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2015 MOCA REAL ESTATE ACQUISITION, 2018
Donor plaque

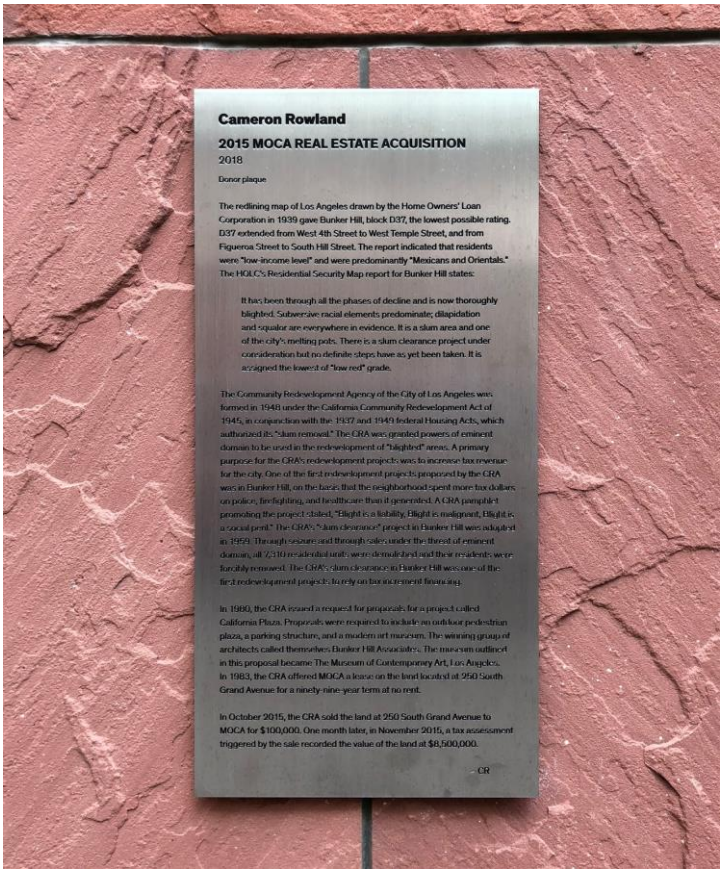
The redlining map of Los Angeles drawn by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation in 1939 gave Bunker Hill, block D37, the lowest possible rating. D37 extended from West 4th Street to West Temple Street, and from Figueroa Street to South Hill Street. The report indicated that residents were "low-income level" and were predominantly "Mexicans and Orientals." The HOLC's Residential Security Map report for Bunker Hill states:

> It has been through all the phases of decline and is now thoroughly blighted. Subversive racial elements predominate; dilapidation and squalor are everywhere in evidence. It is a slum area and one of the city's melting pots. There is a slum clearance project under consideration but no definite steps have as yet been taken. It is assigned the lowest of "low red" grade.

The Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles was formed in 1948 under the California Community Redevelopment Act of 1945, in conjunction with the 1937 and 1949 federal Housing Acts, which authorized its "slum removal." The CRA was granted powers of eminent domain to be used in the redevelopment of "blighted" areas. A primary purpose for the CRA's redevelopment projects was to increase tax revenue for the city. One of the first redevelopment projects proposed by the CRA was in Bunker Hill, on the basis that the neighborhood spent more tax dollars on police, firefighting, and healthcare than it generated. A CRA pamphlet promoting the project stated, "Blight is a liability, Blight is malignant, Blight is a social peril." The CRA's "slum clearance" project in Bunker Hill was adopted in 1959. Through seizure and through sales under the threat of eminent domain, all 7,310 residential units were demolished and their residents were forcibly removed. The CRA's slum clearance in Bunker Hill was one of the first redevelopment projects to rely on tax increment financing.

In 1980, the CRA issued a request for proposals for a project called California Plaza. Proposals were required to include an outdoor pedestrian plaza, a parking structure, and a modern art museum. The winning group of architects called themselves Bunker Hill Associates. The museum outlined in this proposal became The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. In 1983, the CRA offered MOCA a lease on the land located at 250 South Grand Avenue for a ninety-nine year term at no rent.

In October 2015, the CRA sold the land at 250 South Grand Avenue to MOCA for $100,000. One month later, in November 2015, a tax assessment triggered by the sale recorded the value of the land at $8,500,000.


Cameron Rowland
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