

DIETZ GARAGE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL UPDATE:

Including a Phase I Archaeological Survey and Phase II
Evaluation of the Dietz Garage; Lots 3, 4, and 9, Block
51, Town of Ontario



1930s View of Dietz Garage Interior
Photo Credit: Pannone Collection

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Draft: August 15, 2011
FINAL: August 11, 2012

PART II

CULTURAL RESOURCE SETTING

The history of the Dietz Garage is documented in sufficient detail to place it within a greater City of Ontario *Surface Transportation Historical Context Statement*, and a tentative transportation context is presented herein. However, the intention of the following historical background is not to present a detailed history of the growth and

development of the City of Ontario. Rather, the purpose here is to place the construction and occupation of the Dietz Garage within a greater City of Ontario transportation historical framework as required for determining the historical significance of the Dietz Garage only. As a result, commonly available and previously well-accepted histories are quoted freely here, as are official websites and newspaper articles.

PREHISTORIC AND HISTORIC BACKGROUND CITY OF ONTARIO

Prehistoric Occupation in Vicinity of Project Site

In late prehistoric times, the area was occupied by either the Gabrielino or Serrano Indian peoples. It is also possible that the general region was jointly occupied by both groups.

The Serrano and Gabrielino jointly interacted with each other, and with other such groups as the Luiseno, Cahuilla, and the Chemehuevi (Kroeber 1925: 617, and Strong 1929: 8). The Serranos were exogamous, patrilineal village dwellers, occupying locations throughout the San Bernardino area. Ethnographic descriptions of the Gabrielino appear in numerous volumes. Some of the most widely regarded are those by Kroeber (1925), and Bean and Smith (1978).

The Gabrielino appear to have entered the Los Angeles Basin around 500 B.C. They eventually occupied many of the Channel Islands, and the watersheds of the Los Angeles, San Gabriel, and Santa Ana Rivers. They were hunters and gatherers who spoke the Cupan language. The social system was probably organized as a moiety system, and may have consisted of 27 elite, middle, and common classes. Their seasonal rounds would have taken them to marine and terrestrial resource areas, with primary and secondary villages located near water sources.

European contact occurred as early as 1542, when Juan Rodriquez Cabrillo landed at Santa Catalina Island. Spanish colonization began in earnest in the late 1700's with the establishment of Mission San Gabriel in 1771. The aboriginal lifestyle rapidly deteriorated. By 1900, as a result of introduced disease, relocation, and general hardship, the aboriginal way of life had virtually disappeared.

Summary Statement

No prehistoric occupation of the project site or any property within the immediate vicinity of the project site is known.

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The Rancho Period to Chaffey Purchase

Note: The following information is taken from *History of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties* by John Brown, Jr. & James Boyd:

Lying to the west of the “red hills” of Cucamonga is found Ontario, the town and colony that in 1882 consisted of only a barren waste extending from the San Antonio Canon on the north to the Rancho Santa Ana del Chino on the south and from Cucamonga on the east to Rancho San Jose on the west. The early history of the colony is that of a part of the original Cucamonga Rancho, which, after passing through many hands, finally came into the possession, April 15, 1882, of Capt. J. S. Garcia and Surveyor J. S. Dunlap, through

“an option for the purchase of that part of the grant known as the “San Antonio lands” at the net sum of \$60,000. This property comprised 6,216 acres, together with the water, water rights and privileges of San Antonio Creek, and the waste water of Cucamonga Creek.

Prior to this they had located at Riverside, for the purpose of engaging in the real estate business, the Chaffey brothers, George B., Jr. and William B., and these progressive business men soon formed the acquaintance of Captain Garcia, who was then residing at Etiwanda, where he owned a ranch and one-half of the water in Dry Canon and all the water in Smith Canon. He sold his 1,000-acre property to the Chaffey Brothers. “Not long afterwards,” says Captain Garcia, “I went to San Francisco and interviewed the Cucamonga Company and bonded their Cucamonga lands with one-half the water flowing from the San Antonio Creek for \$60,000. I took John C. Dunlap as a partner and he was to have one-half the commission over and above the price fixed by the company. M. L. Wicks of Los Angeles and Professor Mills of Mills’ Seminary, Oakland, were then operating largely at Pomona. As soon as my option was put on record in San Francisco, Mr. Wicks interviewed Mr. Dunlap and offered quite a sum for it. Chaffey brothers then offered Mr. Dunlap and myself the same price as the other parties for the option. We consented to let them have it and George Chaffey and myself went to San Francisco to make arrangements with the Cucamonga Company. Our contract having been surrendered, N. W. Stowell was set to work to make cement pipe and also put up the first house in Ontario, between Eighth and Ninth. (Brown and Boyd 1922: 229)

Summary Statement

No portion of the project site is known to be linked to the Rancho period of development.

History of the City of Ontario: Model Colony to 1960

Note: The following brief history is taken from the official City of Ontario website (<http://www.ci.ontario.ca.us>).

It was in the first week of August 1881 when George Chaffey, a Canadian engineer, viewed the wastes known as the Cucamonga Desert and decided that this patch of land, if properly watered, could become productive and profitable. George and his brother William bought the "San Antonio lands," 6,218 acres with water rights for \$60,000. This was the nucleus of their new model colony.

They subsequently expanded to the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks on the south. On the north, they took in the Kincaid Ranch at San Antonio Canyon, an all-important source of water.

The Ontario Colony lands were quickly surveyed and went on sale in November 1882. The centerpiece was Euclid Avenue, eight miles long and two hundred feet wide, the twin "driveways" separated by a parkway, which was seeded in grass and lined with pepper

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trees. George named Euclid Avenue after the great Greek mathematician whose book Elements of Geometry had been a favorite subject for George in school.

The primary requirement, which had to be met before the land could be utilized, was that water had to be found and brought to the town. Chaffey laid miles of cement pipe for this purpose and later the San Antonio Water Company drove a tunnel into the head of the canyon to tap the underground flow—then an innovation in the field. The need for electric power to lift water from deep wells led to the establishment of the Ontario Power Company.

Another innovation in the settlement of Ontario was the provision, whereby, purchasers of land automatically received shares in the water company. This would ensure purchasers

that a share of water proportional to their acreage would be piped to their land. This eliminated many problems that faced settlers elsewhere, where land rights and water rights were kept separate.

The results of George Chaffey's labors showed what could be achieved. All too soon, however, the Chaffey brothers went off to Australia to attempt a repeat performance of their success as city planners here.

Charles Frankish became the guiding force during Ontario's early years. No matter what the activity he undertook, Frankish always threw himself into his work and was determined to do the best possible job.

In 1887, Ontario's unique "gravity mule car" made its first run on Euclid Avenue. Charles Frankish and Godfrey Stamm established the Ontario and San Antonio Heights Railroad Company. Engineer John Tays of Upland added the pullout trailer that allowed the mules to coast downhill after each laborious pull from Holt to Twenty-Fourth Street. The mule car served until 1895, when it was replaced by an electric streetcar and returned temporarily when a flood damaged the electrical generator in the powerhouse.

On December 10th, 1891, Ontario was incorporated as a city of the sixth class under the California Constitution. It adopted a City Council-City Manager form of government. The mayor was at first called the "President of the Board," and was chosen by the Council, or the Board of Trustees as it was then called, from among their number. Subsequently, the law was changed to allow the people to elect the mayor directly.

Ontario first developed as an agricultural community, largely but not exclusively devoted to citrus. A few of the lovely Victorian "grove houses" still survive, relics of the days when growers could pretend that they were living the graceful lives of the old Spanish dons—until it came time for harvest.

Chaffey College, was founded by the Chaffey brothers as an agricultural college to support the local growers. It was there that Prof. George Weldon developed the Babcock peach, an adaptation to California's mild winters. The college has moved to Rancho Cucamonga now, but Chaffey High School is still on what was originally a joint campus.

A reminder of the heyday of the orange groves, the Sunkist plant remains to this day. Even though the groves have gone from the West End, Ontario is still close to the "ten mile center" of the industry. In addition to oranges, the production of peaches, walnuts, lemons and grapes was also important to the growth of Ontario and the adjoining city of Upland.

In 1923, Judge Archie Mitchell, Waldo Waterman, and some other airplane enthusiasts established Latimer Field. From that time on, the town became increasingly aviation

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conscious. Urban growth pushed the fliers progressively east, until they took up their present location, the Ontario International Airport. During World War II, this was a busy training center for pilots of the hot Lockheed P-38 "Lightning," Howard Hughes' twin boom fighter.

Since World War II, Ontario has become a much more diversified community. The mean temperature of 61 degrees and the average rainfall of 18.4' continues to attract more residents; with an approximate population of 165,000. The city has expanded from the 0.38 square mile area incorporated back in 1891, up to almost 50 square miles. The economy now reflects an industrial and manufacturing base. Ten thousand acres are zoned for industrial use. With three major railroads, the San Bernardino, Pomona, and Devore Freeways (10, 60, and 15), and the Ontario International Airport, Ontario is well provided with major transportation resources. Its proximity to Los Angeles ensures that Ontario

will continue to grow in the years ahead.

Ontario's official song is "Beautiful Ontario," written by Paul Coronel in 1960. The official flower is the Charlotte Armstrong rose, developed by local nurseryman John Armstrong and named for his first wife. At different times, Ontario has adopted as its slogan or motto each of the following: The Model Colony; The Model City; Ontario Offers Opportunity; Pulse of the Inland Empire; Stop and Grow with Ontario; Gateway to the Inland Empire; A Balanced Community; and The Gateway to Southern California.

HOLT BOULEVARD: THE AUTOMOBILE COMES OF AGE IN THE CITY OF ONTARIO

The following is taken from the "Holt Boulevard Historic Property Survey Report" for *the Pike's Peak Ocean to Ocean Highway in Ontario*, as prepared under the auspices of the City of Ontario, Planning Department. This document is utilized here as the basis for a transportation context statement describing, in part, the relationship that the Dietz Garage had to the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway.

Arriving from Europe, the automobile first appeared on the American scene during the 1890s and was not regarded as having practical, workday uses. It was considered an elaborate "play thing" for the wealthy class. Nonetheless, it excited the curiosity of American mechanics, who immediately began construction adaptations of the European models. The American version of the automobile continued to develop gaining much popularity and by 1905, 78,000 vehicles existed in the United States. As more well-to-do people acquired automobiles, social clubs such as the American Automobile Association (AAA) emerged as strong advocates for supporting recreation auto touring and long distance road racing. Others vested groups such as local booster clubs, petroleum companies, and auto manufacturers and dealers banded together to push for new roadways linking one town to another promoting the American auto-tourism movement.

Pike's Peak Ocean-to-Ocean Highway is one of the nation's first transcontinental highways commencing construction in 1912. The highway spanned the continent from Los Angeles to New York and passed through Ontario, along Holt Boulevard. Leading the local chapter was no other than local town promoter and developer, Charles Frankish. It was quickly realized that Ontario's participation in this new highway was key to furthering economic prosperity as the highway would bring travelers directly to the downtown.

By 1920, Holt Boulevard had been transformed from a 2-lane scenic road lined with citrus trees and grand Victorian homes into a modern 4-lane highway. It ultimately became the main transportation route from Los Angeles to Palm Springs for the newest

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class of automobile owners; the Hollywood movie stars and Beverly Hills socialites. Soon automobile ownership was widespread and auto tourism was on the rise thanks to Henry Ford's Model T. The simple engineering and design applied with the assembly line technique allowed for the first time an affordable auto to be marketed to the middle class. Twenty-eight million cars were reported on the road by the end of the decade.

Existing property owners and businesses along Holt Boulevard began to modify their products, services and buildings to better address the needs of the highway motorist. This is evident by the many residential buildings that were converted to commercial or those commercial additions that were attached to the front of the residence. The businesses that once catered to railroad travelers such as the Casa Blanca Hotel expanded their advertising to Holt Boulevard to get the attention of the auto traveler. All types of businesses began to develop along the side of the road. A certain number of travelers would always be in need of gas and often times they grew hungry, tired, and restless.

Soon gas stations, produce booths, hot dog stands, and auto camps sprouted up along Holt Boulevard to capitalize on these needs.

Early on, petroleum companies began to enlist the services of strategically located livery stables, garages, hardware stores, and grocery stores to sell their gasoline. Initially, gas was sold in cans, but soon gasoline pumps were installed near the road. This method of selling gas quickly caught on and the first stand-alone gas stations began to appear. Many gas station owners also began selling additional products and services such as auto repair services and tire sales. However, the most dominant auto-related business along Holt Boulevard was the automobile dealership.

In the early 1920s, “autocamping” became the rage, and campgrounds equipped with tents sprang up along the highway. By the end of the decade, however, the camps became less desirable and “cabin camping” also referred to as “tourist courts” were popularized. The modern tourist courts of the 1940s and 50s were professionally designed and much more sophisticated. They provided travelers with all the comforts of home including kitchens, bathrooms, electricity and comfortable furniture.

Prior to the 1920s, automobile travelers had few choices in the way of restaurants on the road. However, that changed as food stands, drive-in restaurants, diners, and full-service restaurants joined into the competition for the traveler’s attention and money.

Food stands were often shacks virtually thrown together by farmers who owned property along the highway and sold their produce and other homemade products to passing travelers. Former citrus ranch home, The Orange Grove Inn, became famous for its fried chicken dinners and homemade marmalade. Some food stands also served hot, refrigerated or frozen foods such as hot dogs, hamburgers, cold drinks and ice cream. In particular, Vince’s sold fresh squeezed orange juice and french dip sandwiches in an open air 6-stool food stand. It would later develop into a full service restaurant becoming famous for its spaghetti dinners. Meanwhile, the food stand evolved into a completely new type of restaurant – one that was born of the automobile – the drive-in restaurant.

Unlike the businesses that provided necessary products and services to travelers, roadside tourist attractions and souvenir shops simply offered tourists a diversion from the road: Graber Olive, GE Hotpoint, Armstrong Nursery, the Ice Skating Rink, and both Fountain and Cucamonga Valley Wineries all benefited from this notion.

Signing of the 1956 Federal Aid Interstate Highway Act sealed the fate of many small U. S. roads. This legislation authorized the appropriation of funds for the construction of the Interstate Highway System. Federal funding would absorb nearly all of the expense leaving the states responsible for only 10% of the shared construction cost. As a result,

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much of the tourist traffic that traveled along Holt Boulevard was diverted to the I-10 putting an end to the golden age example of Roadside architecture.

The above quoted study “identified four patterns of development or themes that impacted the development of Holt Boulevard; 1) Agriculture (1880-1940), 2) Industrial (1880), 3) Transportation and related businesses (1912-1956), and 4) Commercial (1880-Current).” In addition, “Five building typologies were identified through the first phase of the survey effort; 1) residential, 2) Agriculture & Industry/Warehouse Buildings (1925-1940), 3) automotive related building (1915-1950), 4) Auto tourism buildings, and 5) Commercial.” These themes and typologies are both interesting and useful, but it is suggested herein, that the evaluation of transportation related buildings and features in the City of Ontario might first consider a much more broad-based context.

City of Ontario: Surface Transportation Historical Context Statement Over time, various transportation components have formed a network of interconnected linear features in the vicinity of the City of Ontario. By way of example, nearly all of today's transportation features in southern California are directly and/or indirectly related to much earlier transportation features. In point of fact, historic wagon roads and routes of exploration were almost all preceded or antedated by Native American trails. Many, if not all of these wagon roads would eventually be replaced and/or bypassed as transportation corridors by modern railroads and highways. Several key characteristics are here identified as a means of developing a meaningful City of Ontario *Surface Transportation Historical Context Statement*. The continued replacement and/or bypassing of earlier with newer transportation routes is perhaps the single-most important key characteristic of any meaningful transportation context. A second key characteristic is that east-west and/or west-east travel was, from prehistoric times to the present, a primary goal of travelers in southern California. A third important characteristic is that in southern California important north-south connectors were developed over time to link the primary east-west transportation routes, alignments, and corridors. This development almost assuredly began in prehistory and continues today with the improvement of and widening of existing highways and roadways. A fourth important key characteristic is that transportation destination points change dramatically over time. This characteristic is oftentimes linked to the first, but it stands on its own. A fifth key characteristic is the influential role of federal, state, and local government in the development of transportation routes, alignments, and corridors.

In reality, the history of the City of Ontario may be divided into five primary periods of significance in the development of a greater City of Ontario *Surface Transportation Historical Context Statement*. These five periods are:

- 1.) Prehistory-1875: Indian Trails to Railroads
- 2.) 1875-1911: Railroads and Wagons to Dawn of the Age of the Automobile
- 3.) 1912-1931: Ocean-to-Ocean Highway to State and Federal Highway
- 4.) 1931-1954: State Highway Adjacent to Freeway Bypassing of Downtown Ontario
- 5.) 1954 to Present: Changing Highway Tourism and Commerce

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The above suggested periods of significance differ from the "development patterns" suggested by the "Holt Boulevard Historic Property Survey Report" for *the Pike's Peak Ocean to Ocean Highway in Ontario*, as prepared under the auspices of the City of Ontario, Planning Department. They differ for one primary reason, and that is that the development of any given transportation system must first be placed into a larger historical context before an understanding of how any given transportation related feature (i.e. Holt Boulevard) may be evaluated.

In summary, the greater City of Ontario historic transportation network is best viewed as a series of overlays comprising five major periods in time, and extending from prehistory to the present. These historical periods provide a broad-based historical background for the better contextual understanding and evaluation of all transportation related features within the City of Ontario and, in particular, establishing the significance of the Dietz

Garage within a meaningful greater City of Ontario *Surface Transportation Historical Context Statement*.

Prehistory-1875: Indian Trails to Railroads

Early maps of the region show several surface transportation routes leading primarily from Los Angeles eastward to either the Cajon Pass or San Gorgonio Pass. A north-south connector leads from near Temecula through “Cocomungo” (Cucamonga) to the foot of the Cajon Pass. The wagon roads shown on the map below almost certainly developed from prehistoric trails. Clearly, the City of Ontario, in the period of time prior to 1875, was not directly connected to any major transportation network.



Bancroft Knight 1867

1875-1911: Railroads and Wagons, to Dawn of the Age of the Automobile

Construction of the Southern Pacific Railroad from Spadra to San Gorgonio began in 1875, by January 1876 trains were running to Whitewater, and by May of 1877 the banks of the Colorado were reached. The completion of the railroad clearly predates the establishment of the Ontario Colony and/or the Town of Ontario. The railroad is,

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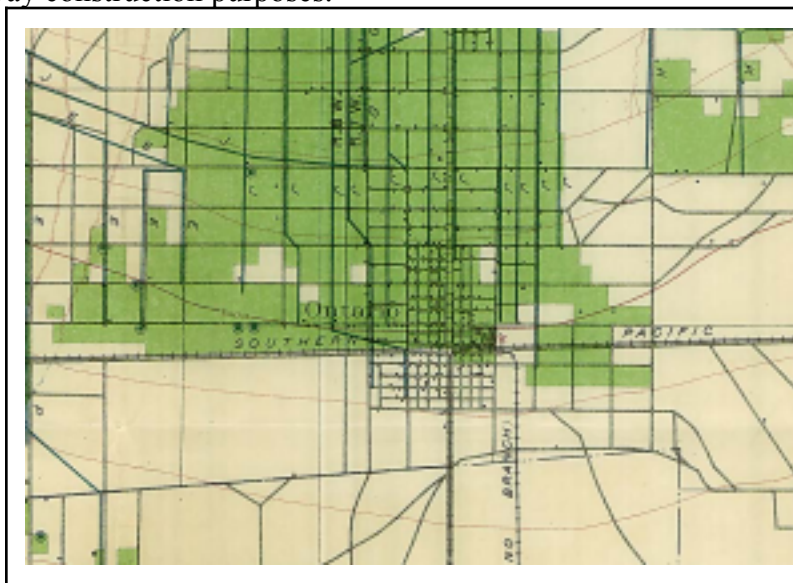
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however, one of the reasons that the Town of Ontario was located by the Chaffey brothers where it was.



War Department 1879

The above map, published in 1879 by the U. S. Department of Engineers, depicts the Southern Pacific Railroad alignment that currently runs through the City of Ontario, immediately to the north of Holt Boulevard. Virtually every newly constructed railroad alignment in the United States had a roadway running directly adjacent to it as originally used for railway construction purposes.



1898 USGS Topographic: Revised 1904 & 1905

Many, if not the majority of these railroad adjacent roadways, were quickly converted to wagon roads and then to automobile roads and highways. The above map, as published in 1898, and revised in 1904 and 1905, depicts several roadway alignments (including what is now Holt Boulevard) paralleling the Southern Pacific Railroad alignment.

1912-1931: Ocean-to-Ocean Highway to State and Federal Highway In

1912, boosters across southern California began promoting the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway in California as a transcontinental link. Cities in southern California quickly began lobbying to be included on the highway, and the competition quickly heated-up between rival east-west automobile transportation corridors.



Early 1930s Hobbs Mohawk Guide to the Southern Route: The Ocean-to-Ocean Highway Showing Highway Section and Text Passing Through the City of Ontario

In southern California there were two major east-west links being proposed, one was the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway leading from Los Angeles to the Colorado River near Yuma. The second was the Santa Fe Grand Canyon Needles Highway (later know as National Old Trails Road), leading from Los Angeles to the Colorado River at Needles. During this time period many auto related business were built on A Street/Holt Boulevard, including the Dietz Garage in 1923. A Street was paved through the City of Ontario, and a key link was built across the Guasti Italian Vineyard Company property. Additional improvements including street lighting, safety signals, safety related realignments, and promotional events were also paid for by either the County of San Bernardino and/or the

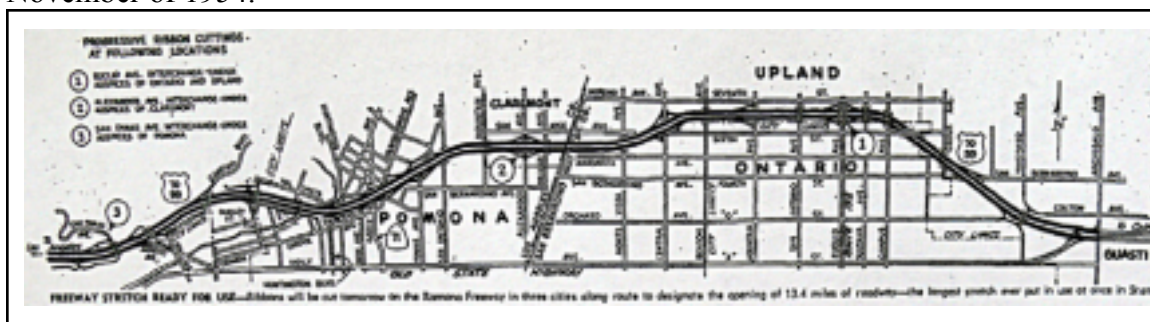
City of Ontario. The period of time extending from 1912 to 1931 should be regarded as the Holt Boulevard “Formative Years.”

1931-1954: State Highway Golden Years to Freeway Bypass

In 1931, the State of California took over maintenance and control of that portion of the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway passing through the City of Ontario. The state had been improving the highway from the Arizona/California State line for a number of years, and the inclusion of that portion extending westward from Redlands as a state highway had been lobbied for by citizens and politicians alike for several years. Improvements, including paving, realignment, and widening took place from 1931 to 1933. A June 17, 1933 *Los Angeles Times* article notes that Governor Rolph attended the opening of the new highway. These should be regarded as the Holt Boulevard “Golden Years.” During this period of time the automobile related businesses established on A Street/Holt Boulevard, including the Dietz Garage, flourished.

Changing Highway Tourism and Commerce

In 1954, the Ontario/Pomona link of the Ramona Freeway was opened. Planning had begun in the late-1940s. Approvals were sought and received by the cities of Upland and Ontario in 1948, over 80% of the rights-of-way were purchased by 1951, contracts were let in 1952, and the Ramona Freeway was opened bypassing downtown Ontario in November of 1954.



1954 *Los Angeles Times* Map of Ramona Freeway Bypassing Downtown Ontario

The continued replacement and/or bypassing of earlier with newer transportation routes is the single-most important key characteristic of any meaningful transportation context, and Holt Boulevard and the Dietz garage fit nicely into this context.

Transportation Context Summary

Holt Boulevard and the Dietz Garage fit into several historical periods of significance as defined above in the present proposed City of Ontario *Surface Transportation Historical Context Statement*. The Dietz Garage was built in 1923, or during the Holt Boulevard “Formative Years” as extending from 1912-1931: Ocean-to-Ocean Highway to State and Federal Highway. The business was further developed under, and the ownership changed during the Holt Boulevard “Golden Years,” as extending from 1931-1954: State Highway Adjacent to Freeway Bypassing of Downtown Ontario. Finally, the business was moved

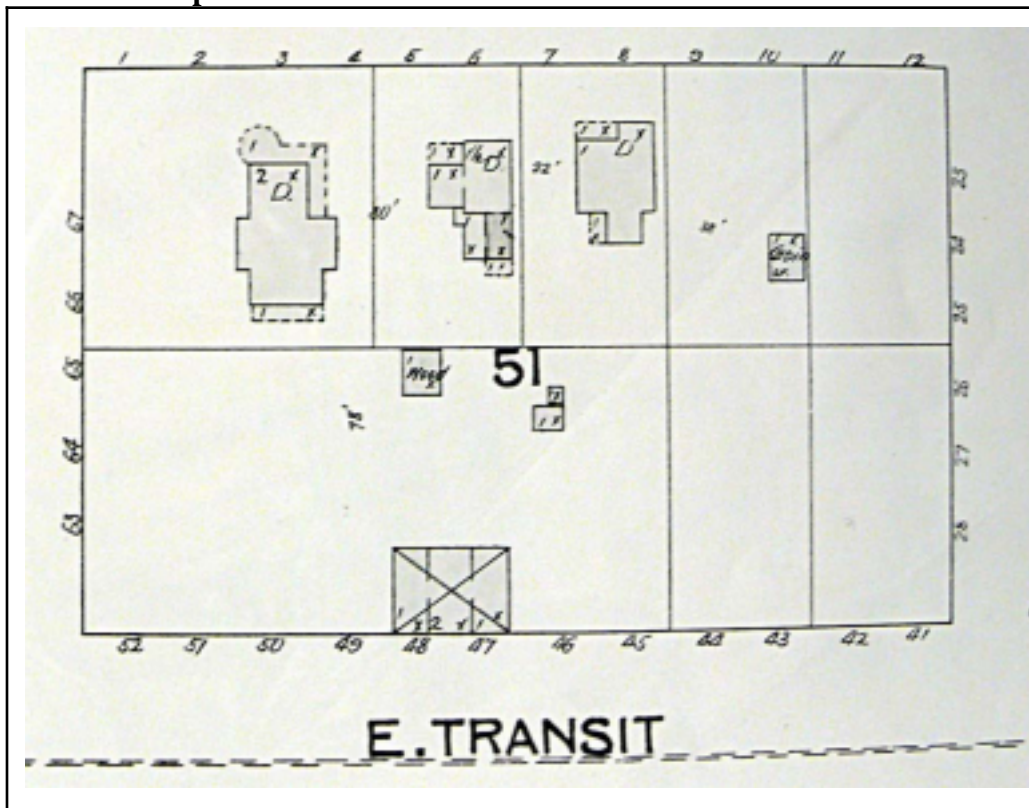
out of the Dietz Garage in 1981, or during that period of time defined as 1954 to Present: Changing Highway Tourism and Commerce.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF BLOCK 51, TOWN OF ONTARIO The Dietz Garage city block is bounded by Holt Boulevard (originally A Street) on the north, Transit Street on the south, Lemon Avenue on the west, and Plum Avenue on the east.

1888 Sanborn Map: Block 51

No improvements are recorded on Block 51, Town of Ontario.

1895 Sanborn Map: Block 51



1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Block 51, Town of Ontario

Two Residences are Built on Lots 3 and 4, and a Wooden Structure with Woodshed is on Lot 9

Lots with improvements are:

- Lot 2: Very small “cabin”
- Lot 3: Medium one story wood dwelling
- Lot 4: Small one story wood dwelling
- Lot 5: Large two story wood dwelling
- Lot 9: Two story wooden structure, woodshed
- Lot 10: One very small one story wooden structure

Building improvements were made to Lot 9 as early as 1895, when a medium sized one story wooden structure with a woodshed behind it was built on the lot facing Transit

Street. Various historic improvements were made to Lot 3 and Lot 4, Block 51, Town of Ontario, also beginning as early as 1895 when one story dwellings were located on each lot.

1907 Sanborn Map: Block 51

By 1907, the first possibly automobile associated improvement, an “Oil Ho.,” was made on Block 51, Town of Ontario. Oil was, however, used for a variety of purposes not associated with the automobile. This is, however, the first known non-residential improvement made to Block 51. In addition, the large dwelling unit located on Lot 5 had been converted to a lodging house.

Lots with improvements are:

Lot 2: Small one story wood dwelling

Lot 3: Medium one story wood dwelling

Lot 4: Medium one story wood dwelling

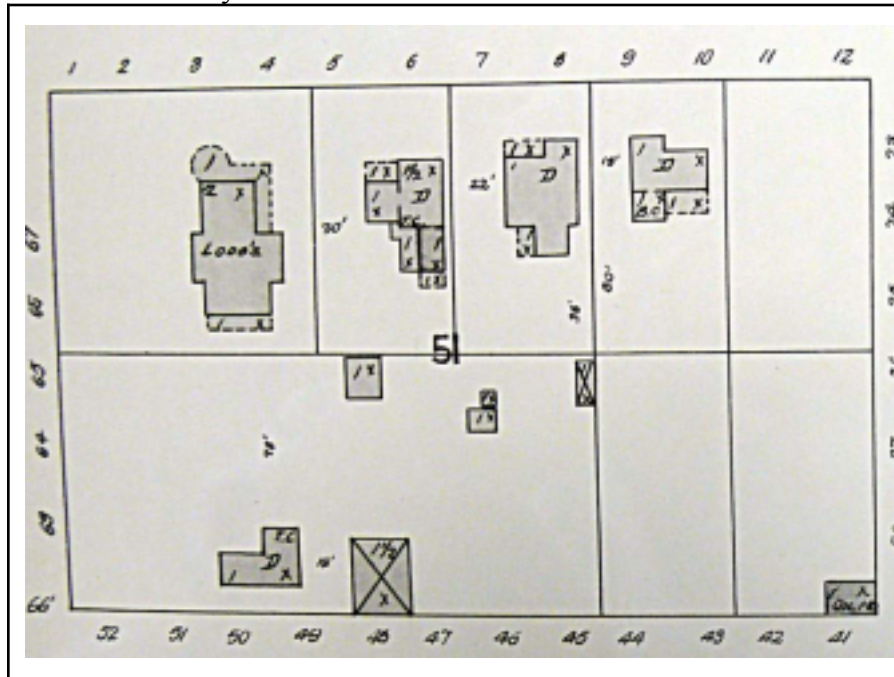
Lot 5: Large two story wood Lodg's”

Lot 8: Small one story wood dwelling

Lot 9: One small 1 ½ story wooden structure, and one small one story wooden structure

Lot 10: Two very small one story wooden structures

Lot 12: One small one story “Oil Ho.”



1907 Sanborn Map Showing Lot 3, 4, and 9 as Developed

1912 Sanborn Map: Block 51

By 1912, the “Oil Ho.” had been replaced with a medium sized one story wood dwelling. An automobile garage had, however, been added behind the residence fronting at 215 Transit Street. All of the improvements made on Block 51, Town of Ontario, at this time were, therefore, residential in nature. One of these residential units, however, had built a

garage behind it, signally the permanent arrival of automobile related improvements made to Block 51.

Lots with improvements are:

Lot 2: Small one story wood dwelling at 224 A Street

Lot 3: Medium one story wood dwelling at 220 A Street

Lot 4: Medium one story wood dwelling at 214 A Street

Lot 5: Large two story wood Lodg's" at 208 A Street

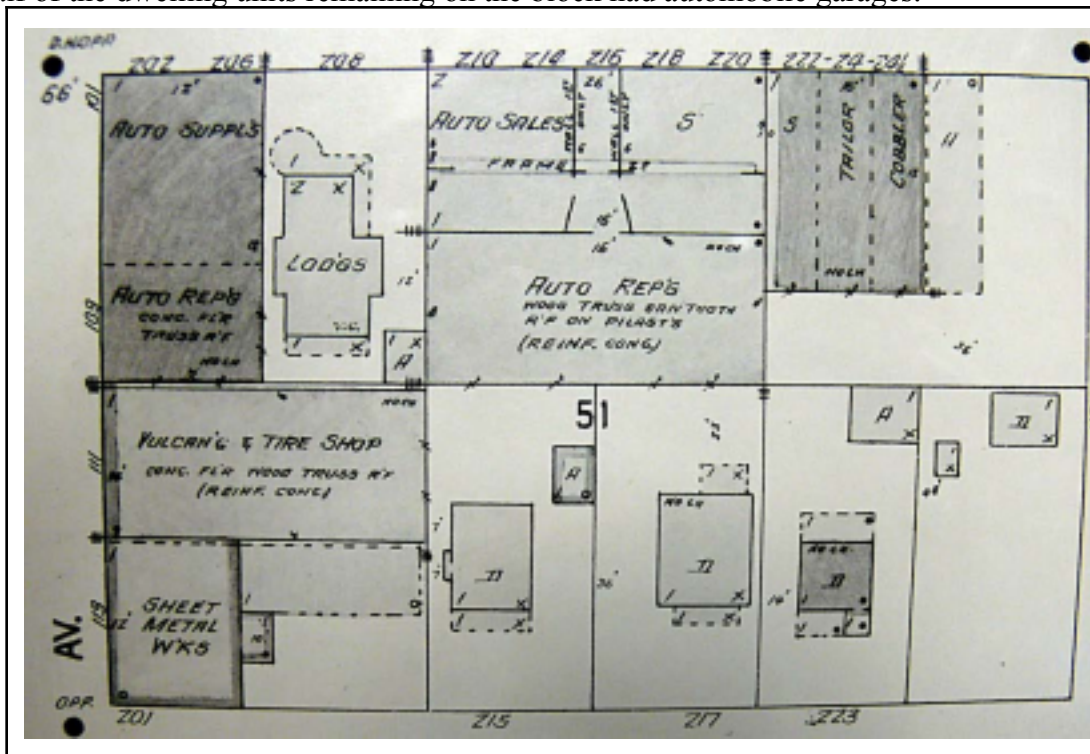
Lot 9: Medium one story wood dwelling, and automobile garage at 211 Transit Street

Street Lot 10: Medium one story wood dwelling, and shed to rear at 217 Transit Street

Street Lot 12: Medium one story wood dwelling at 227 Transit Street

1928 Sanborn Map: Block 51

By 1928, the small automobile associated improvements previously made on Block 51, Town of Ontario, had become more of a pattern. Specifically, of those lots with improvements, three contained major commercial automobile repair shops. Finally, over half of the dwelling units remaining on the block had automobile garages.



1928 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Block 51, Town of Ontario
Dietz Garage is Built on Lots 3 and 4, and a Dwelling with Garage is on Lot 9

Lots with improvements are:

Lot 1: A small and very narrow one story automobile garage

Lot 2: A large shop at 222-224 ½ A Street

Lots 3 and 4: Dietz Garage; auto sales & repairing, and shops, at 210-220 A

Street Lot 5: Large two story wood Lodg's" and automobile garage at 208 A
 Street Lot 6: One story auto supplies and auto repairing at 202-206 A Street

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Lots 7 & 8: One story vulcanizing & tire shop at 111 Lemon Avenue
 One story sheet metal works at 119 Lemon Avenue

Lot 9: Medium one story wood dwelling, and automobile garage at 215 Transit

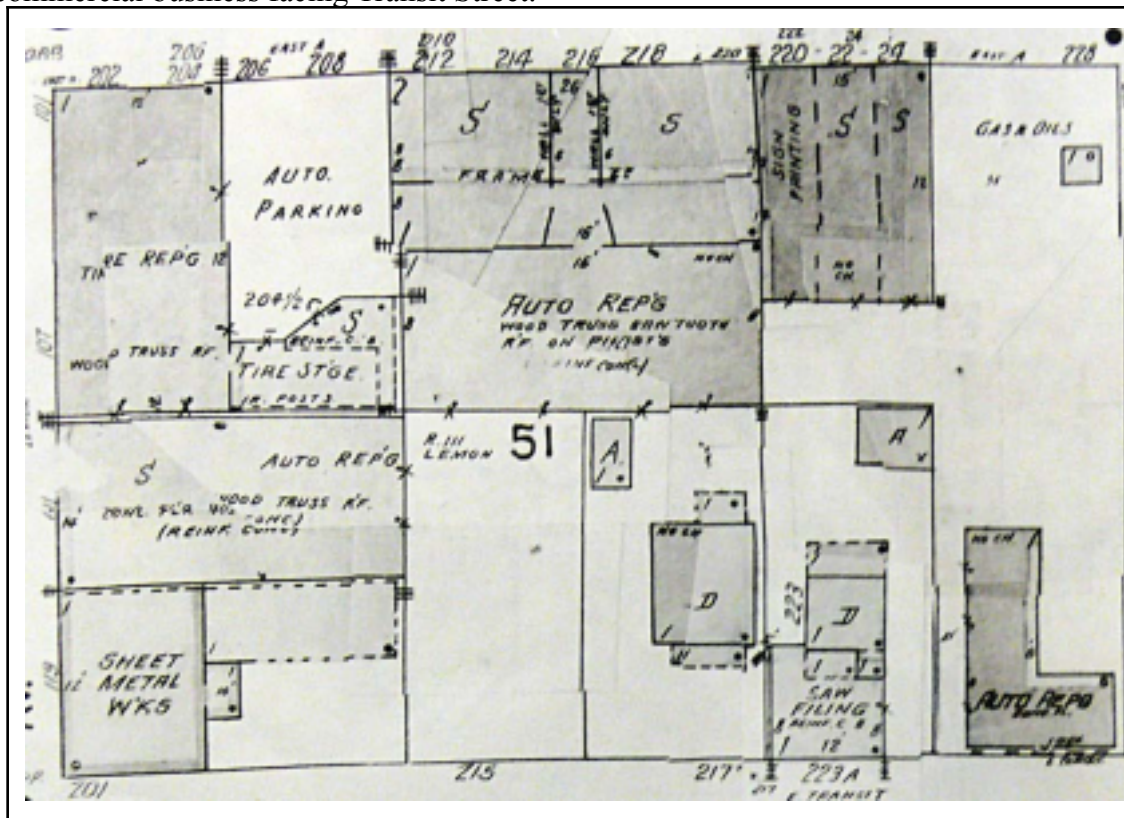
Street Lot 10: Medium one story wood dwelling at 217 Transit Street

Lot 11: Medium one story wood dwelling, and automobile garage at 223 Transit

Street Lot 12: Small one story wood dwelling and shed at 110 Plum Avenue

1951 Sanborn Map: Block 51

By 1951, the various building improvements made to Block 51, Town of Ontario, appear to have been primarily dedicated to the automotive industry. Fully half of the lots contained major commercial improvements related to the automobile industry. Only two dwelling units remain on the block, both with automobile garages, and one of these had a commercial business facing Transit Street.



**1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Block 51, Town of Ontario
 The Residence on Lot 9 Has Been Demolished**

Lots with improvements ar

Lot 1: Gas & oils at 228 A Street

Lot 2: A large shop at 222-224 A Street

Lots 3 and 4: Dietz Garage; auto sales & repairing, and shops, at 210-220 A

Street Lot 5: Auto parking and tire storage at 206-208 A Street

Lot 6: One story tire repairing at 202-206 A Street

Lots 7 & 8: One story auto repairing at 111 Lemon Avenue

One story sheet metal works at 119 Lemon Avenue

Lot 10: Medium one story wood dwelling, and automobile garage at 217 Transit

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Lot 11: Saw filing & one story wood dwelling, and automobile garage at 223 Transit Street

Lot 12: Auto repairing at 116 Plum Avenue

CITY DIRECTORIES AND BLOCK 51

Consultation of various historic City Directories for the City of Ontario, with Criss-Cross or “Household” reference sections adds considerably to our understanding of how Block 51, Town of Ontario, grew and developed. The City Directory for 1924 contains, for example, the first listing for the Dietz Garage. It also lists residential addresses for both O. O. Dietz and Lemuel A. Graves (Dietz Garage original owners and founders), and it contains a listing of every business and householder (by address) for the entirety of Block 51, Town of Ontario, as bounded by A Street, Transit Street, Lemon Avenue, and Plum Avenue. Historic City Directories do, in fact, serve as something of a time capsule.

City Directories providing historic perspective on the development of Block 51, Town of Ontario, spanning four decades from the 1920s to the 1950s include the following:

ONTARIO CITY DIRECTORY 1924

Published by the Los Angeles Directory Co.
221 East Fourth Street, Los Angeles

Alphabetical Listing

Dietz Owen O (Dietz & Graves) r117 West B

DIETZ & GRAVES (O O Dietz, L A Graves), Automotive Repairs, Welding, Complete Machine Shop. Tow Car Service 214 East A, Tel 818

Graves Lemuel A (Dietz & Graves) r309 East I

Householders

A (EAST) – E from Euclid av to city limits bet B and Transit

204 Western Auto Supply Co

208 Brogan P J

Ivy House The

210 Clark Bros autos

214 Dietz & Graves Machine Shop

218 Vacant

220 Vacant

224 Kirkpatrick J D

LEMON AV (South) – S from East A 1 blk e of S Euclid av

105 Spencer R S batteries

111 Price R F

119 Ontario Sheet Metal Wks

PLUM AV (South) – S from East A to Dessau 2 blks e of S Euclid av

110 McConnell C B

TRANSIT (East) – E from S Euclid av to Sultana av ½ blk s of A

208 Becket Lynn
212 Merrie Thos
212 ½ Berger Mary Mrs

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228 Campbell Construction Co

ONTARIO CITY DIRECTORY 1937 -1938

Published by the Los Angeles Directory Co.

ONTARIO

A, EAST – East from Euclid av to city limits, bet B and Transit

LEMON AV INTERSECTS

204 Stanyer & Edmonson Inc tires
210 Berry R J

Hobbs John
Rice Harriet Mrs
Wallace Jas

212-214 Dietz O O auto repr
218 Vacant
220 Stults D C signs
222 Traver R N sewing machs
224 Bretz & Brown liquors

LEMON AV. SOUTH – South from East A, 1 e of S Euclid av

111 D & D Rubber Co whol auto accessories
119 Opitz F E shtmtl wks

TRANSIT, EAST – East from S Euclid av to Sultana av, e/2 blk s of A

208 Poling C S
212 Roth J S
212 ½ Baldion G W
Payne E W
228 Campbell Construction Co

ONTARIO DIRECTORY OF HOUSEHOLDERS 1948 – 1949

Published by the Los Angeles Directory Co.

A, EAST – East from Euclid av to city limits, bet B and Transit

204 Stanyer & Edmondson co tires
210 Dietz E M

Felix A K Mrs
Hase C J

212-16 Dietz Garage
218 ½ Fulmer B E Mrs

Taylor A O

220 Jensen R C

Stults D C signs

222 La Rue M C Mrs

hemstitching
Sewing Mach Shop

224 B & B Liquor Store

228 Don's Serv gas sta

LEMON AV SOUTH – South from East A, 1 e of S Euclid av

111 D & D rubber co auto parts

119 Ontario Sht Mtl Wks

TRANSIT, EAST – East from S Euclid av to Sultana av, ½ blk s of A
208 Miles H H Mrs

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212 Ayala L V
228 Campbell Construction Co

LUSKEY'S ONTARIO & UPLAND CRISS CROSS CITY DIRECTORY 1957

Published by Luskey Brothers & Co.

HOLT BL., EAST (Ontario) – From Euclid av east

LEMON AV INTERSECTS

204 Stanyer & Edmondson Co tires

210 Apartments

- 1 Vacant
- 2 Vacant
- 3 Dietz E M
- 4 Vacant
- 5 Vacant
- 6 Vacant

214-16 Dietz Garage

218 Allied Blue Print & Sup Co

220 Zorns Sign System

Jeannerette Marie D
public sten

222 LaRue M C Mrs hemstitching

Traver R N sewing mach

Dunn Jean Mrs

Reweaving

224 DeVore's Rl Est

226 Western Union Teleg Co

228 Vacant

230 Tiberg G W rl est

LEMON AV, SOUTH (Ontario) – From 200 East A south

111 D & D Mtr Pts

119 Ont Sht Mtl Wks

PLUM AV. SOUTH (Ontario) – From 300 East A south

120 Rowland's Garage

TRANSIT, EAST (Ontario) – From 150 S Euclid av east

208 Miles H H Mrs

212 Humphrey A J

228 Campbell Constr Co

DIETZ GARAGE PROPERTY OWNERS: PERSONS OF SIGNIFICANCE

During the defined "Period of Significance" for the Dietz Garage, or that period of time extending from 1923 to 1981, there were only two property owners for the Dietz Garage building property on Lot 3 and Lot 4, Block 51, Town of Ontario. These owners were Willis A. Bartlett (original owner and builder), and William Charles Scheu and/or the heirs of W. C. Scheu.

Willis Everett Bartlett: 1923-1926

Willis Everett Bartlett, better known as Willis E. Bartlett was the original owner and builder of the “Dietz Garage” located at 214 Holt Avenue, in Ontario, California. He built the garage in 1923, and sold it to W. C. Scheu in 1926. Bartlett was born in the mid 1880s in the state of Maine. Both of Bartlett’s parents had emigrated from New Brunswick, Canada. By the age of fifteen, Bartlett was living in the Los Angeles area with his family, which included his father, mother, and several sisters. By the time of the 1910 *Federal Census*, Willis was married to Grace, and was employed as a farmer.

According to a 1916 *Index to Voters*, the Bartletts had moved inland to the Pomona area. Willis Bartlett now earned his living as a carpenter. The World War I *Draft Registration Card* for Willis Bartlett reveals that he was employed as the Manager for the Pomona Milling Co. The 1920 *Federal Census* records that Willis and Grace have two children, son Robert, age eight, and daughter Charlotte, age six. The family still resided in the Pomona area, where Willis Bartlett worked as the Superintendent for a construction company.

In September of 1923, Willis E. Bartlett of OakRidge Drive in Glendale, took out a permit to construct, “a reinforced concrete garage in East A street between Lemon and Plum, to cost \$7,000,” according to an article contained in the Ontario *Daily Report*. Willis Bartlett owned the garage building on East A Street in Ontario, leasing to tenants Dietz & Graves, from when it was built in the fall of 1923 until he sold the building to William C. Scheu in July of 1926.

In 1924, Willis and Grace Bartlett and their children were still living at the residence on Oak Ridge Drive in Glendale, just outside of Los Angeles. According to information from an *Index to Voters*, Willis Bartlett lists his occupation as “builder.” In 1928, Willis Bartlett’s profession is listed as the “laundry” business. In a 1936 *Index to Voters*, Willis and Grace Bartlett reside at the same Oak Ridge address in Glendale, California. Willis Bartlett works as a “manager.”

Willis Bartlett died on January 14, 1956, in southern California. His four sisters were still alive at the time of his passing, and he was also survived by his wife, Grace, his children Robert, Charlotte, and June, and by five grandchildren. An obituary in the January 16, 1956 edition of the *Los Angeles Times* noting the passing of Willis E. Bartlett reads:

Los Angeles Times
January 16, 1956, Page A6
Obituary

BARTLETT, WILLIS E. – Beloved husband of Grace L. Bartlett, father of Charlotte Jones, June Dilfer, and Robert O. Bartlett, brother of Gertrude Martin, Flora Hart, Clara Lundes, and Eva Runyon, also survived by five grandchildren.

In summary, Willis E. Bartlett was the original owner and builder of the Dietz Garage. His working career spanned some five decades, and he worked in a variety of jobs ranging from farmer, to carpenter, to builder, to business manager. Like many southern

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California residents in the early years of the twentieth century, where opportunity appeared almost everywhere one looked, he took a little time to find his place. His only known major foray into building development was the construction of the Dietz Garage in 1923. The highly unique design layout of the Dietz Garage, combining industrial (garage), commercial (retail spaces), and residential (apartments) uses, must certainly be credited to Willis Everett Bartlett.

William C. Scheu & Scheu Family: 1926-1993

William Frederick Charles Scheu, better known as W. C. Scheu, was a pioneer in the Orchard Equipment Heating business. Circa 1911, he invented a type of heater called a “High-Low” (or Hy-Lo) that drastically reduced the amount of smoke generated by heaters, which were used to keep citrus crops from freezing during times of frosts. His device improved and virtually replaced the old smudge pots, which had created an enormous amount of smoke pollution when in use. W. C. Scheu owned the Dietz Garage from 1926 until his death in 1942.

Born in West Virginia in 1868, Scheu and his wife, Henrietta, along with their children Meldon and Leland, were residents of Massachusetts in 1910, according to the *Federal Census*. William Scheu is listed as involved in the “manufacturing” business. Although the family residence is listed as Massachusetts in 1910, there was a strong Colorado connection. The family may have perhaps split their time between Colorado and Massachusetts, as in the *Federal Census* for 1920, all three Scheu children (daughter Virginia came along in 1912) are listed as having been born in the state of Colorado. (According to the 1920 Federal Census, daughter Meldon was born circa 1899, son Leland was born in 1901, and daughter Virginia was born in 1912). The family appears to have moved out west more or less permanently in the mid-teens, as William Scheu is listed as a resident of Grand Junction, Colorado, when he applies for a passport in 1915.

In 1917, William Scheu purchased a factory on Campus Avenue in Upland, California, with the stated intention of manufacturing orchard heaters along with a “new patented distillate burner.” By 1920, the entire Scheu clan appears to be living in southern California. The 1920 *Federal Census* lists the family as residents of Los Angeles. The family consists of William and Henrietta, and children Meldon, age 21, Leland, age 19, and Virginia, age 8. William Scheu’s occupation is listed as the manager of a foundry.

In July of 1926, William C. Scheu purchases the property located at 214 Holt Avenue in Ontario, California from Willis and Grace Bartlett. The property would stay in the Scheu family until well into the next century. When he died in April of 1942, William Scheu was remembered as a pioneer in the orchard heating business. The following obituary regarding the death of W. O. Scheu appeared in the April 12, 1942 edition of the *Los Angeles Times* reads:

April 12, 1942, Page A2
"Pioneer in Orchard Heating Succumbs"

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UPLAND, April 11. – W. O. Scheu, 73, pioneer developer and leader in the orchard heater industry, died at his Euclid ave. home here today.

As the result of constant experiment and study Scheu took much of the smoke out of the smudge pots and developed the modern orchard heaters. Funeral services will be conducted at 2 p.m. Monday at Ontario. He leaves his widow and a son, Leland, Upland and two daughters Mrs. C. H. Dekker, San Marino, and Mrs. D. N. League, Kansas City.

In summary, W. C. Scheu was a highly influential local resident and businessman. His interests extended across the Inland Empire, although in the 1920s they were primarily focused in the vicinity of Upland and Ontario. His purchase of the Dietz Garage should be regarded as a diversification of the enormous wealth that was being generated by his orchard heater business. An Upland philanthropist, Scheu and/or his heirs, appear to have been remarkably reticent to invest in preventative maintenance at the Dietz Garage. Historic building inspection record make repeated comments like, "much def. maintenance," "fair" (condition early-1950s), "poor" (condition late-1950s to early 1970s), and "bldg. needs much work," and "inadequate maint." In addition, interviews with current owners of Dietz Towing, and one-time renters from the Scheu family, record that the Dietz Garage landlord was extremely pennywise.

DIETZ GARAGE: HISTORIC BUSINESS OWNERS

During the defined "Period of Significance" for the Dietz Garage, or that period of time extending from 1923 to 1981, there were multiple owners of the Dietz Garage business, as originally established in 1923 in what is known today as the Dietz Garage building on Lot 3 and Lot 4, Block 51, Town of Ontario. These owners include Owen Orlo Dietz and Lemuel Graves from 1923-1928; O. O. Deitz from 1928-1940, Eli Miller Dietz from 1940 to 1972; and Phillip Pannone from 1972-1981.

Owen Orlo Dietz

Owen Orlo Dietz (primarily referred to as O. O. Dietz) was born in 1889 in South Dakota. When he was still a young boy, his family pulled up stakes and moved to Iowa. Although he had several siblings, it was little brother Eli Miller, who came along in 1902, with whom he had the most in common. Both brothers were enthralled with the nascent automobile industry.

O. O. Dietz first went into the garage business in 1912 in a building on Laurel Avenue, in association with W. O. Campbell. In 1922, he entered the garage business with Ontario native Lemuel A. Graves. They opened the Dietz & Graves garage on East A Street in the fall of 1923. In 1928, he purchased Graves' interest in the business. Interestingly, O. O. Dietz had already hired younger brother E. Miller in the fall of 1927. Dietz never purchased the building on Holt Avenue, instead leasing the space first from Willis Bartlett, and then from William C. Scheu.



The Dietz Brothers

Photo Credit: Pannone Collection

The following article is from the Model Colony Room archives, Bio Book I, Page 170, and dated June 28, 1937. The article consists of an interview with local garage owner, O. O. Dietz. In the article, O. O. Dietz provides a summary of his involvement in the automobile garage industry.

Model Colony Room Archive

Bio Book I, Page 170

June 28, 1937

“O. O. Dietz Long Active in Ontario”

“Puts Best Possible Effort Into Every Job, Large or Small”

The man with the “flivver” gets the same efficient service at the Dietz garage, 216 East A street, that is accorded the man with the “Rolled-Rice.”

That, according to O. O. Dietz, is the chief secret of his 20 years' successful affiliation with the garage business in Ontario. But there is another, and an important one, and the answer is advertising.

ADVERTISING PAYS

In connection with the latter, Mr. Dietz today displayed an advertisement of his authorship which appeared in The Daily Report of October 26, 1912. "When the duck lays an egg, it just waddles off the nest as if nothing had happened," reads the ad, in part.

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"When the hen lays an egg, there's a whale of a noise. Hence the demand for hen's eggs, instead of duck's eggs."

Mr. Dietz first went into the garage business here in 1912, being associated with W. O. Campbell in a building on Laurel avenue. In 1916, he accompanied Mr. Campbell east, but returned with him to Bakersfield in 1929 [1919] and in 1921 was again in Ontario.

OFFICIAL CLUB GARAGE

In 1922, he entered into the garage business with Lemuel A. Graves. He purchased the Graves interest in 1928 and has since been in business for himself, occupying the present location for the last 14 years.

The Dietz establishment is listed as the official garage of the Automobile Club of Southern California. It gives day and night service and is prepared to handle all makes of cars with equal efficiency.

In his personal life, O. O. Dietz was married to Florence. O. O. Dietz's stepdaughter, the Mack Sennett bathing beauty and actress Elsie Tarron, was married to Scottish actor and comic Andy Clyde.



O. O. Dietz Tow Truck Prior to 1940
Photo Credit: Pannone Collection

O. O. Dietz died of an apparent heart attack on May 17, 1940, in the automobile garage

on East A Street. He was fifty-two years old, and a man of some local importance. Several newspaper articles record his death. The most informative is from the *Ontario Daily Report*, placing the news of his death on the front page of the newspaper.

The Daily Report

May 18, 1940, Page 1

“Owen O. Dietz, Pioneer in Auto Field, Succumbs”

Believed the victim of a heart attack, Owen O. Dietz, 408 Plaza Serena, was found dead last night at Dietz garage, 216 East A street. He was 52 years of age.

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The body was found by Mrs. Dietz when she visited the garage about 8 p.m. A native of South Dakota, Mr. Dietz came to Ontario 28 years ago from Waterloo, Iowa, and for several years past had been associated with his brother E. Miller Dietz, in conduct of the A-street garage.

AUTOMOBILE PIONEER

Mr. Dietz enjoyed the distinction of being a member of the “500 club,” numbering the first 500 men to become affiliated with the automobile industry in the United States. He was a member of the Ontario Elks Lodge. He was affiliated with the Knights of Pythias lodge at Waterloo, Iowa and the grand lodge, Knights of Klorasann.

Surviving Mr. Dietz beside the widow and the brother here are a second brother, Walter W. Dietz, Sacramento; two sisters, Mrs. W. S. Taylor, Cincinnati, Ohio and Mrs. Grover Tatton, in Colorado, and his mother, Mrs. Susan Miller Dietz, Cincinnati.

LAST RITES MONDAY

Funeral services will be conducted Monday 3:30 p.m. at the Richardson mortuary chapel, 123 West G street, with the Elks Lodge and the Rev. Herschel R. Griffin in charge.

Reservations will be made both for the Elks and Knights of Pythias lodges. Interment will be made at Bellevue cemetery.

In summary, Owen Orlo Dietz was one of the original founders of the Dietz Garage business, and he died of a heart attack in the place he loved. He was a man of considerable local influence and popularity, a member of several service clubs, and a member of the noteworthy “500 club,” placing him among the first 500 men to become affiliated with the automobile industry in the United States. He should also be credited, at least in part, with the innovative pits and bench system employed at the Dietz Garage. O. O. Dietz must be regarded as having considerable local historical significance.

Lemuel A. Graves

Lemuel Graves was the business partner of O. O. Dietz in the 1920's auto garage business located at 214 Holt Avenue in Ontario, California. A native Californian, Lemuel Graves was born in the city of Ontario, California in 1891. His World War I *Draft Registration Card* lists his occupation as machinist, and he was a member of a “machinist reserve troop.” The 1920 *U. S. Federal Census* lists his occupation as machinist at a garage.

A permit for the construction of the garage on East A Street was applied for by Willis Bartlett in September of 1923. By November of 1923, the garage was open for business. In addition to automotive repairs, an early advertisement for the garage notes that they also provide welding services, a complete machine shop, and car towing services. In the 1924 *City Directory for Ontario*, Lemuel Graves is listed as residing on East I Street.

In 1928, the partnership of Dietz & Graves came to an end. O. O. Dietz purchased Lemuel Graves interest in the business, and brought in his younger brother, E. Miller Dietz, (who had moved back to Ontario in 1927), to help with the running of the garage. In 1930, according to the *U. S. Federal Census*, Lemuel Graves is listed as manager of another automobile garage. Graves and his family, consisting of wife, Isabel, and daughter Elizabeth, continue to reside in Ontario in 1930.

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Eli Miller Dietz

Eli Miller Dietz was born in Waterloo, Iowa in 1902. E. Miller Dietz moved out to the Ontario, California area for several years while still a young man in grade school. From 1913 – 1916 he attended schools in the Ontario area. He then moved back to Iowa for a year. In 1917 he moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he lived with his older sister, Abbie, and her husband, William S. Taylor. In 1920, according to the *Federal Census*, E. Miller was working as a machinist for an automobile company. During his years in Ohio, E. Miller Dietz attended business college, while also working for the Ford Motor Company for a brief period of time.

In the fall of 1927, E. Miller Dietz returned to southern California for good. As older brother O. O. Dietz was involved in the automobile industry early on, it was natural for younger brother E. Miller to follow in his brother's footsteps. In 1927, E. Miller went to work in O. O. Dietz's automobile garage business on East A Street in Ontario and he never really left. After O. O. Dietz's death in 1940, E. Miller Dietz took over the family business, until shortly before his own death in 1972.

E. Miller Dietz and his wife, Dorothy, were very active members of the community, serving on a variety of boards, and joining numerous service clubs. E. Miller Dietz served on the World War II-era gasoline rationing board, he was a city councilman, and he served as a board member of the Ontario Community Hospital. Some of the many service organizations he was involved with include the Elks, the Shriners and the Masons.



E. Miller Dietz Tow Truck Post World War II
Photo Credit: Pannone Collection

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E. Miller Dietz's death was covered in an article, with accompanying photograph, in the local Ontario newspaper, *The Daily Report* article reads:

The Daily Report
April 23, 1972, Page A-4
"E. Miller Dietz funeral Tuesday"

ONTARIO – E. Miller Dietz, a former Ontario city councilman and owner of Dietz Garage in Ontario, died Friday at the age of 69.

Dietz died at Ontario Community Hospital, where he had been president of the board of directors for the past 15 years and a member of the board for the past 20.

A native of Waterloo, Iowa, Dietz had been an Ontario resident for 45 years and resided at 1434 W. D St.

His activities included membership in Ontario Lodge 301 of F and AM, the Pasadena Consistory, Al Malaikah Shrine, Old Baldy Shrine Club, the Royal Order of Jesters, Euclid Chapter 179 O.E.S., and Ontario Lodge 1419 of the Benevolent Protective Order of Elks.

Until recently he was owner and operator of Dietz Garage, 216 E. Holt Blvd.

He is survived by his wife, Dorothy, at home: one sister, Mrs. Edith E. Totton, Englewood, Colorado: and numerous nieces and nephews.

Services will be held Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. at the Masonic Temple, 1025 N. Vine Ave., Ontario, officiated by Rev. Delwin Thigpen of the First United Methodist Church. Masonic Memorial Rites will be performed by Ontario Lodge 301.

Entombment will be at Bellevue Mausoleum,. Committal services at the mausoleum will be performed by Ontario Lodge 1419 B. P. O. E.

In lieu of flowers it is requested that contributions be made to the Ontario Community Hospital Memorial Fund or a favorite charity.

In summary, E. Miller Dietz must be regarded as a man of considerable local historical significance. He spent the majority of his life in the automobile business, and was an Ontario city councilman. He was a member of several service clubs, and was on the board of directors of the Ontario Community Hospital.

Phillip Pannone: 1972-1981

In 1972, Phillip Pannone purchased the Dietz Garage business from the heirs of E. Miller Dietz. Pannone soon acted to promote the towing business only, and he filled-in the large automobile service “pits” in 1972. Pannone and various family members continued to operate “Dietz Towing” out of the Dietz Garage until 1981, when they moved the business to the current location at 1300 East Holt Boulevard after failing to reach a purchase agreement for the Dietz Garage with Scheu family members.

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Dietz Towing Inc. is currently operated by Terry Pannone Jordan. It may well be regarded as the oldest continually operating business in the City of Ontario, having been in operation since 1923 when it was founded by O. O. Dietz and Lemuel Graves.

DIETZ GARAGE HISTORY: CONSTRUCTION OF AND SALE OF BUILDING

The Dietz Garage was built beginning in September of 1923, and was opened for business servicing automobiles in November of 1923, even before construction on the commercial stores was complete.

The following September 1923 article from the Ontario *Daily Report* notes that a permit for a “reinforced concrete garage” was issued to Willis E. Bartlett of Glendale on September 4, 1923.

Daily Report
September 5, 1923, Page 1
“Building Record Given Big Boost”

Three permits for building were taken out at the city service departments yesterday, totaling \$9,700. The figure brings the total permits for September to \$10,250 and for the year to date \$752,996.50.

Willis E. Bartlett, 1257 Oakridge Drive, Glendale, will erect a reinforced concrete garage in East A street between Lemon and Plum, to cost \$7,000.

The November 6, 1923 edition of the Ontario newspaper, *The Daily Report*, contains a

lengthy article on the opening of the new Dietz & Graves garage on East A Street in Ontario. The article details the new types of machinery to be used at the modern garage, and the fact the garage was open for business. The service “pits” appear as an innovative design whereby equipment and tools were more readily accessible, and the pits themselves were better lighted. These modern design innovations are credited to owners Dietz and Graves.

The Daily Report

November 6, 1923, Page 12

“New Garage Open for Auto Public”

“Splendid Equipment Place in Dietz and Graves’ New Garage in East A Street”

New departure in automobile machine shop equipment that means much to the owner as well as the mechanic has been introduced by Dietz and Graves, recently moved to a modern new building in East A street jut beyond Lemon avenue from the Casa Blanca garage at 405 West A street.

This innovation is found in the floor pits, usually associated with all that is dark and grimy. Not so in the new Dietz and Graves garage.

Innovation in Pits

Here the pits are in a series of three-side by side. Cars are run over them on channel beams, set flush with the floor. All are made so that by the removal of plank sections all of their twenty or thirty feet lengths can be opened and they are so lighted that no electric globes are needed except for the most exact work.

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At the western end of the pits, which is also the western end of the building, a work-bench with rises and other equipment runs the length of the openings below the floor level and means that the machinist need not climb from under the car on which he is working every time he must do a little bench work. This saves time for the mechanic and money for the owner.

Latest in Equipment

The garage is equipped with the latest in labor saving tools and devices and the firm gives particular attention to lathe work, having one of the largest lathes in the city.

The garage entrance is in the center of the new reinforced concrete building now under construction. When completed four stores will occupy the front, with the garage taking up the entire large room in the rear.

The Dietz Garage, as built by Willis E. Bartlett in 1923, was soon sold. The following July 1926 article from the Ontario *Daily Report* records the sale of Willis Bartlett’s two-story concrete building to W. E. Scheu, owner of an orchard heating company in Upland.

Daily Report

July 23, 1926, Page 1

“Downtown Business Block Sold in \$70,000 Cash Deal”

One of the biggest real estate deals made in Ontario in months was revealed today, when it was announced that W. E. Scheu, owner of the Scheu orchard heating company of Upland, had purchased the big two-story concrete business building at 214-220 East A street from Willis E. Bartlett of Glendale.

Total consideration involved is estimated at approximately \$70,000, and in exchange

Bartlett received a 20-acre grove on Archibald avenue and the Arrow route, Cucamonga district, and a cash consideration.

The business building, which is now occupied by the Clark Brothers' automobile agency and the Dietz & Graves garage, is located almost directly across the street from the new \$173,000 Hotel Ontario.

It is a modern building and but a few years old.

E. O. Bowden and H. O. Blohm of the Upland Realty & Insurance company made the deal.

The reasoning behind the 1926 sale is unknown, but the transaction appears to have been to the advantage of both parties. If the article in the *Ontario Daily Report* is to be believed, Bartlett made a nice return on his investment, and Scheu added a modern and rented commercial property to his investment portfolio directly across the street from the newest hotel in the City of Ontario. In the late-1920s, the Dietz garage was one profitable property.

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Circa 1940 View of Dietz Garage Facade
Photo Credit: Pannone Collection

DIETZ GARAGE: ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Dietz Garage is located at 214 East Holt Boulevard, City of Ontario, and it is built on Lot 3 and Lot 4, Block 51, Town of Ontario. The Dietz Garage city block is bounded by Holt Boulevard (originally A Street) on the north, Transit Street on the south, Lemon

Avenue on the west, and Plum Avenue on the east. The main (north) elevation of the Deitz Garage fronts on Holt Boulevard. The east and west elevations are “blind,” or without articulation. The rear (south) elevation fronts onto Lot 9, Block 51, Town of Ontario, and this lot is currently under the same ownership as Lots 3 and 4. Lots 9 and 10 were historically used to provide alternate access to the building and as parking for vehicles towed and/or under repair.

The building is simply designed and detailed, and is a minimal example of a combination of the Spanish Colonial and Mediterranean Revival architectural styles which were both highly popular throughout southern California beginning in the early 1920s. It is built in a nearly square building plan, and is of reinforced concrete construction with a wood truss roof with sawtooth skylights. The building has a two story building mass fronting on Holt Boulevard, and one story building mass to the rear, each forming separate but connected building components. It has a one story large garage to the rear, and a two story storefront and residential unit fronting on Holt Boulevard. The garage is accessed by a centrally located drive-thru first floor entrance off of Holt Boulevard. The building has a combined 15,990 square feet of floor space. It was designed as an interesting combination of rental spaces including the garage (primary rental), street level shops with showcase windows fronting on Holt Boulevard, and rental apartments in the second story directly above the shops.

The main (north) elevation first floor consists of two arched entryways leading to the second story apartments at the extreme west and east ends of the facade. The arches at

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each of the doorways are extended in height to reach the height of each of the four plate glass showcase windows. The facade was originally designed with four identical retail rental spaces, each defined by a flat-curved entry area comprised of a single doorway, two flat plate glass window panels, and a leaded glass skylight above. Each window has a narrow band of decorative concrete defining the exterior boundary of the showcase window/entry. A centrally located and open flat-curved entry provides drive-through access to the one story garage at the rear of the building. The garage entry has a similar narrow band of decorative concrete defining the exterior boundary of the entry. Two metal “bullet” guards protect the street level driveway entry corners. The entry acts as a “tunnel” leading to the repair shop at the rear of the building. Glass windows on each side of the entry tunnel provide views of each flanking shop space and serve to help light the interior driveway. Each of the first story articulated features are identical in height. The main/north elevation second story consists of two small apartment bathroom windows at the extreme west and east ends of the facade, with six additional metal casement windows across. Four of the second story windows are double-casement and two are single casement. Each of the second story articulated features are identical in height. A red tile slant roof is at the parapet level. Historically, there were six apartments in the second story, or three on each side of the building.

The east and west elevations are not articulated, consisting of flat concrete wall surfaces. The rear (south) elevation has a large and centrally located sliding metal door leading directly to the original automobile garage repair area. Two windows flank each side of the doorway opening, providing additional light to the interior of the garage. The garage

space originally consisted of two large pits or service bays, and a machine shop. The pits included stairs leading down to the floor of the service bay. These pits represented themselves as a highly “modern” technical innovation in the early 1920s.

The roof of the Dietz Garage is flat, and it is divided into three major components. The first, the garage roof, has two large sawtooth skylights that run the width of the building. A low wall defines the boundary between the garage and the shop/residential portions of the building. The second roof component consists of two similar but smaller skylights set directly behind the two story residential space, providing additional natural light to the first floor. Access to this roof area is provided by two doorways leading off of the second story apartment hallway. The third roof component consists of a flat roof over the second story residential space.

The Dietz Garage has been altered in the following manner. Historically both Lot 9 and Lot 10, which front on Transit Street, were utilized to park automobiles and tow trucks, and, at one point in time as a used car lot operated in association with the garage. Neither of these two lots were under the same ownership at the time that the garage was built, and it must be assumed that some type of lease agreement must have been reached with both owners. In the mid-1940s, Lot 9 was purchased by the Scheu family to create the existing Dietz Garage property ownership profile of Lots 3, 4, and 9, Block 51, Town of Ontario. The exterior of the main (north) elevation has been altered by the removal of the historic “Garage” sign over the main entry, the installation of two new wood doorways leading to the apartments at each end of the elevation (originally open with no doorway), and by the

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destruction of both of the plate glass showcase shop windows and doorways by fire. The entire east half of the two story portion of the building has been damaged by a fire. Both of the interior retail spaces are burned and gutted and the three apartments above are heavily damaged. In addition, the second story apartment level was undergoing remodeling prior to the fire. This remodeling involved the removal of several interior, non-load bearing walls, and the creation of new and larger interior spaces. The garage area has been altered by the filling-in of the original repair pits, and the removal of a gasoline pump near the large sliding door in the rear (south) elevation. Finally, the large and centrally located sliding metal door at the rear of the building is not the original door. In summary, the exterior and interior spaces of the Dietz Garage have been altered by fire and by various remodeling over time. The building, however, does appear to retain approximately 70% of its original design and “as built” integrity. The structural condition of the post-fire building is presently unknown.

In summary, the Dietz Garage appears visually as a rather unremarkable representation of the Spanish Colonial and Mediterranean Revival architectural styles, but the building does retain sufficient exterior design integrity to serve as a minimally representative example of the style. Of more importance than design quality, however, is the fact that the Dietz Garage is a highly unique design layout combining industrial (garage), commercial (retail spaces), and residential (apartments) uses. This is an extremely rare design configuration, making the Dietz Garage a rare example of this type in southern California, and a unique example of this type in the City of Ontario.

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