

# **Glendale Garden Homes**

**(1303-1315 N. Central Avenue)**

## **Historic Resource Assessment and Peer Review of Previous Studies**



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## Introduction

1303-1315 N. Central Avenue, known since its completion in 1957 as Glendale Garden Homes (GGH), is a garden apartment building complex located on the east side of Central Avenue between E. Randolph Street and W. Mountain Avenue. The two-acre site contains three large residential buildings, designed in the Modern style, that embrace four wide interconnected landscaped courtyards featuring numerous mature trees and other plantings. The property features the “garden apartment” typology that was promoted in the United States by the urban planner Clarence Stein, who was a leader of the Garden City movement in the country and designed and laid out numerous New Towns and garden apartment complexes, including Baldwin Hills Village (aka the Village Green) in Los Angeles (1941). Garden apartments were seen as a housing solution in the years after the Great Depression and were often built as public housing projects promoted by the federal government. The typology was also used by private developers, particularly in the years following World War II, when the country faced an acute housing crisis. The name Glendale Garden Homes was not a euphemism - most of the 37 units averaged between 1600 and 2000 square feet, larger than many single-family homes built in the region during the 1950s. Along with the spacious layouts, other amenities included large, private outdoor patios or balconies, rear service doors, central air conditioning, intercom systems, kitchen pass-throughs, specialized built-in cabinetry, wood-burning fireplaces, indoor barbecues, and wet bars. Residents also shared a swimming pool, with a cabana, changing rooms, a sundeck, and barbecues. Advertisements in the *Los Angeles Times* suggested that residents would “enjoy the graciousness of a modern 2 or 3 bedroom, 2 bath home plus the convenience of apartment living.”<sup>1</sup>

A new residential project is proposed for the site by property owner Central BWB, LLC that would require demolition of GGH. A previous project was proposed by the same owner around 2004 and met with opposition from the Glendale Historical Society and some community members because of concern that the property might be a historic resource under the California Environmental Quality Act. Between 2004 and 2024, the owner has commissioned two historic resource evaluations of the property and a peer review of these reports:

- EP Associates, *Historic Assessment: Glendale Garden Homes*, August 30, 2004 (EP Report)
- Environmental Science Associates (ESA), *Historic Resource Assessment*, June 2019 (Draft) (ESA Report)
- Chronicle Heritage, Peer Review Historic Assessment, July 5, 2024 (CH Report)

This historic assessment (the “Glendale Historic Assessment” or “Glendale Report”) was prepared by Jay Platt, Principal Planner for the Community Development Department of the City of Glendale. Mr. Platt obtained a master’s degree in Historic Preservation and meets and exceeds the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards for Architectural History (see Professional Qualifications, Appendix A). The Glendale Report serves two functions:

- Provide a historic resources assessment of GGH focused on its potential eligibility for listing in the Glendale Register of Historic Resources (GR).
- Provide a peer review of the three previous studies note above.

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<sup>1</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, December 18, 1957, p. A5

Mr. Platt visited the site on August 9, 2024 and consulted the following resources in preparation of this document:

- South Glendale Historic Resources Survey (Historic Resources Group, 2019) (South Glendale Survey)
- South Glendale Historic Context (Historic Resources Group, 2014) (South Glendale Context)
- Glendale Municipal Code Sections 15.20 and 30.25
- Garden Apartments of Los Angeles Historic Context Statement (Architectural Resources Group, 2012) (Los Angeles Context)
- *Historical Los Angeles Times* (ProQuest)
- Sanborn fire insurance maps
- Los Angeles County Assessor parcel maps
- City of Glendale annexations map
- Google Street View and Aerial imagery of the East and West Glendale (viewed September 2024)
- UCSB Library Aerial Photograph Collection
- Reviewed EP, ESA, and CH Reports

Based on the research and analysis provided below, the Glendale Report concludes that GGH is eligible for listing in the Glendale Register of Historic Resources under two designation criteria: Criterion 1, as a rare and important example of the use of Garden City planning principles in a post-World War II housing development in Glendale, and Criterion 3, for its distinctive and exemplary mid-20<sup>th</sup> century design and planning that reflect both its period of construction and Garden Apartment typology. In addition, the property retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling sufficient to meet the requirement for listing in the Glendale Register.<sup>2</sup>

## Regulatory Framework

The Glendale Report considers the potential eligibility of the Glendale Garden Homes, also referred to herein as the “GGH”, for listing in the Glendale Register of Historic Resources and/or as a contributor to a potential Glendale historic district. The regulatory frameworks are established by the Glendale Municipal Code (GMC):

### **GMC § 15.20.050 Findings for listing resources in the Glendale Register of Historic Resources.**

Upon recommendation of the historic preservation commission, city council shall consider and make findings for additions to the Glendale Register of Historic Resources. The designation of any resource that is proposed for inclusion in the Glendale Register of Historic Resources as a designated historic resource shall be granted only if city council first finds that the resource meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. The resource is identified with important events in national, state, or city history, or exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, political, economic, social, tribal, or historic heritage of the nation, state, or city, and retains historic integrity.
2. The resource is associated with a person, persons, or groups who significantly contributed to the history of the nation, state, region, or city, and retains historic integrity.

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<sup>2</sup> City of Glendale Municipal Code Section 15.20.050.



3. The resource embodies the distinctive and exemplary characteristics of an architectural style, architectural type, period, or method of construction; or represents a notable work of a master designer, builder, or architect whose genius influenced his or her profession; or possesses high artistic values, and retains historic integrity.
4. The resource has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to archaeological pre-history or history of the nation, state, region, or city, and retains historic integrity.

Historic integrity is defined as the ability of a property to convey its historic significance. This is assessed by considering the integrity of the following seven aspects identified by the National Park Service to assist in determining a property's significance: Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association. The EP and ESA Reports were written before the requirement of retention of integrity was codified in the GMC in 2020.

#### **GMC § 30.25.020 Historic district overlay zone designation criteria.**

A geographic area may be designated as a historic district overlay zone by the city council upon the recommendation of the historic preservation commission and planning commission if the district meets one or more of the following criteria:

- A. Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the city's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, architectural, or natural history;
- B. Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history;
- C. Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship;
- D. Represents the work of notable builders, designers, or architects;
- E. Has a unique location or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood community or of the city;
- F. Embodies a collection of elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation;
- G. Reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, transportation modes, or distinctive examples of park or community planning;
- H. Conveys a sense of historic and architectural cohesiveness through its design, setting, materials, workmanship, or association; and/or
- I. Has been designated a historic district in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources.

In addition, at least 60% of the properties in a proposed district must be identified in a survey as contributors to the overall character of a district.

## **Developmental Context**

### **Is GGH Properly Considered a Garden Apartment?**

To determine any possible historic significance for the Glendale Garden Homes, the broader context of the site's place in the developmental history of Glendale's multi-family residences must be understood. Staff first reviewed existing sources, including the South Glendale Context, the South Glendale Survey,

the Los Angeles Conservancy's 2012 document "Garden Apartments of Los Angeles: Historic Context Statement" ("Los Angeles Context"), and the previous reports prepared for the owners of GGH. Staff also conducted a desktop survey of West and East Glendale to locate any similar buildings in these areas, for which there is no historic context or survey.

The Glendale Report uses the Los Angeles Context as a general reference document because it provides greater depth about the garden apartment typology in the Los Angeles area than anything written to-date that would be more specific to Glendale. The two cities experienced different patterns of growth and development however, and aspects specific to Los Angeles, such as the reasons for developing garden apartments, and their funding mechanisms, scale, and construction timeline, are not necessarily applicable to Glendale. The Los Angeles Context is primarily useful for its historical overview of the Garden City movement and in identifying the basic garden apartment typology and its variants.

Staff agrees with the three previous GGH historic resource assessments (or peer reviews thereof) that the site should be considered a "garden apartment" complex. This name has specific meaning to architectural historians, and is described briefly in the South Glendale Context:

Multi-family residential development during the postwar period was influenced by planning and design principles dating to the 1920s. The Garden City Movement, in particular, had a profound influence on the design of multi-family housing, as did the publication of Clarence Stein's *Toward New Towns* (1951). During the postwar period, local architects and community planners adapted the principles of these movements and constructed innovative new forms of multiple family housing. A new multiple family housing type known as "garden apartments" emerged at this time. Characteristics of garden apartments include the use of superblocks in development of the site, the segregation of automobile and pedestrian traffic, low to medium density and building coverage, the standardization of building types with a maximum of three stories in height, and an emphasis on landscaping and open space.<sup>3</sup>

The Los Angeles Context provides a more detailed definition though, as noted, it is based primarily on examples found in Los Angeles. The bullet points below are taken from the Los Angeles Context and are followed by staff's assessment (italicized) of how closely GGH conforms to the Los Angeles Context's general discussion of garden apartments:

Planned and constructed in Los Angeles between 1937 and approximately 1955, garden apartment complexes generally consist of concentrations of similar multi-unit buildings situated on a large – and often irregularly shaped – property. Complexes range in size from just a few acres to more than a hundred. Though some of Los Angeles's preeminent architects designed garden apartments at mid-century, the buildings themselves are typically (and deliberately) architecturally modest. Emphasis is placed, rather, on site plan and landscape; the designers relied on color, texture, planting plan, light and shadow to create visual interest. Building entrances face landscaped courtyards rather than the street, and parking and vehicular circulation is relegated to the perimeter of the site plan or within garage courts separate from pedestrian areas. Large, expansive green space is common; typically, there are one or two large courtyards or greens at the nucleus of the complexes available to all residents. Garden apartments vary in appearance, size and plan; however, the following character defining features epitomize the property type in its purest expression:

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<sup>3</sup> Historic Resources Group, South Glendale Historic Context

- Superblock site plan, which deviates from the rectilinear urban grid by combining multiple city blocks or parcels into a single property.  
*The large parcel on which GGH was built was mostly undeveloped long after the surrounding area became urbanized. The property does conform to the current street grid but the size of the site roughly occupies the area of ten standard Glendale flatland lots, which are generally 50'x150'. It qualifies as a "superblock" in that vehicular traffic and parking is mostly at the perimeter of the site, with the internal areas dedicated to landscaping and pedestrian pathways.*
- Three acres in size or greater.  
*GGH contains 2 acres. It appears to be the third largest garden apartment complex in South, West, or East Glendale, only two of which, including GGH, are intact. West and East Glendale were largely built out by the 1940s so the larger lots of the properties discussed in the Los Angeles Context were fairly rare.*
- Low-slung buildings, rarely exceeding two stories in height.  
*The residential portions of GGH are two-stories high as seen from the street and the internal courtyards, with the portions containing tuck-under parking actually being three-stories.*
- Elimination of common interior corridors.  
*GGH has no internal corridors.*
- Repetition of nearly identical building models throughout the plan.  
*The three buildings composing the residential portion of GGH are similar in plan and design, but not identical. This similarity includes the three buildings' overall massing, articulation, and architectural detailing.*
- Stylistic simplicity; buildings are usually minimal in appearance with a lack of stylistic details and ornament.  
*GGH features a number of stylistic details that convey its Modern-style design. It is not stylistically complex, as its architectural vocabulary consists of only a few elements repeated across the entire site, but it is also not as minimal as many of the examples in the Los Angeles Context. The word "usually" employed for this item indicates that there is some latitude in how "simple" a garden apartment complex might be. As an example, the large Park La Brea complex in Los Angeles also features more detailing than some of the more austere examples while retaining its status as one of the premier examples in that city and also being found eligible for designation as a historic district at the federal, state, and local levels.*
- Primary building entrances face common courtyards rather than the street.  
*Access to almost all of the 37 units is from the interior courtyards, though a few units are accessed from the street-facing façade. Street access for some units is common to many of the properties discussed in the Los Angeles Context.*
- Parking at the perimeter of the site plan, typically in detached, enclosed garage buildings or garage courts.  
*All parking is segregated from the interior courtyards and walking paths, either under the buildings (tuck-under) or in a detached carport structure. All courtyard walkways and unit entries can be accessed without crossing any driveway.*
- One or more large open spaces, or greens, located at the interior of the site plan, around which buildings are arranged.

*The three buildings are arranged around four wide, interconnected courtyards featuring extensive landscaping.*

- Recreational amenities planned to help foster community.  
*The complex features a swimming pool area that originally had a cabana, rooftop sun deck, changing rooms, and communal barbeques, creating a gathering space open to all GGH residents and guests.*
- Variety of landscape, often native or drought tolerant; low shrubs used to delineate outdoor “rooms”; allées; mature trees and the use of climbing vines to add visual interest to buildings.<sup>4</sup>  
*A wide variety of landscaping is featured throughout the GGH courtyards, including mature trees (with anecdotal reports suggesting that some may predate the complex), low shrubs, and groundcover, many with a “tropical” feel. Because the site is smaller than the larger examples in Los Angeles or one Glendale example, the wide expanses of lawn seen at some other sites was never a feature of GGH. The Los Angeles Context specifically notes that post-WWII complexes often shifted their landscape design away from native plantings toward a denser sub-tropical and tropical palette.<sup>5</sup>*

The Los Angeles Context examines garden apartments built between “1937 and approximately 1955.” The later date is used by the authors of the ESA Report and CH Peer Review to call out GGH as being built outside the typology’s period of significance and therefore ineligible for Glendale designation - despite that study’s focus on resources in Los Angeles and not Glendale. This error of interpretive judgment will be discussed in the peer review section of the current report, but several statements in the Los Angeles Context allow us to see that a later construction date does not preclude significance and that GGH is different from other “late” garden apartment examples:

Public housing developments constructed in Los Angeles in the early 1950s, while still representing an important phase of housing in Los Angeles, began to lose the expression of the Garden City Movement while giving preference to unit count and density. *Although not explored in this study, post-1955 garden apartments will deserve their own analysis as their contributions to the history of housing in Los Angeles become clearer with time.*<sup>6</sup> (Emphasis added).

Post-1945 examples are clearly based on the Garden City planning concepts that shaped the early garden apartments; however, due to the urgency of the postwar housing crisis they are typically higher density with more emphasis on unit count than open space. As such, whereas pre-1945 examples averaged 10 to 20 units per acre, most garden apartments constructed between 1945 and 1955 ranged between 20 to 30 units per acre.<sup>7</sup>

As mentioned in the Introduction, the apartments at GGH were unusually large, averaging between 1600 and 2000 square feet per unit. The density on the two-acre lot containing 37 units is 18.5 units per acre, within the range provide for pre-1945 garden apartments and well under the 20-30 units that the LA Report found typical of postwar complexes.

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<sup>4</sup> Architectural Resources Group for the Los Angeles Conservancy, “Garden Apartments of Los Angeles: Historic Context Statement,” p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21-22.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

## How Does GGH Compare to Other Garden Apartments in Glendale?

To evaluate GGH in the context of similar developments in the city, staff reviewed the South Glendale Context and Survey and conducted a desktop survey of West and East Glendale to identify if other garden apartments exist in these areas that have not been previously surveyed.

### *South Glendale Survey Findings*

In 2018, the South Glendale Historic Resource Survey was reviewed and approved by the Glendale Historic Preservation Commission and was also approved by City Council as part of the South Glendale Community Plan. It was also submitted to and accepted by the California State Office of Historic Preservation for its files.

The South Glendale Survey identifies fifteen properties as eligible for listing in the Glendale Register (California Historic Resource Status Code 5S3) under the theme of “Post-World War II Multi-Family Residential Development (1945-1979). This theme and the registration requirements for properties identified under the theme, were previously established in the South Glendale Context. Of the fifteen eligible properties, only three were identified as garden apartments: 501 W. Maple Street (Glendale Manor); 701 S. Verdugo Road; and 302-308 N. Louise Street. [Figures 1-3]

At almost all levels, GGH appears to be comparable, and in many ways superior, to these properties in terms of its historic integrity, architectural design, and “garden apartment” site planning. The Glendale Manor complex on Maple Street was built in 1945 and features a Minimal Traditional/Colonial Revival style. It is an excellent example of the garden apartment typology. Its lot is slightly larger site than GGH (approximately 2.2 acres vs. 2 acres) and its 56 units give it a higher unit density (25.5 units/acre). The developer of Glendale Manor chose to design smaller units and provide larger landscaped areas, with several lawn areas placed between the more widely spaced buildings. At GGH, the developers created larger, “home-like” units which led to a lower unit density and less landscaping. Glendale Manor was identified as eligible for listing under GR Criterion 1 as “an excellent example of a 1940s garden style apartment complex, representing post-World War II multi-family residential development in South Glendale.”<sup>8</sup> Criterion 3 was not applied, indicating the survey did not find the property’s architectural design to be significant.

In terms of style, the Modern design of 701 S. Verdugo Road is most comparable to GGH. This is a smaller property with much smaller, less lush, landscaped areas. 701 S. Verdugo Road’s primary interest comes from its architectural design, which features crisp, deep roof eaves, corner window sash, and geometric wood detailing at some entryways. This property was found eligible for listing under Criterion 1 as a “good example of a post-World War II garden apartment complex,” and Criterion 3 as “a good example of Mid-century Modern style residential architecture.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> South Glendale Survey, DPR Form, 501 E. Maple Street.

<sup>9</sup> South Glendale Survey, DPR Form, 701 S. Verdugo Road.



Figure 1  
501-613 Maple Street, 1945, Paul Burkhardt, Jr., architect  
Minimal Traditional/Colonial Revival style, 7 residential buildings



Figure 2  
701 S. Verdugo Road, 1950  
Modern style, 2 residential buildings



Figure 3  
302 N. Louise Street, 1949  
Minimal Traditional style, 2 residential buildings (some alterations)

302 N. Louise Street, shown immediately above, was found eligible under local Criterion 1 as an excellent example of a 1940s garden apartment complex, representing post-World War II multi-family residential development in South Glendale. Staff's analysis finds it to not be comparable to GGH in terms of its site planning, design quality, or its integration buildings and landscape. It consists of two identical U-shaped buildings, each embracing a relatively narrow landscaped courtyard. In some ways, the complex is more like a pair of courtyard apartment buildings than a garden apartment. Detailing is limited to a stringcourse at the second-floor windowsill level, decorative shutters at windows near the street, and minimally designed Colonial Revival-style porticoes at the entries off the courtyards. The unarticulated building facades and narrow courtyards do not allow for the density or variety of landscaping found at GGH or the open, grassy areas found at Glendale Manor.

When GGH is compared to the three GR-eligible South Glendale examples, its complex site plan, integration of buildings and landscape, and level of architectural design and detailing make it clearly superior to the Louise Street complex. The Verdugo Road property has strong architectural character but a simpler site plan that provides less integration with its relatively modest landscaped areas. Glendale Manor on Maple Street has a classic garden apartment site plan and a straightforward, but well detailed, design, making it the most comparable to GGH for these reasons. Since all three were identified as significant under the registration requirements of the Glendale Context and city's designation criteria, it appears very likely that GGH, if it were located in South Glendale, would also have been deemed eligible for local listing.

#### ***Desktop Survey of West and East Glendale***

Because GGH was not included in the South Glendale Survey and a survey of West Glendale, the area in which GGH is located, and East Glendale will not begin until later in 2024, staff recognizes the need to assess the property within the context of its own geographical area. West and East Glendale were not developed as intensively or quite as early as South Glendale. They also contain less land area zoned for multi-family development and largely feature single-family homes. That said, the development patterns in West and East Glendale have much in common with South Glendale and the themes identified in the context for South Glendale, especially in the postwar era, will be used as a basis for the future East-West Glendale Historic Context and Survey, with appropriate modifications to account for any differences identified through research or in the field. It is therefore appropriate to use the South Glendale Context's postwar multi-family residential development theme for considering potential eligibility for GGH.

To provide appropriate context a desktop analysis of the multi-family housing stock of West and East Glendale using Google aerial and street-view images was completed. This analysis was aided by the area's limited amount of multi-family housing and the readily identifiable configurations of garden apartment complexes, which are clearly revealed through reviewing close-in aerial images.

As in South Glendale, the garden apartment typology is not common in either West or East Glendale. Numerous examples of courtyard apartments were found, but few garden apartments. The courtyard typology is also important in the development of Glendale's multi-family housing stock built between the 1930s and 1960s, but the courtyard typology features sharp differences from the garden apartments, including less complex site plans and, generally, single buildings on smaller lots.



In West Glendale, only two examples of garden apartments were found aside from GGH and they are located on the two lots just to its north. As with GGH, their large, deep lots were developed later than most of the surrounding neighborhood, but they are somewhat smaller than the GGH lot. Nonetheless, they contain almost all of the elements associated with the garden apartment typology. (Figures 4 and 5, p. 12)

1327 N. Central Avenue [Figure 6, p. 13] was built in 1954 with five, two-story Colonial Revival-style buildings containing twenty-two units. The buildings are arranged around a large grassy courtyard that is screened from the street by the front building. Smaller landscaped courts open off to the sides of the central court and, similar to GGH, a swimming pool is located toward the rear. Parking is also similarly located in a structure at the back of the lot and in garages under the rear residential building. All pedestrian walkways and unit entries are separated from the driveway.

1401 N. Central Avenue [Figure 7, p. 13] was built in 1962 and bears some stylistic resemblance to GGH; it features two, two-story units with a similarly complex site plan but much smaller and less lushly landscaped areas. The Modern style features an East Asian/Polynesian influence that is derived from the use of lava stone cladding at the base and entry of the front building, decorative geometric screens above the entry and at the street-facing gables, as well as geometric designs at the balcony railings and breeze-block patio walls at the interior of the complex.

These three complexes represent the best examples of garden apartments in both West and East Glendale. It is interesting that they are on adjacent lots with a similar development pattern – given the overall rarity of this typology, this grouping could be considered as a potential small historic district, though GGH is the better example of the type for the reasons discussed in the assessment section below.



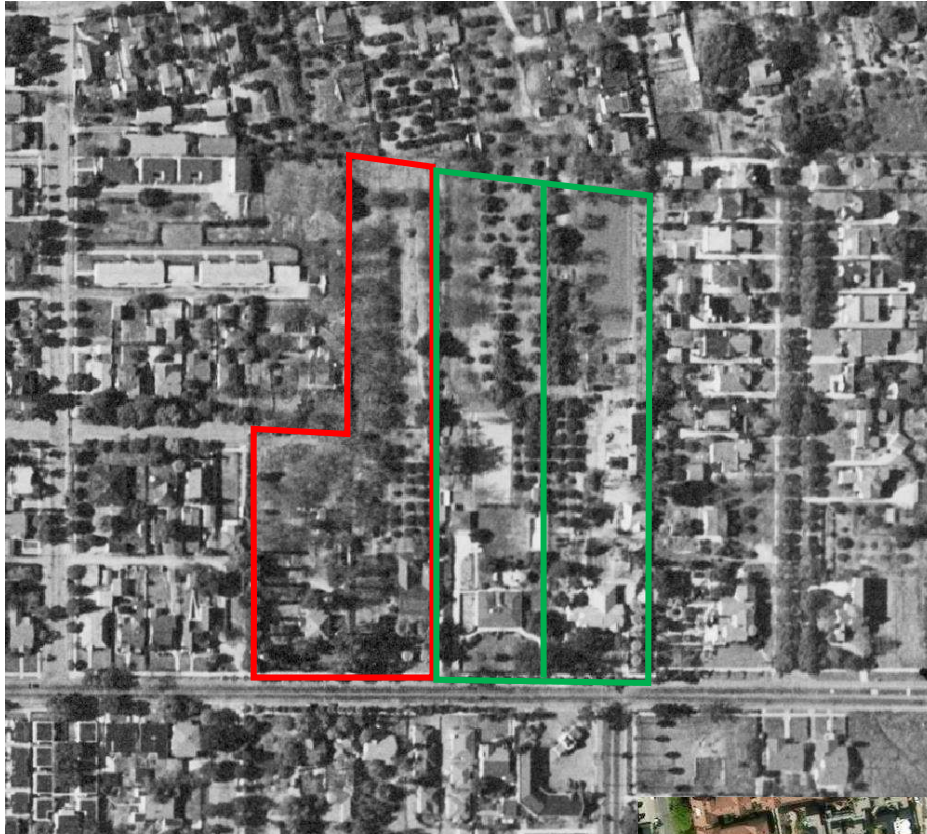


Figure 4  
1945 aerial view, view of large parcels  
on which GGH (red) and 1327 and  
1401 N. Central were  
later built (green).  
(UCSB Library, aerial photo collection)



Figure 5  
Current aerial view, GGH (red) and  
1327 and 1401 N. Central (green).  
Earlier parcels highlighted in orange.  
(UCSB Library, aerial photo collection)





Figure 6  
1327 N. Central Avenue, 1954  
Colonial Revival/Minimal Traditional, 22 units



Figure 7  
1401 N. Central Avenue, 1962  
Modern, 30 units

In East Glendale, only three garden apartment examples were found, and all have been altered to a degree that they are no longer useful for comparative purposes. 1717 N. Verdugo Road [Figure 8] was built in 1965 and features seven residential buildings with modestly sized, narrow landscaped courtyards. The complex was extensively remodeled, and its original style is indiscernible. Two smaller complexes, at 1748 and 1756 N. Verdugo Road [Figures 9 and 10] were built in 1949 and bear some resemblance to the Modern-style complex at 701 S. Verdugo Road that was identified as eligible for listing in the South Glendale Survey. Neither match that building in terms of their architectural design, and replacement windows and a remodeled entryway (at 1756 N. Verdugo Road) significantly reduce their historic integrity.





Figure 8  
1717 N. Verdugo Road, 1965  
Altered c. 1998



Figure 9  
1748 N. Verdugo Road, 1949



Figure 10  
1756 N. Verdugo Road, 1949

## Historic Assessment of Glendale Garden Homes

To assess the eligibility of GGH for listing in the Glendale Register, staff first analyzed the property's features, particularly its site planning and architectural design, and then applied the South Glendale Context's registration requirements under the theme Post-World War II Multi-family Residential Development (1945-1979). GGH's 1957 construction date falls within this identified period of significance. The property was then analyzed under the designation criteria codified in GMC Section 15.20.050.

### Registration Requirements and Analysis

Staff has analyzed GGH under Glendale Register Criteria 1 and 3 because the three comparable South Glendale properties were determined eligible under one or both criteria in that area's survey.<sup>10</sup>

CRITERIA	REASON
GR/1 (Event)	As a unique or rare representation of a particular type of multi-family residential development. Eligible examples may represent the first or best example of a specific type of multi-family residential development; reflect important development patterns from the period in South Glendale; or represent an association with an ethnic group important in Glendale's history.
GR3/3(Architecture)	As an excellent or rare example of an architectural style or property type from the period. Additional information about architectural styles from each period and their associated character-defining features are outlined in the Architecture & Design context.

Based on the South Glendale Survey and the staff survey of East and West Glendale, the garden apartment typology appears to be found only rarely in the city. Its association with the Garden City movement and the work of Clarence Stein (and in England before him, Ebenezer Howard) and the resulting humane site planning have led to many intact examples being historically designated in cities throughout the country. For example, Stein's Baldwin Hills Village is both a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument and a National Historic Landmark. By the time private developers began building garden apartments in the postwar era, Glendale was largely built out, leading extant specimens to be somewhat smaller than better known examples in other cities, especially those built as public housing.

GGH is a rare example of a garden apartment in Glendale and represents an important reflection of how this important building type was incorporated into the city's development pattern. GGH and Glendale Manor are the two best specimens in the entire city south of the Crescenta Valley (North Glendale has not been surveyed). They reflect how their developers and designers chose paths that led to strikingly different projects that nonetheless brought the principles and practices of the Garden City movement to Glendale. The garden apartment concept was informed by earlier multifamily building types such as bungalow courts and courtyard apartments, which are also found in Glendale. Garden apartments, however, were a leap forward in terms of their careful planning and their deliberate effort to balance private apartment spaces with shared landscaped areas in a way intended to enhance the lives of

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<sup>10</sup> South Glendale Historic Context, p. 104 and South Glendale Historic Resource Survey DPR Forms.

residents. The design of GGH took this further by bumping up the apartment sizes to be comparable to those of single-family homes.

GGH is an excellent and rare example of both its property type and as a work of Mid-Century Modern architectural design. In terms of its typology, it features most of the general qualities identified in the Los Angeles garden apartment context:

- Complex site plan, in which the three residential buildings snake through the property to create four lushly landscaped, interconnected courtyards that feature many mature trees.
- Complete separation of pedestrian and automobile areas, with parking relegated to the perimeter and either tucked under the buildings or placed in a detached carport.
- Low-slung two-story buildings as viewed from both the street and courtyard areas.
- No interior corridors, with almost all unit entries accessed from the courtyards.
- The three buildings have similar overall forms despite each have distinct footprints and massing.
- Communal pool area, originally with sundeck, changing rooms, and barbeques.

In terms of its architectural design, GGH is more distinctive than many other examples of its type. The Los Angeles Context indicates these complexes usually feature buildings that are “minimal in appearance with a lack of stylistic details and ornament.”<sup>11</sup> The design of GGH is not flamboyant by any means, but it does possess decorative features that are consistent with, and evocative of, its mid-20<sup>th</sup> century construction date. Its character-defining architectural features include:

- Highly articulated, two-story residential volumes.
- Gable-on-hip roofs with complex roof plans featuring multiple ridge lines and heights that result from the complex, articulated footprint of each building.
- Louvered attic vents at each roof gable.
- Wide, boxed eaves with canted fascia boards that are mitered at all outside and inside corners, helping create a unified datum line at the rooflines that visually unites the three buildings.
- Wood trim at the sill level of the second-floor windows that extends across many of the buildings’ facades, providing another datum line and helping break up the two-story masses.
- A grid of vertical and horizontal wood trim applied at the flanking walls of the main pedestrian entrance, establishing a subtle East Asian/Polynesian design influence that is enhanced by the canted eaves and roof forms.
- Wide lapped wood siding at the second-floor balconies, providing low, solid walls, rather than open railings, that provide privacy while adding texture and detail to the building composition. This cladding turns the outside corners of many balconies using mitered joints, which helps maintain the visual flow established by the fascias and horizontal trim. Similar siding is occasionally applied directly to wall surfaces to help further break up the facades and reduce the amount of plain stucco wall.
- Large ground-floor patios enclosed by tall wood fences for privacy (some fences are altered).
- Vertically oriented tongue-and-groove wood siding running the length of the upper portions of some walls that extend from the bottom of second-floor windows to the underside of the eaves. These also help break up the massing and serve a similar function as the horizontal wood trim in

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<sup>11</sup> Garden Apartments of Los Angeles: Historic Context Statement, p. 4.

terms of emphasizing horizontal flow and providing a level of visual differentiation between the buildings.

- Wood bezels around some windows, often at openings with sills higher than the wood trim datum line. These help avoid having a preponderance of window sash “stranded” in areas of plain stucco wall.
- Decorative metal railings at all stairways.
- Rear service entries for each unit.
- Red brick chimneys visible at various locations.
- Long, horizontal wood trellis structures (*brises soleil*) located above the openings at the tuck-under parking areas. It is rare to see such a detail brought to the more utilitarian facades of a multi-family building, which is indicative of the designers’ attention to detail and design quality.

It is also worth noting that the size and design quality of the apartment interiors is also a character-defining feature, even though these are not ultimately regulated for buildings designated in Glendale. The unit sizes do appear to result in exterior characteristics such as the high degree of articulation at the building facades and roofs, as different portions of individual units vary in width to accommodate interior uses. Staff is unsure of which interior features remain at the property, but house-sized floor plans and amenities such as central air conditioning, intercom systems, kitchen pass-throughs, specialized built-in cabinetry, wood-burning fireplaces and indoor barbeques set in slump stone walls, and wet bars are not typical features of most mid-20<sup>th</sup> century apartments.

### **Glendale Register and Historic District Eligibility**

To be listed in the Glendale Register, a property must be found eligible under at least one of the four designation criteria, though more than one may apply. For the purposes of this report, only Criteria 1 and 3 will be analyzed for the reasons discussed above.

#### **Criterion 1**

*The resource is identified with important events in national, state, or city history, or exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, political, economic, social, tribal, or historic heritage of the nation, state, or city, and retains historic integrity.*

Just as the South Glendale Survey found three garden apartment properties eligible under Criterion 1, GGH is also eligible for GR listing under this criterion. Staff, however, believes that the complex’s specific connection to the context of garden apartments adds a level of importance and meaning that was not fleshed out in that survey. As noted above, the garden apartment typology is an important development in 20<sup>th</sup> century American housing in both its government-sponsored and privately-developed manifestations. When viewed in the context GGH rises to the top of all garden apartments identified to date in Glendale. It represents the suitability of the typology to conform to a community’s specific conditions and a developer’s goals.

With the portions of Glendale south of the Verdugo Mountains largely being built out by World War II, large, underdeveloped lots zoned for multifamily use were not common. GGH, along with the two garden apartments to the north, were built on what appear to be “hold out” parcels – large, sparsely developed lots that had not been subdivided in the real estate boom of the 1920s. With the city experiencing the region’s postwar housing crunch, construction of large-scale garden apartment complexes on largely unbuilt open parcels may have been more feasible than attempting to consolidate



groups of parcels containing multiple individual houses. Further research is needed to fully understand this pattern, but it is interesting that the only garden apartments in this part of the city were built on very similar, and very rare, parcels. GGH contributes to the broad cultural, economic, social, and historic heritage of Glendale because it represents a relatively new housing type in the region at the time its construction, and the developer's effort to create an apartment/home hybrid is unmatched by any other Glendale rental property known to the City's planning staff. In this way, an important nationwide housing phenomenon, the garden apartment, found its way into the rapidly urbanizing city at a time when large numbers of multi-family buildings were being built to address the country's postwar housing crisis.

*For these reasons, Glendale Garden Homes is eligible for listing in the Glendale Register of Historic Resources under Criterion 1.*

### **Criterion 3**

*The resource embodies the distinctive and exemplary characteristics of an architectural style, architectural type, period, or method of construction; or represents a notable work of a master designer, builder, or architect whose genius influenced his or her profession; or possesses high artistic values, and retains historic integrity.*

GGH is a highly distinctive and rare multi-family property in Glendale. The combination of its large lot, extensive landscaping, and complex site plan, along with the high quality of its design, makes it a unique specimen in Glendale. As discussed in the sections above, the property embodies exemplary use of the characteristics of garden apartment complexes, as modified to fit the city's developmental history. It is an excellent representative of Modern-style design, with many of its design features – particularly those reinforcing the horizontality of the three buildings – serving the function of integrating the overall appearance of the complex rather than serving only as decorative features. As such, GGH also relates to the tastes and trends of the mid-century era, with many of its features being found at other properties of the time but generally not in such profusion or applied with such consistency and rigor, as seen with the various uses of wood trim and siding to provide visual variety and interest while also helping unify the overall design conception. Though its landscaping has undoubtedly changed over time, the property's name indicates how important the gardens were to its conception and design, as its marketability. Previous historic resource reviewers have opined that there is not enough information available to assess GGH in terms of whether it is the work of a master designer, architect, or designer and this Glendale Report concurs with that conclusion.

With regard to the property's historic integrity, GGH possesses high integrity with regard to six of the seven aspects of integrity identified by the National Park Service (NPS) and incorporated into GMC 15.20.

- Location – the complex has not been moved and is in its original location.
- Design – the layout of the complex and the buildings themselves have had very few changes over the years. Most, if not all, windows appear to be original. The stucco walls and wood trim elements appear unchanged. The most notable changes seen today include: the construction of a secured entry gate and portal at the main entry, and gates at the driveways and other street entries; low stone-clad pedestals with lights at the entry; ornamental, period-inappropriate “street lamps” at the walkways throughout the property; and the removal of a fountain and its replacement with a stone feature at an entry point to one of the buildings. Of these, the

lampposts are the most unfortunate change as they likely replaced the original fixtures, which undoubtedly would have better reflected the design and period of the building. However, these changes are primarily cosmetic, and each could be easily reversed in the future. None of them compromise the site's remarkable level of overall design integrity.

- Setting – despite new construction in areas around the building, the overall mix and scale of the single- and multi-family properties in the immediate area is similar to what would have existed at its 1957 construction. The setting within the complex is also very similar to its original condition except for the ongoing growth and changes of the landscaping. In both cases, GGH retains its integrity of setting.
- Materials – the property appears to contain an abundance of its original materials, though in-kind replacement over the years may not be readily visible. An unfortunate exception, as noted above, is the loss of the original lighting along the pathways running through the landscaped courtyards. On a property of this scale and complexity, however, this does not significantly impact the high level of material integrity.
- Workmanship – the hand of the builder is often not as evident at resources dating to the modern era as it often is at older properties. The fact that so much exterior woodwork remains at GGH is a likely a testament to a combination of its original detailing and construction, as well as ongoing maintenance over the years. A compelling reminder of the integrity of the workmanship is found at the mitered joints at the corners of the fascia boards and the balcony cladding. These 45-degree joints maintain a crisp edge at locations throughout the property, indicating the care taken in cutting and assembling the lumber – highly exposed joints such as these often show more buckling and separation than is seen at GGH. The use of redwood, rather than less durable species, probably helps maintain this quality.
- Feeling – the complex retains its sense of being built in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, which is partially the result of the high integrity levels noted above. A test of whether a property retains integrity of feeling is to consider whether it would feel familiar and recognizable to an early resident, or the property's architect or builder, if they returned to the site today. This seems very likely to be the case at GGH because other than the noted changes at the entrance, to the fountain, and exterior lighting, nothing has changed.
- Association – no one known to be associated with the building is significant in the broader history of the city or region, including its developers and architects. J.E Hoeft, the founder of Glendale Federal Savings & Loan, is a significant figure in the city's history who apparently lived at GGH for a couple of years after the death of his first wife. His short-term occupancy and deeper associations with other properties, including the headquarters building on Brand Boulevard, should not be considered significant to the history of GGH. Properties without strong associations with important people or events cannot possess integrity of association.

*As a representative of a rare and important property type, as well as an excellent example of Mid-Century Modern design that embodies many features associated with buildings of its period, GGH meets the registration requirements for consideration under Criterion 3 and is eligible for listing in the Glendale Register.*



### ***Possible Historic District Contributor***

It is beyond the scope of this report to conduct the research and analysis needed to determine if GGH could be part of a potential “garden apartment” historic district, though it appears possible. The contiguous grouping of three garden apartment complexes that contain a total of about 15 residential and ancillary buildings is interesting, particularly give the rarity of this building type in Glendale. All three are on unusually large lots for the area. Each was subdivided from much larger lots that remained largely undeveloped long after the surrounding area had been subdivided with more-or-less standard suburban lots [Figures 11, 12, 13]. The question of why these large lots remained intact for so long and who owned them remains unanswered. It may be no coincidence that they were developed as garden apartments. Research into the development of 1327 and 1401 N. Central Avenue, could reveal information that could link the sites with a shared history, despite their being individually developed between 1954 and 1962, and perhaps identify a possible district.

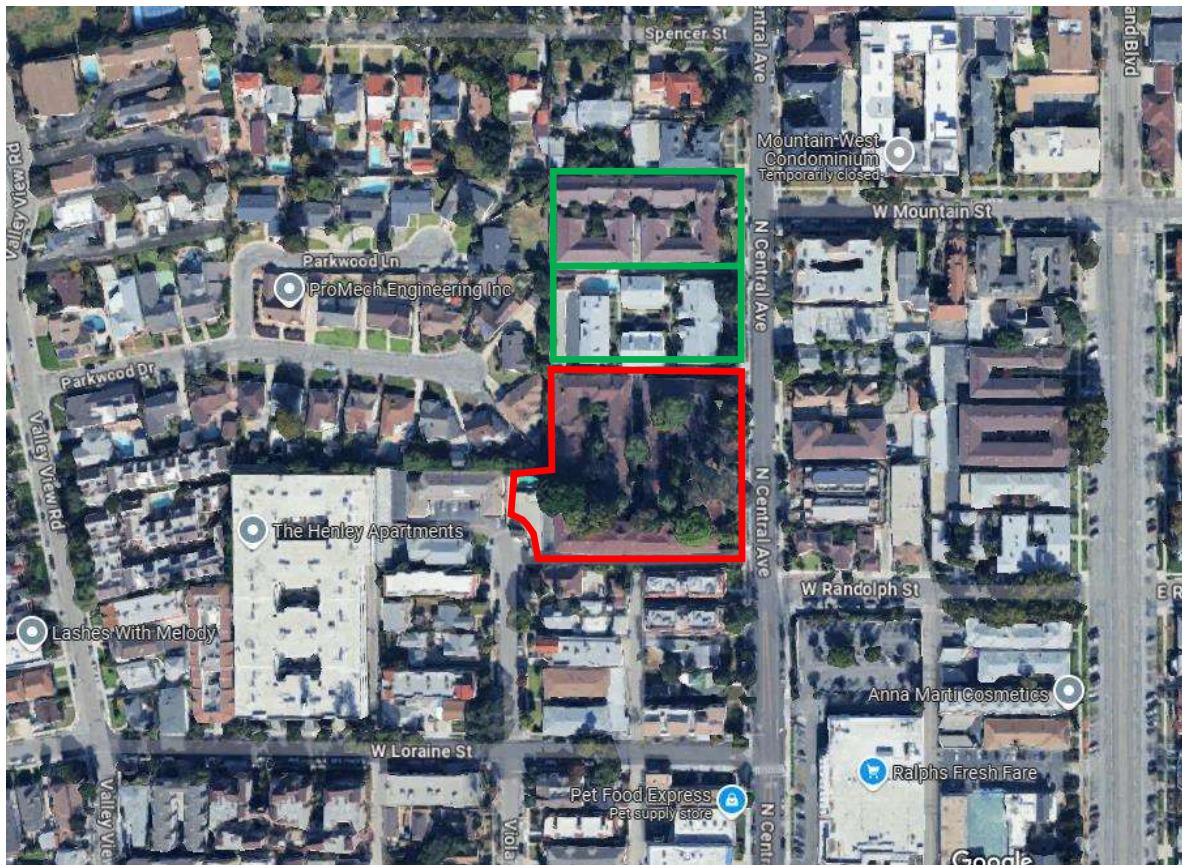
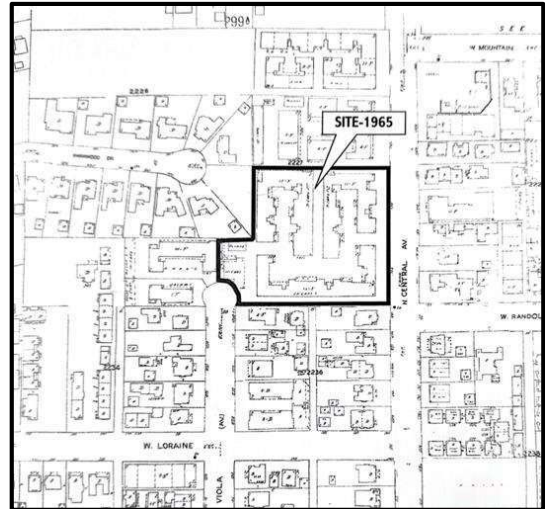
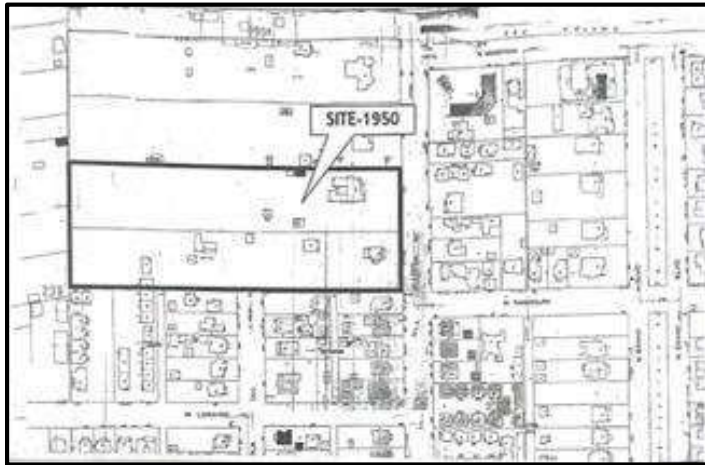


Figure 11  
Glendale Garden Homes highlighted in red, 1327 N. Central Avenue and 1401 N. Central Avenue in green.



Figures 12 and 13

Glendale Garden Homes site before and after subdivision and construction.  
(LA County Assessor Maps annotated in EP Report)

## Peer Review of Previous Studies

As noted in the Introduction, this Glendale Report includes a peer review of the three historic resource assessments previously commissioned by the owners of Glendale Garden Homes:

- EP Associates, *Historic Assessment: Glendale Garden Homes*, August 30, 2004 (EP Report)
- Environmental Science Associates (ESA), *Historic Resource Assessment*, June 2019 (Draft) (ESA Report)
- Chronicle Heritage, *Peer Review Historic Assessment*, July 5, 2024 (CH Report)

All three of these historic assessments agree that Glendale Garden Homes is a Modern (or Mid-Century Modern)-style multi-family apartment complex that is correctly assessed as an example of the garden apartment typology. This Glendale Report also concurs with this assessment. The three prior historic resource assessments are discussed and evaluated below.

### EP Report

The 2004 EP Associates Historic Assessment (EP Report) was commissioned by BWB Partners, the principals of which continue to own the property. It was produced at a time when the owner proposed demolishing Glendale Garden Homes to allow construction of more dense multi-family housing. At the time, there was considerable concern raised by the Glendale Historical Society (TGHS) and some community members that the property was historic. The EP Report was commissioned to address this concern and it contained solid background research. However, the report's analysis of the site's potential historic status is not definitive.

The EP Report reviewed the property's influence by the Modern movement in architecture and the principles of Garden City design. It correctly identified 1401 N. Brand Boulevard, two lots north of GGH,

as having similar garden apartment site planning, but did not mention the property in between the two, which has a more rectilinear site plan but still features the characteristics of a garden apartment complex.

At the time the EP Report was produced, the City of Glendale had seven criteria for listing in the Glendale Register, with the requirement that one or more be met to allow a property to be eligible for designation. Section 5.3 of the EP Report (p. 17) assesses GGH under each criterion. Many of these assessments are cursory and are not entirely sufficient under standard historic preservation practice. For example, the property was found to not be a location of any significant historic events simply because it was not included in any historic registries or indexes. Ultimately, the report found that GGH was not significant under six of the seven criteria.

The assessment under then-Criterion 4 led to a more complicated conclusion. Significance under this criterion is achieved when, “The resource exemplifies one of the best remaining architectural types in a neighborhood, or contains outstanding or exemplary elements of attention to architectural design, detail, material or craftsmanship of a particular historic period.” The EP Report found that, “The subject property retains most of its original architectural features, and is one of the best remaining Garden City apartments in the neighborhood.”<sup>12</sup> This suggests that EP had found the property eligible under then-Criterion 4 as one of the best examples of a specific property type in the area. The EP Report’s “Conclusions” discussion (Section 6, pp. 19-20), however, did not return to this finding and at no point states whether the property should be considered historic or if it met any of the designation criteria.

City staff at the time sought clarification from EP Associates, which provided a follow-up letter dated April 26, 2005, which stated that EP had surveyed other neighborhoods in the city and found that, “Glendale Garden Home is the best of its style within its neighborhood and within the City.” A subsequent letter, dated December 2, 2005, was submitted to staff that further refined the EP Associates’ finding, indicating that the new letter “more accurately and correctly express [EP’s] findings”:

EP Associates surveyed other neighborhoods in the City to find similar properties. Glendale Garden Homes is one of the best remaining Garden Style planned multifamily structures within its neighborhood and within the City.<sup>13</sup>

This clarification still appears to be an indication that EP continued to find that the property met then-Criterion 4 without stating that determination in plain language. The December letter went on to indicate that GGH:

...is not the best remaining mid-century modern multifamily structure. The façade...does not represent one of the best remaining architectural types in its neighborhood. It also does not contain outstanding or exemplary elements of attention to architectural design, detail, material, or craftsmanship of the mid-century period. EP Associates identified approximately 34 additional apartment complexes of similar architectural style and period in the neighborhood of the subject property. These structures are identified in the catalog submitted to the City, “Modern Style Apartment Buildings in the Verdugo Viejo Neighborhood of Glendale, California.”

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<sup>12</sup> EP Report, p. 18.

<sup>13</sup> City of Glendale, “Glendale Garden Homes” file.

This “catalog” is a collection of photographs of apartment building facades in the area without any analysis except for a rating indicating how intact the façade appeared.

### ESA Report

The June 2019 Environmental Science Associates assessment (ESA Report) was also commissioned by the current and longtime owners. In reviewing the document’s methodology, two things jump out as problems. First, it states that the 2004 EP Report had not been located, although it was commissioned by the firm’s client. A copy of that report has also been in the City’s historic preservation paper files for many years. Second, the South Glendale Context is mentioned as a document that was reviewed, but not the South Glendale Survey, the final version of which was submitted to the City in April, 2019 and several draft versions had been publicly available since 2018. The ESA Report did not use the South Glendale Survey to develop an understanding what types of properties had been found significant in South Glendale and therefore did not include an analysis of GGH’s place in the broader context of the city’s overall developmental history.

Absent these two resources, the remaining research sources in the ESA Report largely overlapped with those explored by EP Associates. Ultimately, the ESA Report relies heavily on the Los Angeles Context, which is largely focused on garden apartment complexes within the City of Los Angeles’ boundaries (though a couple of outliers in other cities are also included). While the Los Angeles Context provides valuable information and background about this property type in Los Angeles, the ESA Report returns several times to the Period of Significance established for garden apartments in Los Angeles: “1937 to approximately 1955” and on that basis concludes that GGH’s 1957 build date is outside the period established for *Los Angeles* and therefore renders the property ineligible for designation in the City of Glendale. This conclusion is not based on complete information. Patterns of development vary from city to city for a wide variety of reasons, and stylistic and typological changes may appear more slowly in outlying areas than in the larger urban areas they typically surround. It is worth noting that the use of the word “approximately” means that the Los Angeles Context did not establish a firm end-date even within that city’s boundary. Moreover, the Los Angeles Context acknowledges that post-1955 garden apartments “...deserve their own analysis as their contributions to the history of housing in Los Angeles become clearer with time.” (See footnote 3 above).

The ESA Report’s findings and conclusions are included in the Significance Evaluation section.<sup>14</sup> The property is evaluated under the criteria of the National, California, and Glendale Registers, which generally parallel each other except for subtle modifications in their language.

The ESA Report’s assessment of the property under NR/CR/GR Criteria A/1/1 states:

While the subject property’s development parallels the neighboring South Glendale’s more clearly defined and identified pattern of development, its construction within its own West Glendale neighborhood is not individually significant or exemplary to the area for its association with post-World War II residential development expansion, as there were many newly developed residential buildings constructed by prospective developers looking to capitalize by constructing income-generating properties during this period of expansion. The subject property as a residential building constructed during the larger Glendale construction boom following the war does not rise to a level

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<sup>14</sup> ESA Report, p. 47.



of individual significance necessary for listing on the National Register, California Register, or Glendale Register.<sup>15</sup>

The issue with ESA's blanket statement is that it would lead to a building of significance not being identified simply because it is one of many apartment buildings built in the area after the war. The ESA Report does not undertake analysis and instead generalizes such that the rarity of this property type within the post war period of residential building expansion in Glendale is overlooked. ESA's conclusion that the property is not eligible for the NR is appropriate because there is no evidence to support a national listing. However, the property's importance within the Glendale context should not be dismissed based on a generalized finding of ineligibility that ignores the distinctions in the Glendale context.

The ESA Report's assessment under the "architecture criteria," NR/CR/GR C/3/3, suffers from the same lack of analysis; it states:

As noted in Glendale's "Design Guidelines for Residential Buildings in Adopted Historic Districts," there were many apartment buildings built during the post-World War II era. The subject property does not rise to a level of significance for listing on the National Register, California Register, or local Glendale Register as an exemplary individual example of a garden apartment. Further, more prominent, unique, and notable examples of garden apartments have been identified for their design innovation and nuance, and for their association with notable midcentury architects, designers, and landscape architects and designers.<sup>16</sup>

No explanation is provided to explain *why* GGH is not significant or exemplary and no analysis is provided. The last sentence indicates that more significant examples, featuring "design innovation and nuance," exist, but these comparative examples (presumably in Los Angeles) are not identified or compared. The ESA Report focuses on the LA Conservancy's Los Angeles Context and fails to provide any contextual analysis relevant to Glendale in considering GGH's eligibility for listing in Glendale's Register. Other than to provide broader historical context for the Garden Apartment type, examples outside of Glendale are not germane to an analysis purporting to assess potential eligibility for listing in the Glendale Register. In addition, a comparison of many of the garden apartments identified in the Los Angeles Report reveals that GGH is superior in terms of innovation (with features such as home-sized apartments, central air conditioning, wood-burning fireplaces) and design nuance (the Los Angeles examples tend to have blocky, rectangular massing with limited detailing, where GGH features complex massing that provides architectural interest). GGH was clearly intended to bring the garden apartment concept to a relatively affluent clientele, as was the case at Park La Brea which has a comparably high level of exterior design (though the apartments are considerably smaller than those at GGH). This appeal to a different audience accounts for at least part of the differences between the GGH and many Los Angeles developments, particularly the earlier, publicly funded examples. Ignoring that such differences exist and making unsupported claims without acknowledging such differences is not an acceptable form of analysis.

The ESA Report also claims that:

The Glendale Garden Homes are reflective of the later stylistic evolution of a garden apartment in Los Angeles County, with its higher emphasis on unit count than open space, more traditional suburban landscaping that included tropical plantings as opposed to native plants, and ample character defining features including: its architectural modesty, lack of ornamentation, location of

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<sup>15</sup> *ibid*, p. 48.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*.

building entrances oriented to face the courtyard, and parking and vehicular circulation oriented to face the courtyard, and parking and vehicular circulation along the perimeter of the site plan.<sup>17</sup>

ESA's assertion that GGH is reflective of the later stylistic evolution of garden apartments in Los Angeles is incorrect. As noted above in the assessment section, GGH's residential density (18.5 units/acre) falls into the lower density range associated with the earlier garden apartments rather than the higher densities found at later ones. GGH's lower density was largely the result of the generous apartment sizes – a fact that draws attention to the ESA Report's failure to mention this important and distinctive aspect of GGH, which in fact is critical for understanding the special qualities that distinguish GGH from other garden apartments and much multifamily housing in general.

The rest of the paragraph quoted above raises more questions. For example, does having non-native versus native landscaping have any effect on the potential significance of a garden apartment complex? Why is GGH architecturally modest and does it in fact lack ornamentation; in what ways and why is that important? Or are these issues more related to the economics of developing the public housing projects of the earlier years of garden apartment construction versus the private sector development that was spurred by postwar housing programs and incentives? Finally, are not all garden apartments, early and late, supposed to separate pedestrians from cars and provide access to units from landscaped courtyards?

The ESA Report states that GGH "...was built in a period after the height of the garden-style apartment trend in Los Angeles County, as the style was already waning by the time of its construction." The issue of the "waning style" again makes use of the "approximate" end date of 1955 from the Los Angeles Context, even though that document makes clear, as noted above, that, "although not explored in this study, post-1955 garden apartments will deserve their own analysis as their contributions to the history of housing in Los Angeles become clearer with time."<sup>18</sup> This indicates that the Los Angeles Context report both acknowledges its limitations and that the garden apartment style did not wane over time and therefore deserves closer review, and at least in the City of Los Angeles, later examples would need to be studied. ESA's continued use of "Los Angeles County" seems intended to suggest that Glendale was included as part of the study, which actually focused almost exclusively on the City of Los Angeles, with only a couple of examples include outside the city limits. Based on review of the Los Angeles Context, it is not not appear that any research or survey work was conducted in Glendale for the Los Angeles Context.

The ESA Report's assessment under the "architecture criterion" concludes by noting that the Glendale Historic District Design Guidelines states that "many apartment buildings were built during the postwar era." This anodyne statement leads into the conclusion that the,

"...subject property does not rise to a level for listing [at any level] as an exemplary individual example of a garden apartment. Further, more prominent, unique, and notable examples of garden apartment have been identified for their design innovation and nuance, and for their association with notable architect, designer, and landscape architects and designers. Therefore, the subject property is recommended ineligible for listing under National Register Criterion C and California Register Criterion 3."<sup>19</sup>

This conclusion is opinion unsupported by any substantial evidence. To conclude that "better" examples of a style or property type that might exist in other cities should preclude Glendale from finding a

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<sup>17</sup> *ibid*, p. 49.

<sup>18</sup> Los Angeles Report, p. 22.

<sup>19</sup> ESA Report, p. 49.

property significant to its own history and its own context is not sound preservation practice. Notably, the final sentence of this analysis does not conclude that GGH is ineligible for the Glendale Register under Criterion 3.

Finally, in considering the property's potential to be part of a potential historic district, the ESA report mentions that "...there does not appear to be a pattern of development related to post-World War II multi-family residence or garden apartments in the immediate surrounding area that would warrant this area eligible as a potential historic district."<sup>20</sup>

To the contrary, when viewed from either the street or the air, the adjacent buildings located at 1327 N. Central Avenue and 1401 N. Central Avenue clearly reveal themselves to be large multi-building garden apartment complexes, with all three properties, including GGH, being strikingly different in form and overall appearance from all nearby buildings. This is a glaring oversight in the ESA Report. It is beyond the scope of the present report to fully assess whether these buildings together represent a potential historic district, but the lack of any mention of the possibility is indicative of the ESA report's conclusory nature and shortcomings.

### **CH Peer Review**

The Chronicle Heritage Peer Review, dated July 5, 2024, states that the firm was retained by the current and longtime property owner to conduct a peer review of the findings of the ESA Report based on additional third-party research. The Introduction and Methodology sections mention that the same source materials were consulted as were reviewed by ESA in 2019. Unfortunately, the results of the South Glendale Survey, available at this point for at least five years, were again not consulted despite being germane to understanding aspects of the Glendale's multifamily and garden apartment development.

Overall, the CH Peer Review essentially summarizes the ESA Report instead of performing any independent critical analysis. Some of the factually incorrect information in the ESA Report is repeated without further study. CH cites ESA's assertion regarding residential development in West Glendale that:

This portion of unincorporated Los Angeles County became incorporated into Glendale by 1950. This general area appears to have had a single-family residence and open, undeveloped surrounding land prior to the construction of Glendale Garden Homes and its surrounding residential buildings.<sup>21</sup>

The ESA Report is not clear about whether the author was looking at the broader West Glendale area, the area around GGH, or the specific large lots on which it and the other two garden apartments were ultimately built. Regardless, both ESA and CH failed to note that the overall area was annexed to Glendale in 1926 and that there was substantial development in the area around the future GGH site – except on the three large lots which were ultimately developed with garden apartments. A Pacific Electric Redcar line ran up Brand Boulevard and spurred development in the area beginning in 1910. Suburban lots had been subdivided to the north, east, and south of GGH, with Craftsman and Period Revival style houses being built within a two-block radius during the 1910s and 1920s. Neither the ESA Report nor the CH Report mention the lack of development on these three large lots, and the subsequent construction of three contiguous garden apartment complexes.

The CH Report states that, "...the use of the Garden Apartments of Los Angeles Historic Context Statement to identify a period of significance was key regarding the eligibility of the subject property."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> ESA Report, p. 51.

<sup>21</sup> CH Peer Review, p. 13.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*

CH indicates its agreement with ESA that it is appropriate to use another city's historic context prepared after deep research into that city's particular history and development patterns, for assessing a similar property in another jurisdiction. This suggestion is made several more times in the CH Peer Review. This logic is the equivalent of saying that Glendale's first tall building, the six-story Security Trust and Savings Bank, built in 1923, is considered insignificant in the city's history because the six-story Stimson building had been built twenty-five years earlier in downtown Los Angeles.

While the Los Angeles Context provides valuable background information about the Garden City movement and typology of the garden apartments that were built in the Los Angeles area, its Scope and Methodology section clearly states that its focus is on the City of Los Angeles, and not on Los Angeles County:

The focus of this Historic Context Statement is the garden apartment property type in the city of Los Angeles. Although generally limited to city limits, a select number of significant examples in Los Angeles County are discussed. This study does not include all occurrences of the property type in the county or, for that matter, within Los Angeles city limits; it is likely that many examples are yet to be discovered. Rather, the purpose of this Historic Context Statement is to provide a framework for the future evaluation of garden apartment complexes in Los Angeles, both known and, as of yet, unknown.<sup>23</sup>

ESA's and CH's continual return to the finding that GGH is not significant because it was built outside of another city's Period of Significance is indicative of the general lack of fact-based analysis to support their conclusions. In a relatively short time, Glendale was able to conduct a desktop survey that provided contextual information for the East and West Glendale areas that allowed GGH to be reviewed in the context, including South Glendale, of a very large part of the city. A complete analysis of a potential Glendale historic resource must of necessity use Glendale as its context. ESA and CH used the Los Angeles Historic Context Statement with its acknowledged limitations and based their opinion on incomplete research and analysis of what is actually on the ground in Glendale. As a final example, the CH Peer Review states that:

[GGH] does not appear to be a significant design concept in the City among the dozens of apartments that were constructed during the post-war period in addition to being constructed beyond the period of significance established for garden apartments.

There is no context for this statement. Where are the dozens of apartments identified? Was there a comparative analysis made between them and GGH? No, because no such information is provided. How then was this analysis made – how is a property's significance to be assessed in this vacuum? Unfortunately, the CH Peer Review rubberstamps the flawed ESA report, repeating, rather than challenging or clarifying, some of its most obvious analytical errors that lead to erroneous conclusions in both reports..

## Conclusion

The Glendale Report's peer review of the three previous documents prepared for the property's owner about the Glendale Garden Homes reveals deep inadequacies in each analysis. The 2004 EP Report alludes to a finding that the property was found eligible for listing in the Glendale Register but does not clearly state this as a conclusory determination. Subsequent fine tuning of the firm's opinion in

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<sup>23</sup> LA Report, p. 2.



contemporaneous letters to Glendale city staff appeared to support the eligibility finding under the designation criteria that were in place in 2004.

The 2019 ESA Report's findings are largely based on the Los Angeles Context's Los Angeles-specific period of significance for the development of garden apartments. The lack of any effort to provide a Glendale-based analysis of this housing typology or the specific characteristics of GGH leads to conclusions that are not based on any substantial evidence and therefore become expressions of unsupported opinion. The 2024 CH Peer Review, despite the advantage of a five-year window to at least consider the results of the 2019 South Glendale Survey, merely repeats the ESA findings without conducting any new research or providing additional substantive analysis. For these reasons, Glendale staff finds the ESA and CH determinations that GGH is not eligible for historic designation to be unsupportable due to the two reports' lack of any contextual analysis or presentation of substantial evidence based on facts that would support the firms' conclusions.

As discussed on pages 15-17 above, Glendale staff's analysis of GGH finds it eligible for listing in the Glendale Register of Historic Resources under Criteria 1 and 3, therefore making it a presumptive historic resource under the California Environment Act.

Under Criterion 1, staff finds GGH to contribute to the broad cultural, economic, social, and historic heritage of the city because it represents a nationally important building typology, the garden apartment, tailored to conditions that were specific to Glendale. Its developers and designers struck a balance between providing spacious, home-like residential units and providing large, landscaped areas for the enjoyment of the property's residents. This balance reflects the principles of the Garden City movement, which are displayed in the intertwined connection between the buildings and the lushly landscaped courtyards. In doing so, the developers emphasized the positive enhancement of residents' experience of the resident in the region at the time its construction, and the developer's effort to create an apartment/home hybrid is unmatched by any other Glendale rental property known to the City's planning staff. This is particularly evident in the context of the large apartment buildings that started being built in the 1960s and 1970s and continue to this day. Like GGH, these were built on large lots, but the later building lots generally resulted from the consolidation of numerous adjoining single-family parcels on which the homes were demolished. These large buildings typically feature meager outdoor spaces (as evidenced in review of aerial imagery) and stand in sharp contrast to the graciousness of GGH's apartments and common spaces. GGH represents how an important nationwide housing phenomenon, the garden apartment, found its way into the rapidly urbanizing city at a time when building apartment buildings was critical in addressing the country's postwar housing crisis. The Glendale Garden Homes represent a unique and important expression in the history of multifamily development in Glendale.

Under Criterion 3, staff finds that GGH is a highly distinctive and rare multi-family property in Glendale. The combination of its large lot, extensive landscaping, and complex site plan, along with the high quality of its design, makes it a unique specimen in Glendale. The property embodies the planning and design principles that guided the development of garden apartment complexes during the middle decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as informed by the earlier Garden City movement. It is an excellent representative of Modern-style design, with many of its design features – particularly those reinforcing the horizontality of the three buildings – serving the function of integrating the overall appearance of the site's building rather than serving only as decorative elements. As such, GGH also relates to the tastes and trends of the mid-century era, with many of its character-defining features being found at other properties of the time, but generally not in such profusion or applied with such consistency and rigor, as seen with the various uses of wood trim and siding to provide visual variety and interest while also

helping unify the overall design conception. Though its landscaping has undoubtedly changed and matured over time, the name Glendale Garden Homes indicates how important the gardens were to its conception and design. The landscaped courtyards, along with the house-sized apartments, undoubtedly continue to enhance the experience of the property's residents, as was intended from the time of the project's conception and construction.

## Appendix A: Professional Qualifications

### Jay Platt Curriculum Vitae

#### Professional Experience

##### **City of Glendale Planning Division**

**Principal Planner, 2020 - present**

**Senior Urban Designer 2013 - 2020**

**Planner 2007 – 2013**

- Manage the city's historic preservation program and help lead the design review program. Supervise and guide staff to ensure that proposals conform with the General Plan, Community Plans, and all applicable design guidelines, standards, and environmental regulations.
- Conduct design meetings with architects, developers, and property owners, working toward solutions that meet owners' needs and enhance the functionality and appearance of the city.
- Manage preservation staff and interns.
- Serve as staff liaison to the Historic Preservation Commission and Design Review Board. Prepare and edit staff reports that critically assess projects to help guide the decision-making process. Also prepare reports and make presentations to City Council and the Planning Commission regarding municipal code revisions, design guidelines, and other policy documents.
- Responsible for coordination and implementation of all aspects of the city's historic preservation program, including the Glendale Register, historic districts, Mills Act program, and environmental review.
- Prepare educational materials and conduct community outreach meetings for local residents, working groups, historical societies, and professional groups on a variety of design and preservation topics. Provide educational training for staff colleagues.
- Prepare RFPs, conduct interviews, manage contracts, and supervise consultant work for a variety of planning and preservation related reports, contexts, and surveys.

##### **Los Angeles Conservancy**

**Preservation Advocate, 2004 - 2007**

- Provided preservation outreach and education to individuals and groups throughout Los Angeles County, including technical and research assistance and presentations to community groups.
- Prepared and delivered testimony for municipal preservation and planning agencies. Analyzed EIRs and other environmental documents and drafted response letters.
- Organized and oversaw work related to the Neighborhood Initiative program, including annual HPOZ conference, HPOZ Alliance outreach, realtor training program, LandmarkTHIS! program, and outreach to residents of historic neighborhoods.

### **Historic Districts Council, New York City**

#### **Deputy Director, 2003 - 2004**

- Worked with community groups and individuals to protect historic neighborhoods and sites using preservation and planning tools. Organized educational panels and community meetings. Led Design Review Committee and delivered public testimony.

### **Building Conservation Associates, New York City**

#### **Preservationist, 1999 - 2003**

- Prepared historic structure reports, rehabilitation tax credit applications, condition surveys, and treatment recommendations for a variety of historic civic and commercial structures. Provided design and technical assistance and on-site work monitoring.

### **New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission**

#### **Landmarks Preservationist, 1997 - 1999**

- Conducted design review and provided technical assistance for work proposed for individual landmarks and in historic districts. Wrote and issued permits, prepared staff reports, and made presentations to the commission.

### **Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center, Philadelphia, Pa.**

#### **Assistant to the Director, 1995-1997**

- Worked with director to reuse a portion of the Fairmount Water Works, one of the nation's most important examples of early-nineteenth century engineering and architecture, as a museum devoted to the site and the role of water in the development of the city.
- Conducted archival research and on-site physical investigation; helped develop the overall interpretive program; wrote several successful grant applications; managed contracts and coordinated site work; conducted site tours and assisted with educational programming.

## **Education and Teaching Experience**

### **University of Pennsylvania, M.S. Historic Preservation**

#### **University of California, Los Angeles, B.A. Psychology**

### **USC School of Architecture, Master of Heritage Conservation Program**

#### **Adjunct Associate Professor, 2020 – present**

##### **Lecturer, 2009 - 2020**

- Teach graduate-level Fundamentals of Heritage Conservation course each fall semester. Serve as advisor and/or committee member for thesis students.
- Other courses taught include: Survey LA, Advanced Documentation, and Preservation Planning and Management.

### **State University of New York/Fashion Institute of Technology, New York City**

#### **Adjunct Instructor, 1998-2000**

- Taught two-semester historic preservation course in the Interior Design department.

## **Awards**

University of Pennsylvania Departmental Grants (1995, 1996)

Albert Binder Fellowships (1995, 1996)

Frank Lloyd Wright Conservancy Travel Fellowship (1996)

Samuel H. Kress Foundation Travel Fellowship (1995)

## **Affiliations and Memberships**

Society of Architectural Historians – Southern California Chapter

- Board Vice President (2018 – present)
- Board Member (2009 – 2018)

The Eagle Rock Association

- Board Member (2012-2016)

California Preservation Foundation

Los Angeles Conservancy