

La Canada Elementary School

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Introduction

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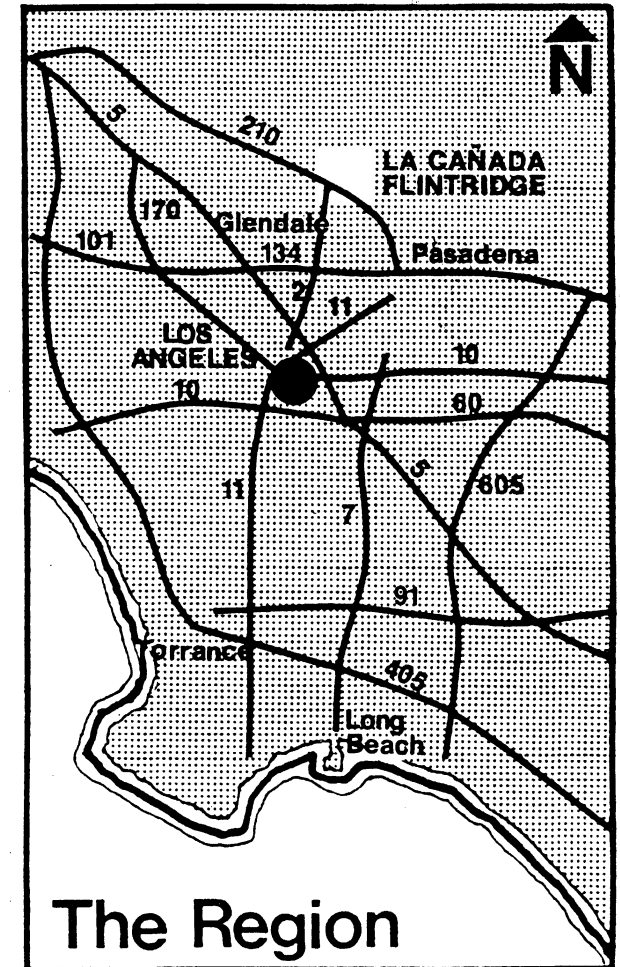
The City of La Canada Flintridge is located 13.5 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles, in a valley between the San Rafael Hills on the south and the San Gabriel Mountains on the north. It adjoins the City of Glendale to the southwest, the City of Pasadena to the east, and the Angeles National Forest on the north. The City contains an area of approximately 8.6 square miles.

EARLY SETTLERS

Among the earliest known settlers of the La Canada Flintridge area were the Gabrielino Indians. Gabrielino is the name given to the group of Indian inhabitants of Southern California. They are of the Shoshonean branch of the Uto-Aztekan linguistic stock. Although few traces remain due to frequent flooding, there is high probability that the streams and canyons in La Canada Flintridge provided temporary camping grounds for these Indians. To date, remnants of large permanent Indian camps have been found in Big Tujunga and in the Linda Vista area.

THE SPANISH PERIOD

The Spanish land exploration of California began in 1769 when Captain Gaspar de Portola, Governor of Baja California, led an expedition north to the San Francisco Bay area. California remained under Spanish rule until 1822 when it became a colony of Mexico after Mexico won its independence from Spain. It was during the Spanish period that the Franciscans and other church orders established missions throughout the state. The Mission San Gabriel Arcangel was established in 1771. In 1784, Corporal Jose Maria Verdugo, who was stationed at Mission San Gabriel, petitioned Governor Pedro Fages for permission to graze livestock on 42,000 acres between the Los Angeles River and the Arroyo Seco from the new pueblo of Los Angeles on the south, to the San



Gabriel Mountains on the north. Although La Canada Valley was part of this area, it was probably not used by Verdugo to graze his livestock due to its isolation and lack of a good water supply. Verdugo's grant was known as Rancho San Rafael.

THE MEXICAN PERIOD

The missions were secularized and their lands gradually granted to private owners after Mexican independence in 1822. In 1843, Ignacio Coronel was granted 12,300 acres in the area now containing La Canada Flintridge, La Crescenta, Verdugo Woodlands and the San Rafael Hills. Coronel called his grant "La Canada atras de Los Berdugos". He was able to obtain the property from Governor Micheltorena over the protests of Verdugo's descendents because it was unoccupied and uncultivated.

UNITED STATES OCCUPATION AND STATEHOOD

California was occupied by the United States after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican War of 1846 - 1848. It became the thirty-first state on September 9, 1850. For many years after the beginning of the Mexican War, land titles in California were unsettled. Ignacio Coronel sold Rancho La Canada to two lawyers, Jonathan Scott and Benjamin Hayes, in 1852. Scott bought out his partner and in 1858 traded Rancho La Canada back to Julio Verdugo, a descendent of Jose Maria, for what is now Burbank. Verdugo wanted the water supply in Verdugo Woodlands for Rancho San Rafael, so he had the U. S. Government Surveyor, Henry Hancock, move the southern boundary between Rancho La Canada and Rancho San Rafael further north to a line running west from what is now Devil's Gate Dam. Rancho La Canada was therefore reduced to 5,832 acres. Julio Verdugo owned the property until 1869 when Los Angeles County seized the property by court order to pay Verdugo's debts.



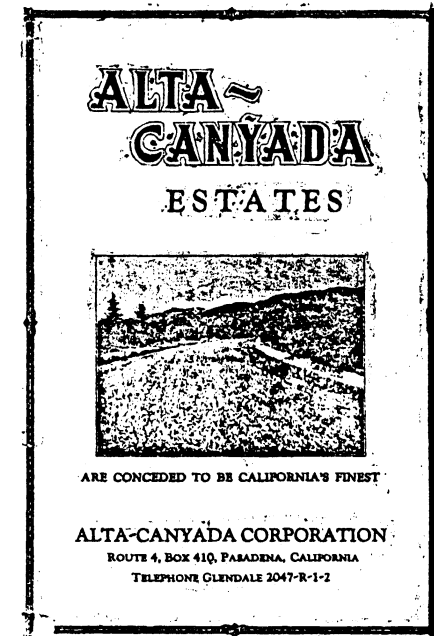
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The property was sold by the County in 1872 to an A. B. Chapman and Andrew Glassell. However, after realizing there was no water source serving the property, they sold the land grant in 1876. Colonel A. W. Williams, a Civil War veteran, and Dr. Jacob L. Lanterman, a dentist, both of Lansing, Michigan, purchased the 5,832 acres of land in the San Gabriel Valley designated Rancho La Canada and started the community of La Canada now incorporated as La Canada Flintridge. Growth of the community was limited until 1892 when approximately 50 area families organized a land and water company, community church and fruit growers' association.

TWENTIETH CENTURY

In the 1920's, developers began to subdivide the land and attract buyers with the beautiful scenery. Edwin T. Earl, inventor of the refrigerated fruit railroad car, who also published the "Los Angeles Tribune Express", bought a large parcel of land at the upper northwest corner of the community of La Canada for development. He called his development "Alta Canyon" and planted the deodars for which this development is now renowned.

On the opposite side of the valley from Alta Canyon, U. S. Senator Frank P. Flint bought 500 acres of the Turner Ranch and, joining with other owners, gradually acquired 1,700 acres south of Foothill Boulevard. This land was subdivided and named "Flintridge" and was developed with winding streets laid out by Senator Flint on horseback. From the beginning, water was a serious problem and caused much bickering among the early settlers. Colonel Williams, not knowing anything about Southern California, had hoped to dam the canyons and use the winter rain water for summer irrigation. He did not realize the porous quality of the soil and that drainage is underground except in flood stage. Furthermore, Rancho La Canada did not include the canyon streams which were on public section land already claimed or homesteaded by Colonels Pickens and Hall. Dr. Lanterman and Colonel Williams appealed in vain

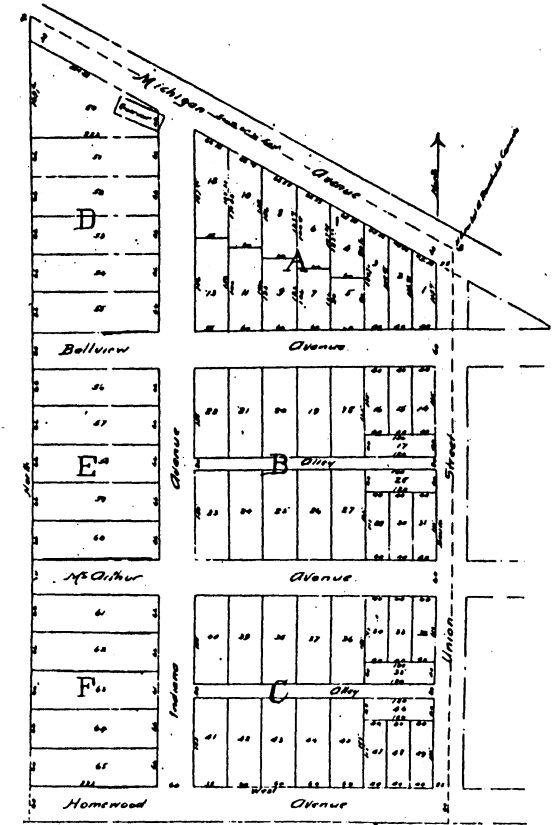


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to the General Land Office for a new survey, hoping to have it include the canyons with the streams within the Rancho boundaries. Finally, Dr. Lanterman personally purchased Pickens' water rights for \$1,250 and 40 acres of good land in Lot #21 of Rancho La Canada.

The Valley Water Co. was formed in 1910. Wells were drilled at the corner of Hampton and Michigan Avenues on Lanterman Estate property. These wells were the only source of water. The community was then sued by the City of Pasadena to obtain the rights to pump from the Raymond Basin, the underground reservoir beneath eight communities in the area. In 1937, adjudication of water rights for users of the Raymond Basin was started to determine the fair distribution of underground water to the eight communities. The suit was settled in 1943 and the State Watermaster was appointed to control the amount of water pumped from the underground reservoir. The amount of water apportioned to La Canada Flintridge was not sufficient to permit further unlimited property development.

In 1951, Assemblyman Frank Lanterman sponsored and helped plan into law, a major amendment to the Municipal Water District Act of 1911 which permitted formation of the Foothill Municipal Water District. In 1952, steps were taken to join the Metropolitan Water District (MWD). Bonds were issued to pay for joining the MWD and for building a system to deliver water to the Foothill Water agencies. The first Colorado River water was delivered to the community in 1955, just in time to relieve a serious drought and heat wave. In the early Seventies, Assemblyman Frank Lanterman introduced and successfully enacted a bill to obtain a balanced blend of State water for this area from the California State Water Project in Northern California. The first supply was received in July, 1975, and after mixing with Colorado River water, produced a satisfactory 50 percent blend to handle the needs of this and other Southern California communities.



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CITYHOOD

On November 2, 1976, citizens of La Canada and Flintridge overwhelmingly supported and voted for the incorporation of both communities into the City of La Canada Flintridge. The City operates with a council-manager form of government. The five member council consists of local citizens elected at large for four year staggered terms. Annually, the City Council selects a mayor from among its members. The City Manager is appointed by the City Council and is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the City. All City functions, except planning and finance, are carried out by private contractors or various departments of Los Angeles County.

On May 15, 1978, the westerly boundaries of the City were further extended as a result of an annexation of land south of Foothill Boulevard.

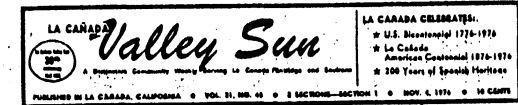
DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Although recently incorporated as a city, La Canada Flintridge is an almost fully developed, well established and stabilized community. The most immediate concern of the community is the final disposition of several large hillside parcels of land.

The City has experienced and is familiar with the hazards of hillside development such as fire, flood and improper techniques of grading. It is such hazards and the community's concern for maintaining high standards of development quality, design and construction that represent the City's most pressing issues today.

A second major concern is the improvement of the City's commercial section. Residents rely heavily upon the local business community for providing daily goods and services as well as specialty items. However, many residents purchase such goods and services in neighboring cities.

CITYHOOD WINS!
7355 For, 2849 Against In Strong Victory
THE NEW COUNCILMANS:
Mount, Parrish, Hillgren, Smith and Krause



The Happy Warriors!
The new council members of the City of La Canada Flintridge, from left to right: Councilman Parrish, Councilman Hillgren, Councilman Smith, Councilman Krause, and Councilman Mount. Photograph by Jim [unreadable]

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It is believed that with provisions for improved parking, traffic circulation, architectural design, landscaping and a better distribution of uses, the commercial section can be enhanced to foster an increase of commercial trade.

Finally, another major issue confronting the City in the next twenty years is its maintenance primarily as a single family residential community.

THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan reaffirms community character established in the past, and without redefining such character, it expresses City policy regarding present and future physical, social and economic development, based on the widely-held attitudes, desires and priorities of the local citizenry.

This plan sets forth guidelines to which development projects, public and private alike, must adhere and is the official statement of policies governing all City Council, advisory commission and administrative decisions regarding zoning, subdivisions and public improvements.

California planning law requires each city and county to establish a planning agency and a planning process to guide future growth and change within the framework of officially adopted goals and policies addressing land use, circulation, housing, environmental quality, conservation of resources, safety and other relevant physical, social and economic factors. The City's zoning and subdivision ordinances, plus any other development and land use regulations contained in the City's municipal code must conform to the policies articulated in the General Plan.

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The La Canada Flintridge General Plan was generated over a period of years, with the final text which follows in this document representing the product of an extensive process of citizen involvement and input. A comprehensive questionnaire, covering a wide range of General Plan issues was circulated to over 600 citizens in early 1977 (A sample questionnaire is located in the appendix). Based upon responses to this questionnaire and several study sessions before the City Planning Commission, draft goals, issues and policies were prepared as a framework for a Draft Plan itself. City staff, working with an experienced consultant, subsequently undertook detailed research and began preparing the Draft General Plan text for community, Planning Commission and City Council review. The Draft General Plan was published in tabloid form and enclosed for distribution with the July 27, 1978 issue of the La Canada Valley Sun. It is estimated that this document reached approximately 5,000 households.

Subsequent to one year of review at no less than twenty-one meetings held for the purpose of reviewing the General Plan and obtaining additional citizen input, the Planning Commission approved an amended Draft General Plan and recommended its adoption by the City Council.

ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Subsequent to adoption by the City Council, on March 3, 1980, the process of plan implementation will also demand ongoing effort from the community. Anticipated amendments or revisions to the City's zoning and development-related ordinances must be undertaken and accomplished to enable the goals and policies articulated in the plan to be translated into decisions and actions by the City. Programs proposed in the General Plan are intended as programs the City desires to accomplish, and are not intended as mandates to the City. The programs will be undertaken on a priority basis within the constraints of available staff time and financial resources. Further, the General Plan should not be regarded as a final irrevocable City policy. Rather, the plan should be dynamic and flexible in meeting changing City needs and community priorities.

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