

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Hoover, Herbert Jr. & Margaret (Watson) Garden  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

street & number 900 S. San Rafael Avenue (formerly 890 S. San Rafael Avenue)  not for publication  
city or town Pasadena  vicinity  
state California code CA county Los Angeles code 37 zip code 91105

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:  
\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:  
\_\_\_ entered in the National Register \_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_ removed from the National Register  
\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
 Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA  
 County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
 (Check only **one** box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
2	1	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

Historic Designed Gardens in Pasadena

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

**Current Functions**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

LANDSCAPE/Garden

LANDSCAPE/Garden

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

**Materials**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

N/A

foundation: N/A

walls: N/A

roof: N/A

other: \_\_\_\_\_

Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA  
County and State

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### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### **Summary Paragraph**

The Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden is a private residential designed garden built in 1962 to a design by Thomas Church. It is located on South San Rafael Avenue in the southwestern portion of the City of Pasadena. The property is within a hilly, large-lot single-family residential neighborhood and is 1.61 acres in size. The historic portion of the garden wraps around the entire house and is divided into three distinct components: a motor court/entry progression, a formal garden at the southwest corner of the house and a pool area and terraces east of the house. A fourth garden area has been recently added to the east of the pool area. The historic garden includes geometric and curving pathways in brick and pebble pavement, terraces integrated into the architecture of the house, including one with a freestanding shade structure and specialty paving pattern, landscape beds with native and tropical plantings and a small lawn area. There is also a circular swimming pool east of the house surrounded by a stone deck and a "garden house" near the motor court.

The main house is non-contributing to this nomination of the garden, although it may be eligible for listing under another context.

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### **Narrative Description**

The Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden is a private residential designed garden built in 1962 to a design by Thomas Church. It is located on the east side of South San Rafael Avenue, a north-south-oriented street in the southwestern portion of the City of Pasadena, immediately east of its intersection with Hillside Terrace. The property is within a hilly single-family residential neighborhood of large lots, most of which are over one acre in size. The house is roughly in the center of the lot with distinct garden areas on the west, south and east sides of the house. The north side is primarily a service area.

The site is relatively flat, although it is raised above the street and accessed by an upward-sloping curved driveway. The driveway opens to a curving paved motor court surrounded by rose-filled planters created by a solid retaining wall coated in smooth plaster. A permit was issued in 1965 for a "garden house for plants," designed by Homer Pownall, which sits at the northeast corner of the motor court. The garden house is rectangular in plan and has a hipped roof, tongue-and-groove wood walls and steel windows. The house also has unglazed openings of wood lath strips. The main house, designed by Eggers & Wilkman and located east of the motor court, is slightly elevated above the level of the motor court. The house has an irregular plan of intersecting "U" and "L" shapes that create several distinct garden areas surrounding it. The first of these areas is an entry terrace within a "U" shape in the house plan. It is accessed from the motor court by a two separate sets of brick steps with curving raised planters between them. The entry to the house is set within a deeply recessed front porch within the northerly leg of this "U" shape. The entry terrace has herringbone-patterned brick paving framed in the same brick in a stacked-bond pattern as well as large in-ground planting beds with lush plantings.

South of the entry terrace and separated from it by a freestanding solid wall and metal gate is a more formal garden space. This space has a stretcher-bond brick pathway with raised brick edges that forms an elongated octagonal shape with in-ground plantings both within and outside the pathway. A tiered fountain with scalloped basins is in the center planting area and plantings in this area are mostly roses. Freestanding plastered walls define the outer edges of the space; a large mirror with a sculptural silver-colored frame attached to the southerly wall is likely a newer feature of the garden. A pathway to the pool deck and easterly terraces extends from the southeast corner of the rectangular pathway. To a solid wall and metal gate that divides the formal garden from the pool deck. At this point, the pathway transitions to pebble paving, which continues along the outer perimeter of the pool deck.

On the south side of the house is a second "U"-shape in the floor plan of the house, which creates a semi-enclosed side terrace. This terrace includes a freestanding shade structure, a specialty paving pattern and lush in-ground plantings. The shade structure has an octagonal shape in plan that responds to the shape of the pathway in the formal garden described above. It has paired, open metal posts with a diamond pattern between them and an ogee-shaped roof clad in standing-seam metal with a weathervane at the peak. The ceiling within the structure is tongue-and-groove wood strips with exposed curving wood rafters. A starburst paving pattern is created beneath this structure using a three-color

Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA  
County and State

“mosaic” (as described on the original plans) of sand, black and white concrete. This pattern is created within a large octagonal area and includes a central circular shape in pebble concrete, a concentric octagonal shape with elongated triangles extending from each side of the octagon to the edges of the space, all in white concrete, and an outer ring in black concrete. The remaining areas are in sand-colored concrete. A secondary uncovered terrace north of the shade structure has sand-colored concrete framed in pebble paving as well as in-ground planting areas along the perimeter.

Southeast of the semi-enclosed terrace is a pool deck surrounded by a pebble concrete pathway. The pool deck is an octagonal shaped area surrounded by a low plaster wall, with a circular pool at the center of it. It is sunken below the level of the pathways and terraces to the west and north and accessed by pebble concrete steps. The pool itself is also covered in pebble concrete with accents of bright blue ceramic tiles. The deck paving has been changed from the original plan to a compatible new material. A smaller circular spa has been added north of the pool.

A third terrace is at the northeast corner of the property and includes stretcher-bond brick paving with a border of pebble paving and low freestanding and planter walls, including a wall defining a semicircular look-out pad at the northeast corner of the patio. A large tree in a raised planter creates a focal point at the northern end of the space. The eastern end of the garden looks out over views of the Arroyo Seco.

East of the historic garden area, recent terracing of the hillside has allowed for the creation of additional areas for seating and planting, which are non-contributing features. These areas are compatible with but clearly differentiated from the historic garden and are largely made of broken concrete, both stacked to form retaining walls and set in the ground to form pathways and terraces.

Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Landscape architecture

**Period of Significance**

1962-1965

**Significant Dates**

1962 (construction of house and garden)

1965 (construction of garden house)

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Thomas Church

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The garden was constructed in 1962 and only minor changes have occurred to it since that time. A "garden house" was built in 1965.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA  
County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Built in 1962, the Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover garden is a locally significant example of the "California Modern Residential" property type under the context "Residential Garden Design in Pasadena: 1945-1968" documented in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historic Designed Gardens in Pasadena." It is also an example of the work of master landscape architect Thomas Church. It meets National Register criterion C by embodying the distinctive characteristics of the property type and meets registration requirements listed in the Multiple Property Documentation Form.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden is locally significant under Criterion C. Under this criterion, the garden is a notable example of a designed residential garden of the California Modern Residential property type and the work of master landscape architect Thomas Church. The garden exhibits the defining characteristics of the property type including horizontal focus; interlocking geometric planes (in this case, the plan includes juxtaposition of rectangular, octagonal and circular/semi-circular/curving forms); clearly delineated circulation patterns; outdoor rooms; linkages between the architecture and the landscape; terraces; scenic views and vistas; low walls and integrated planters, brick, concrete and pebble paving laid in decorative patterns; a swimming pool; naturalistic and distinctive plantings; and association with a Mid-Century Modern building. The garden retains integrity through its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and feeling and continues to retain essential character-defining features and distinctive characteristics of its period and method of construction. Very little change has been made to the garden since its original construction and it clearly exhibits evidence of techniques employed in residential garden design in the 1960's in Pasadena and clearly expresses the historic sense of this time period.

The house and gardens were built for Herbert Hoover, Jr., son of former U.S. president Herbert Hoover and prominent engineer, radio communications innovator and advisor to foreign governments. When the house was built in 1962, Hoover, Jr. was near the end of his life; he died in 1969. As such, although he is a significant figure in American history, the house and gardens are not associated with the period in which he achieved significance.

**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

N/A – Historic context documented in Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historic Designed Gardens in Pasadena."

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Permit research materials, assessor's records and historic designation reports in files, Planning Department, City of Pasadena (referenced in August 2012).

Environmental Design Archives, University of California at Berkeley, Thomas Church Collection  
([www.ced.berkeley.edu/cedarchives/index.html](http://www.ced.berkeley.edu/cedarchives/index.html)) - referenced in October 2011)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA  
County and State

\_\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_ N/A

### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 0.90  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property is bound by South San Rafael Avenue on the west, the Arroyo Seco on the east and the boundaries of 900 South San Rafael Avenue on the north and south. The Los Angeles County Assessor's Parcel number for the property is 5717-014-010.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries were selected because they encompass the extent of features associated with the Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden.

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kevin Johnson/Planner  
organization City of Pasadena date October 4, 2012  
street & number 175 N. Garfield Avenue telephone (626) 744-7806  
city or town Pasadena state CA zip code 91101  
e-mail kevinjohnson@cityofpasadena.net

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA  
County and State

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

The following is the same for all photographs:

Name of Property: Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
City: Pasadena  
County: Los Angeles  
State: California  
Name of Photographer: Kevin Johnson  
Location of Original Digital Files: 175 N. Garfield Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1. Motor court - Looking southwest from house – taken on October 4, 2012
2. Entry terrace planters & steps - Looking east from motor court – taken on October 4, 2012
3. Entry terrace - Looking south from front porch of house – taken on October 4, 2012
4. Path from entry terrace to formal garden - Looking south from entry terrace steps – taken on October 4, 2012
5. Formal garden - Looking south from formal northwest corner of formal garden space – taken on April 6, 2012
6. Formal garden– Looking northwest from side entry to house – taken on October 4, 2012
7. Formal garden – Looking southwest from side entry to house – taken on October 4, 2012
8. Formal garden fountain detail – Looking southwest from northeast corner of formal garden space – taken on April 6, 2012
9. Shade structure & paths – Looking north from west entry to pool deck – taken on October 4, 2012
10. Shade structure paving pattern – Looking west from south end of shade structure area – taken on October 4, 2012
11. Pool deck – Looking south from spa – taken on October 4, 2012
12. Rear lawn & terrace – Looking north from northeast corner of pool deck – taken on April 6, 2012
13. Rear terrace – Looking north from northeast corner of rear lawn – taken on October 4, 2012
14. Planter & tree at north end of rear terrace – Looking north from center of rear terrace – taken on April 6, 2012
15. Semicircular lookout at rear terrace – Looking northeast from northeast corner of rear terrace– taken on October 4, 2012

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**Property Owner:**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Sam & Dianne Nicholson  
street & number 1001 S. El Centro Street telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town South Pasadena state CA zip code 91030

Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA  
County and State

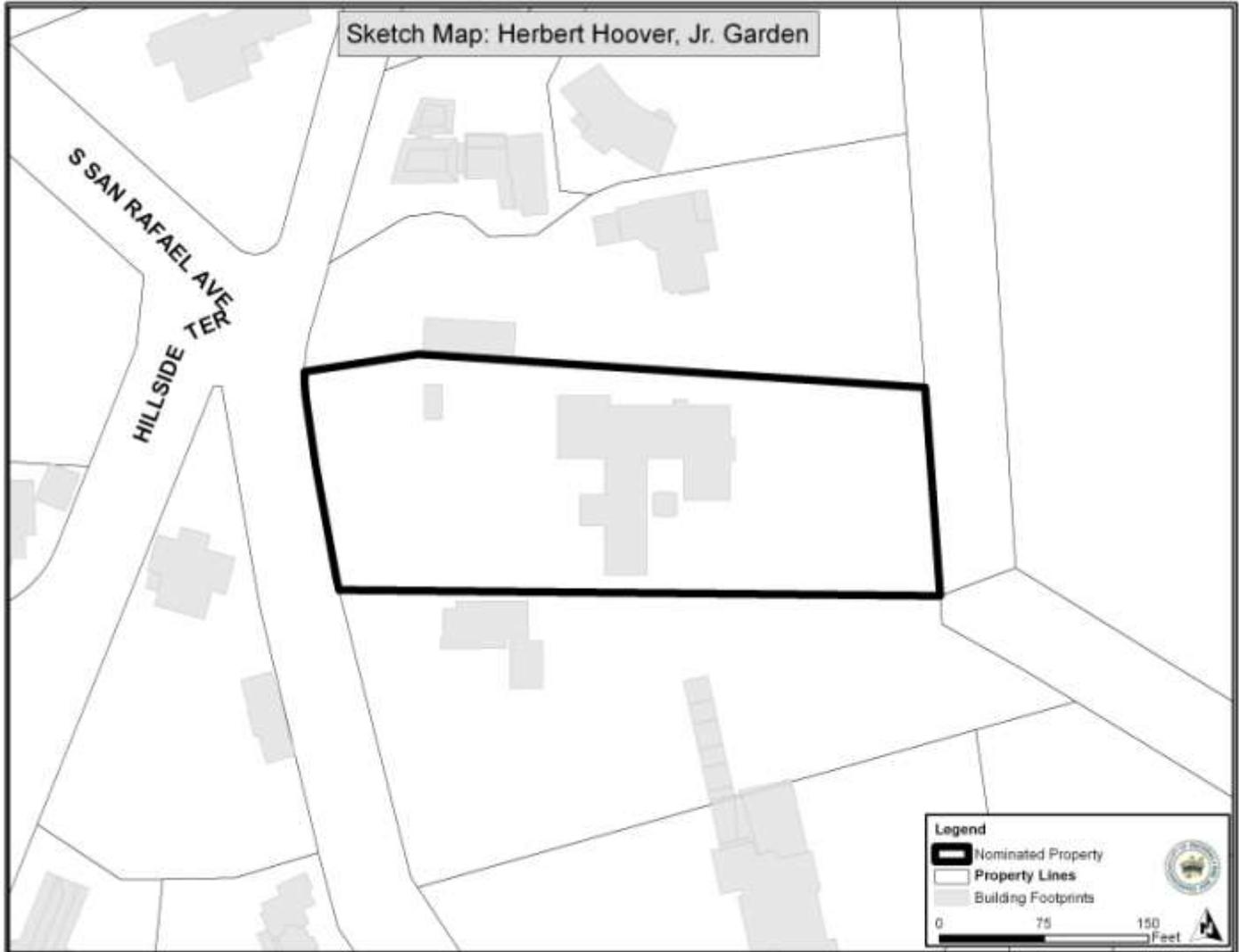
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA  
County and State

**SKETCH MAP**



Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA  
County and State

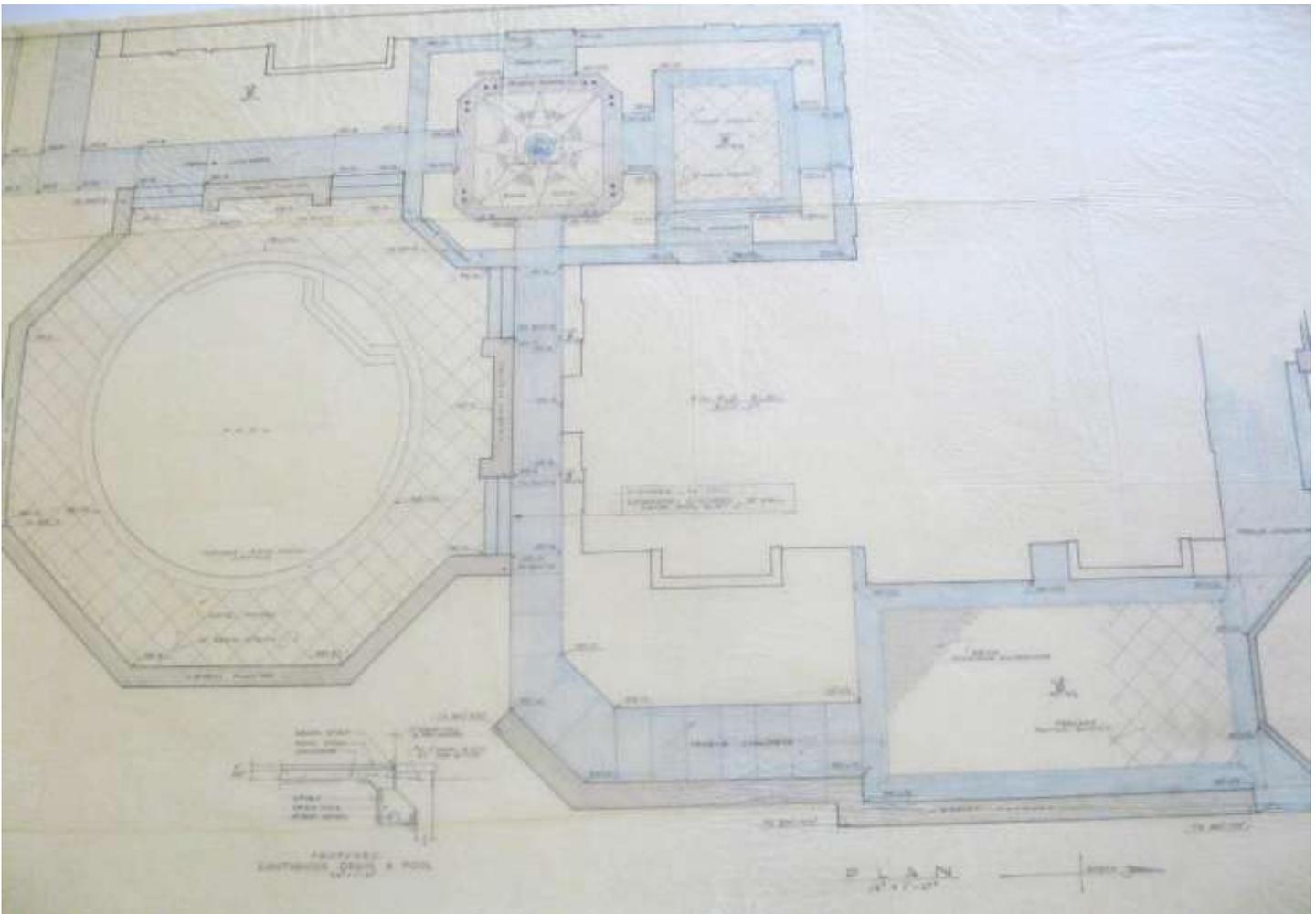
**AERIAL MAP**



Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA  
County and State

**“GRADE & MATERIALS STUDY” OF EAST TERRACES AND POOL DECK, THOMAS CHURCH, 1961**

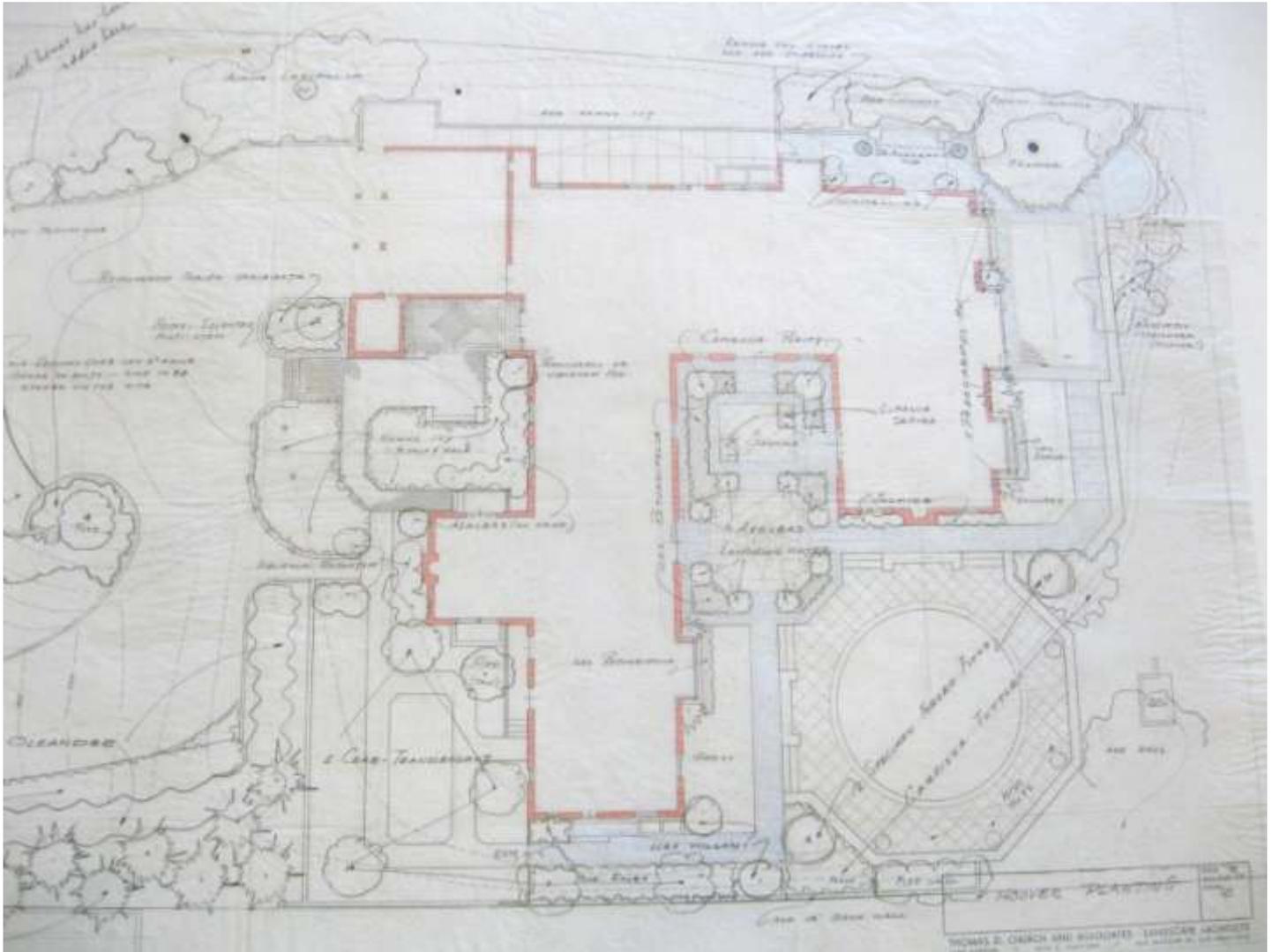


**Source: Environmental Design Archives, College of Environmental Design, University of California Berkeley**

Herbert, Jr. & Margaret Hoover Garden  
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, CA  
County and State

**“PLANTING PLAN,” THOMAS CHURCH, 1961**



Source: Environmental Design Archives, College of Environmental Design, University of California Berkeley