environment for wildlife to thrive, an important window into the history of the area and New Mexico as a whole, a significant agricultural resource, and an important resource to research and further the study of our natural environment. Provisions within the proposed amendment to the Wild and Scenic River Act allow for the continued use of these resources while maintaining the natural integrity of the river system itself. The proposed amendment has received wide support from a variety of interested parties. The amending of the Wild and Scenic River Act to include the segments of the Gila River, its headwater, the San Francisco River, and all major tributaries, will secure a unique and invaluable resource for the Southwest as well as the United States as a whole for generations to come.





PHOTO BY LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY

HAZARD PARK | EAST LOS ANGELES, CA

The 1968 East Los Angeles Blowouts are among the most significant educational justice youth-led social movements in United States history.³⁴ Organized by Chicano high school students from East Los Angeles, the Blowouts were massive student walkouts to protest the abject educational conditions Mexican Americans had to endure at the time. Charging that the Los Angeles School Board disproportionately discriminated against schools and students from East Los Angeles because students of Mexican origin primarily populated those schools, the Chicano youth walked out of their classrooms as an act of protest between March 1st-8th, 1968. Among the locations where they ultimately rallied was Hazard Park in East Los Angeles.

In part, the decision to gather at Hazard Park had to do with the ample grounds available for assembly and because there was a Los Angeles School District office across the street from the park. It was a perfect location for the youths' voices to be heard. Ultimately, the Los Angeles School Board—the second largest in the country—agreed to meet with the students and listened to their demands for equitable access to education. The outcome of the Blowouts resulted in hiring more culturally relevant teachers and advancing access to proper avenues for higher education for East Los Angeles youth.³⁵

Besides being an important site contributing to one of the most significant youth-led Chicano social movements, Hazard Park is among the few green public spaces in East Los Angeles. For multiple generations, families have depended on the park for recreational activities and relaxation. Hazard Park is within walking distance of the historic Ramona Gardens public housing complex. Many of the youth who participated in the 1968 Blowouts lived in Ramona Gardens and have fond memories of Hazard Park during weekend family picnics or attending community baseball games.



Baseball is often regarded as a national pastime both in the United States and Latin American countries, but at Hazard Park, it is more. It is an intergenerational sport that has equally entertained families and taught its players cultural values and teamwork. As sports scholars Richard A. Santillan and Francisco E. Balderrama (2011) illustrate, baseball “promoted civil and labor rights, reaffirmed cultural values and traditions, and forged a national identity for people of Mexican heritage by

bringing them together across miles and circumstances to the baseball diamond.” Indeed, Baseball and activism have been integral in establishing and building community at Hazard Park.



Similar to the discrimination in East Los Angeles schools, sports too were racially segregated in early 20th century Los Angeles. Before World War II, primarily white baseball teams played at Hazard Park. Mexican-American baseball or “Barrio Baseball” was rarely played at public parks, as social structures racially segregated the baseball diamonds. At the time, Mexican-American baseball teams in Los Angeles were denied access to parklands and ball fields due to racism and racist exclusionary laws. The “Barrio Baseball” teams were relegated to playing at informal fields or on train tracks. It wasn’t until after World War II that Mexican American teams, such

as the Chorizeros, began to proliferate and claim space at Hazard Park and other public parks and baseball fields in East Los Angeles.³⁶

Both educational and sport social histories of overcoming racial discrimination and advancing civil rights contribute to the historical and cultural integrity of Hazard Park in East Los Angeles. Recently, the Sal Castro Foundation, based in Los Angeles, has sought the preservation of Hazard Park and its inclusion in local, state, and federal historic registers for its contributions to the 1968 East Los Angeles Blowouts. Sal Castro, whom the foundation is named after, was a teacher at Lincoln High School and was a central figure in supporting, mentoring, and advocating for the students that organized and participated in the 1968 East Los Angeles Blowouts.



GLOSSARY

Minoritized Communities or Populations

Refers to communities of peoples that face oppression as a result of systemic inequalities in the United States. Minoritized groups are defined as “minorities” by a dominant, power-holding group that implements and upholds discriminatory laws and inhibits rights and access to equitable representation and economic mobility of said group. Our use of Minoritized communities or populations, as a term, aims to highlight the intersectionality of populations in the U.S. that are historically and continue to face marginalization, erasure, exclusion, and denial of rights and equal access to social and political participation.

Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC)

The term “Black, Indigenous, People of Color” or “BIPOC” does not directly account for the class, sexual, and gendered disparities or inequities present in the populations the term BIPOC aims to encompass. In a similar vein, terms such as, “historically oppressed” or “historically underrepresented” mislead and situate social inequities as a thing of the past. In this report, we use the term “minoritized populations,” because it encompasses the active and ongoing dynamics that work intersectionally to create a lower socioeconomic status.

Gentrification

Gentrification is the process of changing a neighborhood via economic investment, typically led by affluent residents and businesses.³⁷

Latinidad

Latinidad is the Spanish-language term that refers to the various characteristics shared by Latin American people. Latinx and most recently, Latine (accent on the e) is the gender neutral term used to refer to people and communities originating from, or descendants of, one or more of 33 countries in Central and South America, the Caribbean and the United States. The concept of Latinidad is rooted in land and geography, which transformed into a cultural identity tied through shared languages, religion, art, music, behavior and customs that do not reflect any one racial identity and experience.

The term Latinidad is encompassing whilst often erasing race and class, therefore providing a false sense of unity under a monolith. Blackness and Indigeneity are integral to the very essence of Latinidad- the tangible and intangible, yet are often omitted from the dominant narratives and representation. Therefore, we acknowledge its exclusionary use and aspire to amplify the stories of place through a nuanced lens. In this report we hope to continue to look at Latinidad as an opportunity to evaluate how culture, heritage and place impact us individually and collectively. We seek to celebrate the nuance and challenge the hierarchy of white supremacy that prevails in it.

Antiquities Act

Since 1906, when Theodore Roosevelt signed the Antiquities Act into law granting the executive office the authority to establish national monuments, 17 presidents – nine Republicans and eight Democrats – have used the law to protect our natural and cultural heritage. More importantly, these national monument designations have received broad support. For example, the 2021 Colorado College Conservation in the West poll showed that 92 percent of voters support creating new national parks, national monuments, national wildlife refuges and tribal protected areas to protect historic sites or areas for outdoor recreation.

Through The Antiquities Act, U.S. presidents have been able to protect hundreds of millions of acres of land that have significant cultural and historical significance. These presidential designated National Monuments protect our public lands, air, water, wildlife, culturally and historically significant artifacts and sites. Furthermore, monuments help to support and grow local economies, tourism, and outdoor access. While it only permits presidents to designate new national monuments from existing public lands, it has been used to create over 130 national monuments.

ENDNOTES

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CONTACTS

The following list documents the community leaders, technical experts and advocates consulted during the process of writing this report. This list is to serve as a resource for anyone interested in historic preservation and cultural resource conservation.

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Diana Figueroa
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Angel Peña
Peter Kopp
Friends of Friendship Park

Sal Castro Foundation
Raquel Reichard

ABOUT LATINO HERITAGE SCHOLARS



Latino Heritage Scholars are a coalition of young professionals in the fields of cultural and historic preservation who assist communities in navigating government processes or systems and achieving permanent protections of sites that are important to Latino communities.



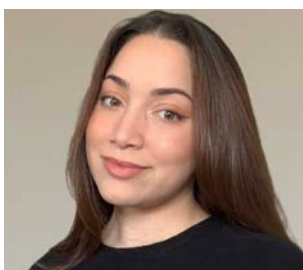
Manuel Galaviz, Ph.D.
University of Texas Austin / Social/Cultural Anthropology

Manuel G. Galaviz, Ph.D. is the host of LM Voices’ Scholar Holler Podcast. His Ph.D. is in Sociocultural Anthropology from the University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Galaviz’s commitment to the empowerment and advancement of minoritized populations in accessing higher education and social justice emerges from his background as an undocumented youth, former construction worker, and community college student. His scholarship, community engagement, and personal experiences have well-equipped him for the next stage of his career. In Fall 2021, Dr. Galaviz will join the Division of Anthropology at California State University, Fullerton as a Tenure-Track Assistant Professor of Cultural Anthropology.



Norma Hartell
New Mexico State University / Archivist, Masters in Cultural Anthropology

A first generation immigrant, Norma and her family moved to the United States when she was only seven. While being raised in the US/Mexico border she gained an interest in learning about her roots. In 2010, Norma graduated from NMSU with BFA and graduated with an MA in Anthropology in 2016 where she focused on highlighting the visual arts of Southern NM. On May 26, 2015, she listed Chope’s Town Café and Bar on the National Register of Historic Places. Norma is the co-founder of the Murals of Las Cruces project, 2021 National Association of Latino Arts and Culture Leadership Institute Fellow and also works as a City of Las Cruces Museum Curator.



Ashleyann Perez-Rivera
Roger Williams College / Historic Preservation and Sustainability Studies Minor

Ashleyann Perez-Rivera was born in Puerto Rico and grew up moving around northeast region of the U.S. She has a B.S in Historic Preservation with a focus on sustainability. Her passion and experience for the natural and cultural landscapes provide a unique perspective on social and ecological public lands issues. Currently, Ashleyann is a Digital Media Ranger at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) headquarters within the National Wildlife Refuge System. Ashleyann seeks to continue bridging environmental conservation, social sciences and cultural resources.

ABOUT HAF

Hispanic Access Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that connects Latinos with partners and opportunities improving lives and creating an equitable society. Our vision is that all Hispanics throughout the U.S. enjoy good physical health, a healthy natural environment, a quality education, economic success and civic engagement in their communities with the sum improving the future of America. For more information, visit www.hispanicaccess.org.

HAF was actively involved in elevating the Latino community's voice around the Browns Canyon, San Gabriel Mountains, Boulder-White Clouds, Sand to Snow, Mojave Trails, and Castle Mountains National Monument efforts. Additionally, HAF has launched the initiatives Por la Creacion Faith Based Alliance, which unites Latino faith leaders around the protection of God's creation and creating tomorrow's environmental stewards, and Latino Conservation Week, which includes dozens of conservation and outdoor-related events across the country.



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