**label: Foreword**

In leading Los Angeles City Planning’s Office of Historic Resources, I’ve seen firsthand how surveys and inventories serve as key building blocks of heritage conservation. Cities can only preserve their significant places and plan for how their neighborhoods should evolve if they first know what and where their heritage resources are.

Surveys and inventories can guide the future of our communities, informing long-range planning in any dynamic city. Survey data, made publicly accessible through an inventory, can direct the attention of urban planners and policymakers to which places need special protection, while enabling areas with fewer heritage resources to change more rapidly.

We continue to find that our citywide survey (SurveyLA) and heritage inventory (HistoricPlacesLA) have been paying regular dividends, providing invaluable information to guide not only planning policies but also reviews of whether proposed development projects may adversely affect heritage resources.

Prior to SurveyLA, 85 percent of Los Angeles had never been evaluated to identify sites with historic, architectural, or cultural significance, leaving many important heritage resources at risk of demolition without any City review. Survey information has now flagged these locations for City decision-makers and the general public, ultimately making possible numerous preservation/reuse success stories. These include one of the most notable works of Late Modern/Expressionist architect John Lautner, an intact neighborhood of worker housing built by the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, the city’s last commercial citrus orchard, and the first African American cultural center, which was constructed in response to the 1965 civil unrest in the Watts community.

Despite the many benefits of surveys and inventories, governments and heritage organizations have largely undertaken them independently, with little external guidance or support. When we started early work for SurveyLA in 2006, we benefited greatly from preparatory research conducted by the GCI, but still confronted many lingering questions: How could we fund and sustain a large-scale survey over time? What community outreach strategies would most meaningfully engage the public to contribute their knowledge to inform the survey while also building broad-based support for the project? And how could heritage survey data become transparent and usable for the public?

In addressing these questions, and many more, this publication represents an important achievement in the heritage conservation field. It builds upon Getty’s past leadership, which made possible SurveyLA and HistoricPlacesLA, to capture the instructive lessons learned from these projects in ways that are transferable at any scale. Janet Hansen, who so skillfully guided SurveyLA, shares her insightful guidance on survey methodology, ranging from the big picture to the very specific and practical, while David Myers, who has been engaged with diverse applications internationally of the GCI’s Arches Heritage Data Management Platform, imparts valuable insights on best practices for creating a successful inventory.

*Inventories and Surveys for Heritage Management: Lessons for the Digital Age* provides heritage professionals with an essential roadmap of how to implement a survey and inventory – allowing heritage conservation to play a more central role in urban planning by ensuring that a richer understanding of our past will shape our communities’ future.

Ken Bernstein

Principal City Planner

Los Angeles City Planning Office of Historic Resources