Q: In 1941, at the beginning of World War II, planners in Los Angeles needed a plan to accommodate industry, housing and transportation. Where did they find help?

Fortunately, they were able to turn to a recently completed study funded by the Haynes Foundation. In 1938, three years before the US entry into World War Two, the Haynes Foundation offered to assist the City of Los Angeles in the area of regional planning. The Foundation declined to assume an official title, but offered to aid the City’s efforts through the Foundation’s support of objective and comprehensive research.

The result was a collection of essays from twenty-one social scientists, city officials and other professionals that provided readers with factual data and offered an expert interpretation. This study provided a comprehensive look at current Los Angeles and pointed the way to the future.

Not all of the Haynes studies were directed at professional researchers and government officials. For example, a lively and understandable text about urban planning, “Cities Are For People” was adopted by Los Angeles schools in 1942. “Metropolitan Los Angeles: One Community” and “Metropolitan Los Angeles: Its Governments” both appeared in 1949. Nearly 80 years later, these references still make for interesting reading.