



**LA-MÁS ANNUAL REPORT:
2015**

In 2014, LA-Más relocated to the neighborhood of Frogtown, Los Angeles. Since that time, we've completed over 15 projects, designed over 30 workshops, and facilitated 9 community builds. We've also worked with over 50 small businesses to create pedestrian friendly environments. We did all this because we believed in an alternative approach to developing urban projects, by investing our efforts at the community scale. Two of our long-term projects grappled with complex topics of inclusive economic development and greater housing affordability because we believe in long-term systemic change.

Of the eight projects in the office in 2015, five of our projects are located in the public right of way. We are passionate about creating a body of work that redefines the boundaries and limitations to public space and blurs the lines between public and private. Unlike the traditional field of architecture, we believe that the future of our public spaces is not led with buildings and design interventions, but rather by a focus on what it takes to build a sustainable and inclusive community.

Because there is no one field of expertise required to navigate the complexity and bureaucracy embedded in transforming our urban environments, we rely heavily on our cross-disciplinary expertise and strong partnerships with fellow community-based organizations. As a reflection of our continued commitment to problem solving beyond any one discipline, Elizabeth and Helen became Co-Executive Directors in 2015.

As we begin 2016, we look forward to countless sunburns, endless tacos, and trips to Home Depot or City Hall. We are excited by the possibilities of future partnerships and emergent issues that are indicative of our shared values as a team. Most importantly, we are humbled by all the support we have received in the past year and look forward to more collaboration in the year to come.

Elizabeth Timme & Helen Leung
Co-Executive Directors





OUR MISSION

LA-Más is a cross-disciplinary non-profit community design organization. We define design as a process that is intentional, iterative, and implementable. We are passionate about social equity and how our work collectively can translate into social good.



OUR TEAM



Elizabeth Timme
Co-Executive Director



Helen Leung
Co-Executive Director



Stacey Rigley
Director of Operation



Ross Hansen
Fabrication Manager



Sal Vargas
Junior Designer



Andrew Sieger
Project Manager



Nikki Polizzotto
Planning Fellow



Alyssa Lopez
Engagement Fellow



Petey Rigley
Office Dog





OUR BOARD

Mia Lehrer
President
Mia Lehrer + Associates

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Victor Jones
Principal
Fievre Jones

Alexis Tsotsis
Sloan Fellow
Stanford University

Edwin Valencia
Consultant
Arroyo Strategy



OUR GEOGRAPHY



OUR PARTNERS

COUNCILMAN
@JOEBUSCAINO

www.LA15TH.com



KOREATOWN YOUTH+
COMMUNITY CENTER



A+D

ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN
MUSEUM > LOS ANGELES



Felipe Fuentes

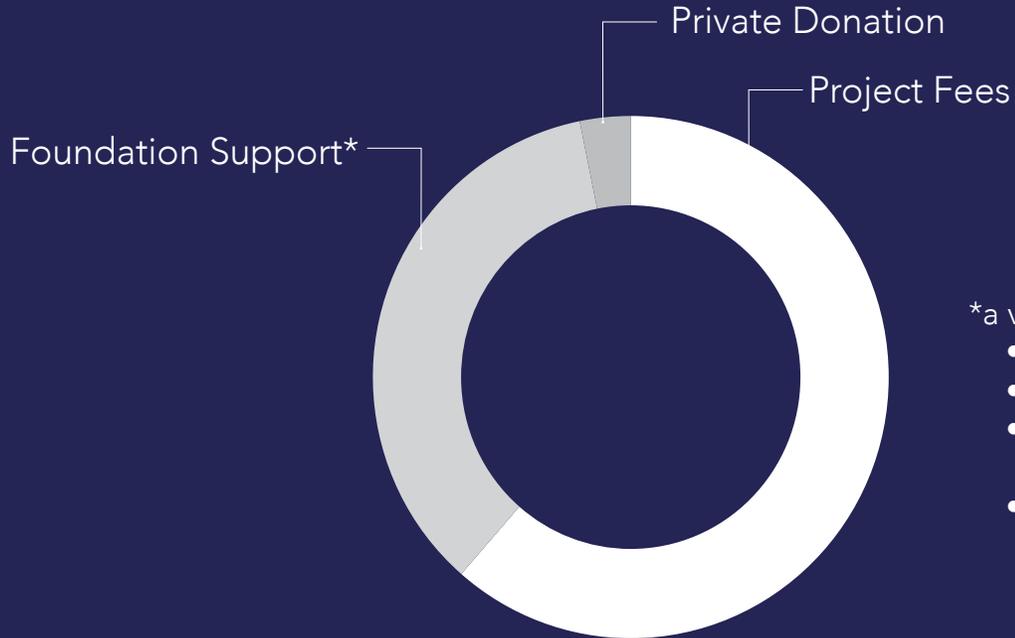
Councilmember of the Seventh District



ACE CENTER



OUR FUNDING



- *a very special thanks to:
- Hegardt Foundation
 - Goldhirsh Foundation
 - Southern California Development Forum
 - Julia Meltzer + David Thorne



OUR PROJECTS





HAYDEN ST

100%
100%
100%

Special
BACON & SAUSAGES
EGGS
PANCAKES
HASH BROWN or FRIED

RECEIVED

GREAT STREET INITIATIVE, RESEDA BLVD.

To support Mayor Garcetti's first executive directive, we transformed car-centric Reseda Boulevard in Northridge into a pedestrian friendly street with the intent of highlighting local history and supporting small businesses.

Through an iterative design process with the community, we built a strong system of local partnerships to pilot and sustain the City's first plywood-based street furniture and patterned sidewalk. Today, you can enjoy 50+ pieces of custom-built mid-century modern inspired furniture, patterned sidewalks and under-awning art that continues to encourage locals and visitors alike to shop, sit, eat, and connect. The community itself has rebranded this initiative RE[visit] RE[seda].





CAR
AUDIO
ALARM

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THE
CITY OF
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INCOME TAX
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TABLET
STREET

NO
LEFT
TURN

ASSAG

GLOBAL ELECT
PLASMA TV-DIGITAL VIDEO
CELLULAR PHONES-CAR AUDIO

RE[VISIT] RE[SEDA] TRANSFORMATIVE STAGE

As part of Mayor Garcetti's Great Streets Challenge Grant, we partnered with the collaborative RE[visit] RE[seda] to help program the corridor with small business events. The project is formed around a series of community led performance and artistic activities created to bring attention to the many businesses along Reseda Blvd.

LA-Más created a custom designed and transformative stage that is collapsible and modular, which can be used as a backdrop for a street theatre performance, a temporary art gallery display space, sidewalk movie screening, or local pop-up business or product demonstration.



FINDINGS

Participants of Futuro de Frogtown saw the Q Conditions process as an important 'make-or-break' moment in the larger discursive history of Elysian Valley. To understand the different perspectives from a diverse community of interests, we have organized key community interactions and exchanges in this section under six topics.

BBO OPEN HOUSE

Insight-finding exercise.

LET'S Embrace
and Encourage the
Respectives in our
neighborhood

Let's add
more playground
equipment

SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND?
SHARE IT! CONCERNS OR IDEAS

The Stop Sign On
Blake And Dallas St Is
Constantly Ignored By Motorist
Too Many People Just Keeps Going
Don't Even Stop. I Nearly Got Into
An Accident Recently. I Would For
The Stop Signs To Be More Visible
And Enforced.

- Ben W

SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND?
SHARE IT! CONCERNS OR IDEAS

It hope this
neighborhood just keeps
getting better, and the
developments are thoughtful
and creative ones.

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SHARE IT! CONCERNS OR IDEAS

FUTURO DE FROGTOWN

In the summer of 2014, we launched a project to engage the residents of Frogtown, the colloquial name for Elysian Valley, to discuss their vision for what they would like to see or not see in their community as it inevitably changes.

The project aimed to bring uncensored local perspectives on land use policy and provide a roadmap of actionable strategies. After a series of six iterative, site-based, topic specific workshops that engaged developers and property owners on the possibilities of change, the Futuro de Frogtown report was released in both English and Spanish in March of 2015.





SHELTER: RETHINKING HOW WE LIVE IN LOS ANGELES

As part of the inaugural exhibition for the Architecture + Design Museum's new home in the Arts District, our multi-part exhibit explored the potential of promoting greater housing affordability through the use of backyard space and secondary units in Elysian Valley along the Los Angeles River.

Inspired by our Futuro de Frogtown project, this alternative strategy for resident-led affordable housing combined cooperative development, combined entitlements, and consolidated service to address issues of unpermitted and unrealized housing, especially in low density communities. This exhibit has inspired conversation on policy changes that make it easier to build secondary units in Los Angeles.



ELYSIAN VALLEY

LOCAL JOB FAIR / FERIA DE TRABAJO

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31ST, 2015

3:00 - 5:00 PM

3051 N. Coolidge Avenue (next to LA River)

*Meet local employers and
trick-or-treat with your
neighbors!*

*¡Conoce empleadores
locales y disfruta golosinas
con sus vecinos!*



ELYSIAN VALLEY HIRES LOCALLY

As Elysian Valley faces new development and economic activity, we want to ensure that local talent can be matched with the new short-term and permanent jobs available in the community – a strategy featured in our Futuro de Frogtown report.

In partnership with the Elysian Valley Neighborhood Watch and Terra River LLC, we hosted the community's inaugural local job fair at our new office. The event was a success with great community participation, representation from over 10 local companies, and a series of resume/interview workshops. Next year, LA-Más intends to work closely with the northeast WorkSource Center to develop a neighborhood specific job matching system.





ÉCOLE BEATRICE

École Beatrice is a school in Petit Goave, Haiti that LA-Más designed in partnership with structural engineering support from Burro Happold. We completed construction drawings in spring of 2015. The design is a reinterpretation of the vernacular architecture of Haiti, commonly referred to as Ginger Bread Houses.

This campus can also be operated completely off-grid in the case of emergency and uses natural ventilation throughout all buildings. Within four buildings, there are 14 classrooms that have been designed in a flexible manner and can accommodate a range of class sizes. The modular designs allows for the school to easily adapt as it grows.





Top: Fig. 14 Existing Alley in Boulder Ave. Plan.

Right: Fig. 16 Proposed Green Alley in Boulder Ave. Plan.



PACOIMA URBAN GREENING PLAN

Pacoima residents have long expressed desires for enhanced public infrastructure investments, especially improved pedestrian experiences, increased green space, and community programming. In a community driven and collaborative process, LA-Más was a partner in creating this vision plan – a project led by Pacoima Beautiful.

Our team conducted research and analysis in Pacoima to identify which projects and sites were most feasible for improvements given community feedback. LA-Más also created renderings of the transformed spaces, using both the practical considerations and creative expertise of the team, as well as designed the final plan.





PACOIMA STREET VALUES

As part of Mayor Garcetti's Great Streets Challenge Grant, Pacoima Street Values is a short-term project with a long-term vision to support the informal activities along Van Nuys Blvd in Pacoima. Our goal is to support local businesses and the community by identifying, encouraging, and enhancing the positive activities that shape the core and culture of the community.

In partnership with Pacoima Beautiful, we worked with five diverse local businesses to create amenities that support existing business and pedestrian needs. The design and fabrication of these amenities will be available to the public and unveiled at CicLAvia in March of 2016.





END

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ANY TIME

NO STOPPING
ANY TIME

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So... Real
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UNTO 2
PARTY

PICO-UNION STREET ENDS

After decades of neglect, neighbors wanted to see the planters along Pico Blvd street ends transformed into a welcoming community space. The community wanted to maintain the pedestrian atmosphere that these planters can facilitate, rather than returning the street to cars.

In partnership with the Koreatown Youth & Community Center, LA-Más worked with the community to design planters to reflect the character of the Pico-Union neighborhood. After many community workshops and a successful build day featuring the extraordinary help of many local students and residents, the street ends are now bright fixtures for Pico-Union.





ON AVALON IN WILMINGTON

To enhance the safety, experience, and vitality of Avalon Boulevard – On Avalon featured an intensive community engagement process, the results of which have shaped a Project Roadmap with permanent projects planned for 2016. Our pilot projects were a platform for informal community conversations and featured low cost solutions that represent the potential for high-impact and long-term change.

With support from Council District 15, LA-Más ensured this project engaged the community every step of the way, including a small business open house, youth-led corridor tour, a local design competition, and community programming. The result was a project roadmap for Avalon Boulevards that serves as a action plan for implementation.





WIKI ALTERNATIVES

WIKI ALTERNATIVES

WIKI ALTERNATIVES

LA-MÁS NEW HOME

We have moved our office! After a year and a half in a beautiful warehouse along LA River in Elysian Valley, our former office is transforming into a mixed-use, mixed income creative campus. Our team completed tenant improvements to an old house right next door – rumored to have once been a weed shop, halfway house, and James Brown's recording studio.

Today, we have a dedicated workshop, an open working environment, a conference room, and hopefully next year – a second floor lounge where friends will be welcome to work with us!



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



Inaugural Fundraiser

After two and a half years of being around, we celebrated our partners with an inaugural fundraiser at our offices. We were humbled by the 150+ people who joined us to drink micheladas, eat ice cream, take photos, and most importantly connect with one another.



SXSW Eco: Place by Design

We had the opportunity to present our work with the Great Streets Initiative along Reseda Boulevard as a finalist for SXSW Eco's Place by Design competition. Our Co-Executive Director, Helen Leung, presented in Austin with four other urban design initiatives taking place in cities throughout the US.



Shelter Salon

As part of our A+D Museum exhibit, we organized a salon style discussion that explored secondary units from the perspective of policy, development, and design. We gathered a dynamic group of leaders that inspired passionate discussion regarding secondary units.





1: ICONS OF EL

Valley in context with its surroundings, a community of
Valley en contexto con su entorno, una comunidad d



2016- WHAT'S NEXT?

Small Business Concierge Service

As part of the On Avalon project in Wilmington, LA-Más will be prototyping a small business concierge service to support existing businesses and attract new investment. Services will range from façade improvements to business planning and financial support.

Secondary Units Prototyping

We firmly believe that secondary units could become a meaningful strategy to create greater housing affordability in Los Angeles. In partnership with Mark Valliantos of Occidental College, we've convened cross-sector leaders in an informal salon gathering to discuss strategies from a policy, financial and design perspective. We hope to prototype a secondary unit in 2016.

Rio Vista Murals

In partnership with the LA River Corporation, we will be designing three murals on three street ends in Elysian Valley. One of these murals will be on the walls of our office. Stay tuned for a community paint day in April 2016.

