

Palisades del Rey, California

Palisades del Rey (also, **Palisades Del Rey**) was a 1921 neighborhood land development by Dickinson & Gillespie Co. that later came to be called the *Playa del Rey* district of Los Angeles County, California.^[1] It lay at an elevation of 135 feet (41 m).^[1] All of the houses in this area were custom built, many as beach homes owned by Hollywood actors and producers, including Cecil B. DeMille, Charles Bickford, and others.

A southern portion of Playa del Rey became known as **Surfridge**.^{[2][3][4]} It was south of the current remaining area of Playa del Rey and north of El Segundo and immediately west of the perimeter of Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). The area is bounded on the east by LAX, on the north by Waterview and Napoleon streets, on the south by Imperial Highway, and on the west by Vista del Mar. The beach to the west of the area is Dockweiler State Beach.

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The development

Surfridge was developed in the 1920s and 1930s as "an isolated playground for the wealthy."^[5] In 1925 the developer held a contest to name the neighborhood and awarded the \$1,000 prize to an Angeleno who submitted "Surfridge."^[5] The *Los Angeles Times* wrote that Surfridge was chosen "due to its brevity, euphony, ease of pronunciation ... but above all because it tells the story of this new wonder city."^[5]

Salesmen pitched tents on the sand dunes and sold lots for \$50 down and 36 monthly payments of \$20.^[5] House exteriors could only be stucco, brick or stone; frame structures were prohibited.^[5] Development was slowed by the onset of the Great Depression, but in the early 1930s the wealthy began to buy lots to build large homes.^[5]

The airport

A small airfield opened to the east of Surfridge in 1928. It became a popular location for residents to see air shows.^[5]

The growing number of commercial flights into Los Angeles following World War II meant a higher number of planes flying low over Surfridge. Many residents learned to co-exist with the noise from propeller planes, but jet engines were difficult to ignore.^[5]

Palisades del Rey

Former settlement



Abandoned streets of Palisades del Rey visible to the left of Los Angeles International Airport



Location in California

Coordinates: 33°56′25″N 118°26′16″W﻿ / ﻿33.93750°N 118.43778°W﻿ / 33.93750; -118.43778

Country	United States
State	California
County	Los Angeles County
City	Los Angeles
Elevation ^[1]	135 ft (41 m)

"If you lived in Surfridge prior to the late 1950s, you had to raise your voice a bit when having a conversation. After the jets came, you had to literally stop talking when they took off," said Duke Dukesherer, a business executive who has written about Surfridge's history.^[5]

In the 1960s and 1970s, the area was condemned and acquired by the City of Los Angeles in a series of eminent domain purchases to facilitate airport expansion and to address concerns about noise from jet airplanes. Homeowners were forced to sell their property to the city. Several homeowners sued the city and remained in their houses for several years after the majority of houses were vacated. Eventually all the houses were either moved or demolished.^[6]



Aerial El Segundo and former Surfridge.

Nature preserve

Fences protect the vacant land and old streets are visible along which houses once stood. The area is now the protected habitat for the endangered El Segundo blue butterfly. In 2019 a number of the rare Burrowing Owl were sighted nesting in the preserve.^[7]

Vista Del Mar Park is a small park with a playground and picnic area on Vista Del Mar Boulevard that is open to the public and maintained by the City of Los Angeles.^[8]

External links

- Video: Surfridge and Palisades Del Rey - What Remains
- The remains of a Hollywood playground wiped off the map
- Surfridge: A Los Angeles Ghost Town
- Surfridge Ghosttown Photos, videos, information and links.

References

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3. Waffling article (http://www.jwairfair.com/images/ONCE_VIBRANT_BEACH_COLONY_A_GHOST_TOWN.doc) at JWAirFair.com
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5. Anton, Max. (2013, March 2). *LAX ghost town a home to memories and rare butterflies* (<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-surfridge-20130303,0,283887.story>) The Los Angeles Times.
6. "Los Angeles Ghost Town: At the Hands of LAX" (<http://www.ascjweb.org/309/21111/laurena/Surfridge/mainstory.html>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20130429091919/http://www.ascjweb.org/309/21111/laurena/Surfridge/mainstory.html>) 2013-04-29 at the Wayback Machine
7. Sahagun, Louis (February 17, 2019). "This LAX-adjacent ghost town is now 'priceless coastal real estate' for rare owls" (<https://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-ln-lax-ghost-town-preserve-20190218-story.html>). *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved 18 February 2019.
8. "LA Parks: Vista Del Mar Park" (<https://www.laparks.org/park/vista-del-mar>)

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