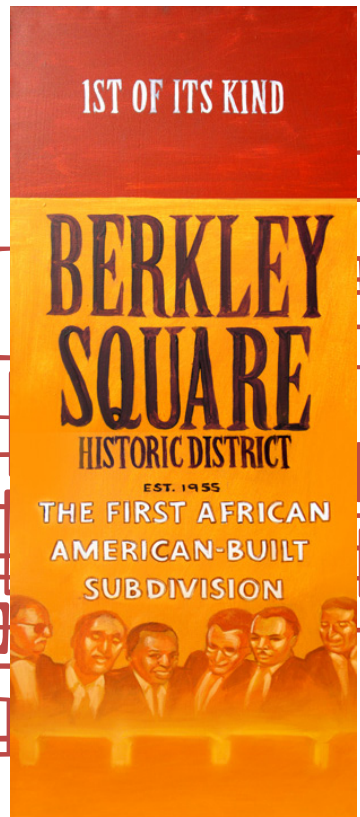
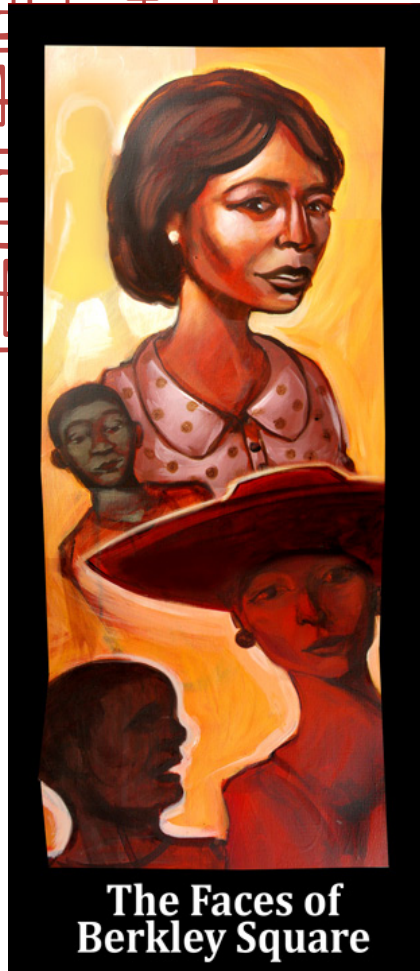


# Berkley Square

## Historic District



Early residents were from all walks of life, including casino, retail and industry workers, civic leaders, community advocates, doctors and entertainers. Early families included the McMillans, Wests, Jordans, Ottos, Leonards, Marshalls, McNeils, Haynes and Glasscos. Many homes are inhabited by the original owners' families.

In 2012, the city of Las Vegas received funding from the Las Vegas Historic Preservation Commission and the Commission for the Las Vegas Centennial to design and install bronze plaques and banners recognizing the historic neighborhood. With help from Berkley Square residents, local artist Joseph Watson designed the banners with the purpose of educating the community about the history of the neighborhood and its residents.

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of recognition and preservation.



Phone: (702) 229-6301 • Fax: (702) 474-7463

[www.lasvegasnevada.gov/hp](http://www.lasvegasnevada.gov/hp)

The historic Berkley Square Neighborhood is the first subdivision to be built in Nevada by and for African-American residents of Las Vegas. It was designed in 1949 by Paul R. Williams, an internationally-known African-American architect from Los Angeles. The Berkley Square Historic District is part of the larger Berkley Square Neighborhood Association, which includes the Sunset Manor subdivision to the north. The neighborhood is home to many original residents and their families, as well as new families of all backgrounds.



The Berkley Square neighborhood was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2009 for its association with the civil rights movement in Las Vegas and architect Paul R. Williams. Williams (1894-1980) was the first African-American to be elected a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. He was known for his upscale residential designs for Hollywood entertainers, as well as his efficient small house designs. A local example of Williams' work is the La Concha Motel Lobby, which now serves as the visitor's center for the Neon Museum in downtown Las Vegas.



The Berkley Square Historic District is located in Historic West Las Vegas between G and D streets on the west and east, and Byrnes and Leonard avenues on the north and south. The neighborhood was designed according to Federal Housing Administration (FHA) standards of the day, which included treatments for traffic and pedestrian safety such as limited access points and sidewalks separated from the streets by a grass strip. The district includes 148 contemporary, ranch-style homes constructed in 1954 and 1955. Models included variations in roof style, porches and carports, façade finishes, windows and doors. Original roofs were covered in white rock, which was popular in the 1950s and 1960s. The integrity of the community is a testament to the care taken in its planning, design and development.



The push for development began with African-American community activists and civic leaders including financier and namesake Thomas L. Berkley from Oakland, CA. Berkley was a distinguished attorney, media owner, developer, civil rights advocate and a frequent guest at the White House during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. Other financiers included Edward A. Freeman and J. J. Byrnes from Los Angeles. The developer was Leonard A. Wilson of Las Vegas who hired Harry L. Wyatt of the Las Vegas firm Burke and Wyatt to supervise construction. Massie L. Kennard, a Las Vegas civil rights leader, was the real estate agent.