

Appendix B

State of California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 Forms

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6L

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

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*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #1

P1. Other Identifier: Van Ness Avenue and portion of South Van Ness Avenue; Section U.S. Highway 101

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: Van Ness Avenue and South Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94102 and 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Van Ness Avenue between Market Street and North Point Street and South Van Ness Avenue between Mission Street and Market Street.

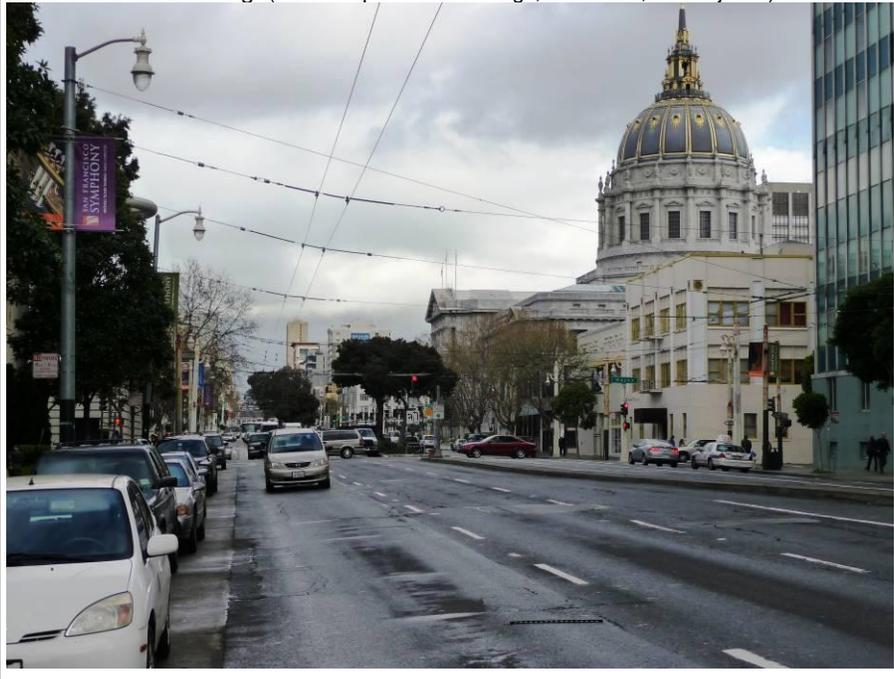
***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

Van Ness Avenue is one of San Francisco's primary north-south transportation corridors. Extending from Market Street at the south to Fort Mason at the north, the thoroughfare runs approximately two miles along the valley between Nob and Russian Hills and Pacific Heights (see Continuation Sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP37: Highway/Trail

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)
Roadway and ancillary streetscape features

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) Southern beginning of Van Ness Avenue, looking north from Market Street, March 9, 2009.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
Established in 1858 under Van Ness Survey, ongoing infrastructural alterations and construction.

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Van Ness Avenue is under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Transportation from Golden Gate Avenue northward and the City of San Francisco from Golden Gate Avenue southward.

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen; Meta Bunse, JRP Historical Consulting LLC, 1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110, Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:** March, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

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*NRHP Status Code 6L

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #1

B1. Historic Name: Marlette Street

B2. Common Name: Van Ness Avenue

B3. Original Use: Transportation Corridor

B4. Present Use: Transportation Corridor

*B5. Architectural Style: Utilitarian

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) Van Ness Avenue was platted in 1858 under the Van Ness Survey. The roadway was originally dirt and was subsequently macadamized until the early twentieth century when modern asphalt pavement of the roadway and sidewalks was extended up the avenue. Asphalt paving was complete by the early 1910s. Municipal Railway tracks were installed in 1914 in the middle of the street from Market to Bay streets, remaining in service until 1950, and then removed in the early 1950s (see Continuation Sheet).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features: Sidewalks, median, trolley/light poles, miscellaneous transportation infrastructure and street furniture including traffic signals, bus shelters, fire hydrants, and vegetation.

B9a. Architect: None

b. Builder: Assorted agencies under the aegis of the City of San Francisco, and the U.S. Highway System

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a

Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that neither Van Ness Avenue, nor the studied portion of South Van Ness Avenue, appears eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because they lack integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000). The corridor has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and is not an historical resource for the purposes of CEQA. (See Continuation Sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes)

B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; San Francisco Chronicle; San Francisco History Center; Online Archive of California; San Francisco Municipal Reports; James Rolph Papers (California Historical Society); *San Francisco Chronicle*; *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*; Tobriner, *Bracing For Disaster* (2006); Richards, *Historic San Francisco* (1991); Lau and Lieber, *The Last Great World's Fair* (2004); Perles, *The People's Railway* (1981); Clarke, *Trust and Power* (2007); Bean, *California* (1968); Caltrans Archives, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Archives.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)

See Continuation Sheet 25 for Sketch Map.

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***P3a. Description: (Continued)**

Established under the Van Ness Survey of 1858, which incorporated the Western Addition into the burgeoning city of San Francisco, the avenue is wider than the adjacent streets, and was surveyed to a width of 125 feet. It currently contains six traffic lanes, divided by discontinuous medians of varying dimension and composition. In addition to being a major San Francisco Street, Van Ness Avenue is part of U.S. Route 101, which runs from Los Angeles to Olympia, Washington. The 101 alignment extends up South Van Ness from Mission Street, and meets Van Ness at Market Street, following the avenue until it turns toward the Golden Gate Bridge at Lombard Street.

The southern end of Van Ness Avenue is anchored by Market Street and the Civic Center National Historic Landmark District (see Figure 1, Continuation Sheet 18). Moving northerly along the avenue, Van Ness has a dense mixed-use character, with residential, entertainment, and commercial construction flanking its length. Scored concrete sidewalks, approximately ten feet in width, line both sides of the street and are punctuated by various types of infrastructure, including light standards/trolley poles, fire hydrants, call boxes, traffic signals, bus shelters, and benches. The infrastructure dates from throughout the twentieth century, with a variety of fire hydrants dating from the early to late twentieth century, as well as call boxes from 1915, and the trolley poles most of which date from 1914, with 1936 brackets and modern luminaires (see Map Reference #2).¹

In 1914 Municipal Rail tracks were constructed in the median of the street and subsequently removed in the 1950s as public transportation moved away from rail toward bus service. No track remains from the original rail system, but approximately 259 trolley poles (discussed above) still line the avenue, extending from Market to North Point Street. Wiring associated with the modernized MUNI Bus Service is affixed to the poles. After the rails were removed medians of various widths with various hard and soft landscaping were installed.

South Van Ness Avenue, which extends in a southerly direction from Market Street was constructed at a later date than Van Ness Avenue. The portion within the study area, extending from Market to Mission, was a new alignment completed in the early 1930s as a means of relieving congestion and better connecting the northern and southern portions of the city. The road is the same width as Van Ness Avenue, however it does not have any median and does not contain the same early Municipal Rail associated trolley poles. Modern sidewalks, street furniture, and other infrastructure are similar to that of Van Ness Avenue.

***B6. Construction History: (Continued)**

An elevated concrete median of varying widths was constructed in segments along the avenue in the years following removal, with some portions wide enough to accommodate vegetation and others only narrow raised ribbons. Several types of ancillary structures line the roadway, most notably approximately 259 trolley poles erected with the original rail tracks in 1914 that have subsequently been utilized as both streetlight poles and mounts for modern electric traffic signs, as well as support for other decorative features such as planters and signage. Other infrastructural equipment and resources include medians, fire hydrants, MUNI bus shelters, and vegetation. Virtually all of these

¹ A 2007 HRER and HPSR discusses some of these elements, but only those found along Van Ness within the Civic Center Historic District: Architectural Resources Group, "Historic Resources Evaluation Report: Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, City of San Francisco, California," prepared by Bridget M. Maley, prepared for Caltrans District 4 and San Francisco Department of Public Works, March 2007; Architectural Resources Group, "Historic Property Survey Report: Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, City of San Francisco, California," prepared for Caltrans District 4 and San Francisco Department of Public Works, October 2007.

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features were constructed and planted in the modern period, although some hydrants, as well as police/fire call boxes date to the early twentieth century. The basic grade and width of the right-of-way has not changed since original construction, with one alteration in 1936 that widened the roadbed and narrowed the sidewalk. This work necessitated the relocation of all of the trolley poles, hydrants, and call boxes further toward the road's periphery. As a heavily travelled transportation corridor, Van Ness Avenue has undergone continuous basic maintenance including paving, sidewalk repair, traffic signal installation, and other miscellaneous infrastructural work.

South Van Ness Avenue has a distinct construction history, beginning when it was completed in the early 1930s to ease traffic congestion and provide a direct link between the northern and southern portions of the city. Initially constructed on condemned land from Market to Mission, South Van Ness was extended several years later further south to Howard, where it overlay the existing Howard Street corridor through the southern portions of the city.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Historic Context

Van Ness Avenue has served as one of the primary arteries in the City of San Francisco throughout its historical development, and this span of time can be broken into four potential periods of significance as both a transportation and aesthetic civic corridor. The first is the original platting of the avenue in 1858 and early urban expansion accompanying its development. The second is the earthquake and fire of 1906 and the subsequent redevelopment and urban reconceptualization of the avenue as an increasingly commercial thoroughfare. The third period revolves around the Panama-Pacific Exposition of 1915 and the role of Van Ness as a nexus between the City Beautiful aims of both the Exposition and the newly reconstructed City Hall and Civic Center. The final potential period of significance is the increasingly central automobile-related role of Van Ness Avenue as a booming "Auto Row" and a modern highway transportation corridor.

The Van Ness Survey and Nineteenth Century Urban Expansion

The 1858 completion of the Van Ness Survey extended the city's original 50-*vara* land division of San Francisco to include the dune covered valley formed between present-day Nob and Russian Hills and Pacific Heights.² City officials envisioned the spine of the substantial acquisition as a comparable north-south arterial that would match Market Street in civic importance. The avenue was thus surveyed to a width of 125 feet, markedly wider than typical San Francisco streets. Originally named Marlette Street after Seneca Hunt Marlette, who had surveyed portions of the Western Addition, the avenue was quickly renamed Van Ness Avenue in honor of the mayor and sponsor of the pivotal urban ordinance. Despite becoming an official part of the city, development was initially slow along Van Ness Avenue, which remained little more than a dirt track through undeveloped swaths of the city. In the 1860s the avenue fell under the gaze of noted landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, who had been commissioned by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to develop a major urban park that would lend the burgeoning city of San Francisco the same stature as eastern cities such as New York with its Central Park. Olmsted envisioned a greenbelt that would center upon Van Ness Avenue rather than a large park. The greenbelt would extend roughly from Duboce Park to Aquatic Park through the protected valley, with small naturalistic areas and enclaves along the way. The plan was rejected by city officials who sought a more traditional park setting in the manner of Central Park; a desire which

² San Francisco Planning Department, "Van Ness Avenue Area Plan," (San Francisco, c.1989). Available online at http://www.sfgov.org/site/planning_index.asp?id=41410.

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ultimately was expressed by the design of William Hammond Hall and John McLaren.³ Throughout the 1860s Van Ness Avenue was slow to develop. Far from the city core, the area was relatively isolated and there was little demand for the lots.⁴ The area's underdeveloped infrastructure may have contributed to the slow pace of settlement along Van Ness: it was not until the early 1870s that portions of Van Ness were macadamized or in some cases graded, and planking of sidewalks and corners only existed in isolated pockets.⁵ By 1872-1873, Van Ness was graded between Sutter and Post streets, Geary and Turk streets, and California and Pine Streets. The boulevard was macadamized at the crossing with Fulton Street, at the crossing of McAllister Street, and at the crossing of Tyler Street. In general, street improvements occurred in segments, with grading, macadamizing, and sidewalk planking undertaken on a largely block-by-block basis. Well into the 1870s, much of Van Ness Avenue to Lombard Street was ungraded and there were but a few buildings located outside of the immediate periphery of Market Street.⁶

As the population of San Francisco soared from a mere 35,000 in 1852 to nearly 300,000 in 1890, a pressing need for additional housing drove housing demand into the Western Addition, including Van Ness Avenue. Speculative builders constructed middle and upper class residences, primarily of wood frame construction with prominent bays, cornices, and elaborate moulded detailing in the popular Italianate and Queen Anne style. Interspersed among this relatively modest middle-class construction were a number of grand residences designed for the city's elite. By the mid-1880s, the wide avenue had evolved into a bastion for many of San Francisco's wealthiest, whose large homes typically occupied several lots on a block. Although Van Ness itself did not have a dedicated cable car line in the nineteenth century, many lines traversed the area, both from east-to-west and north-to-south along portions of Polk Street, parallel and one block east of Van Ness.⁷

Although the avenue was home to many of the city's elite, a striking number of diverse uses flanked the corridor, particularly within its upper reaches. The Fort Mason military reservation was located at the northern terminus of the avenue, on the west side of Van Ness, while the Fontana Company Canned Fruit Warehouse, the former San Francisco Woolen Factory, and the Spring Valley Water Company's Black Point Pumping House stood on the east side at its northern terminus. In the closing years of the nineteenth century, a large greenhouse occupied nearly the entire block between Lombard Street and Chestnut Street along the avenue. Civic and public buildings occupied the middle stretches of Van Ness, transitioning from the residential blocks in the north to the busier central city. Saint Mary's Cathedral filled the corner at O' Farrell Street. Saint Ignatius Church and College stood at Grove Street, established by Jesuits who had arrived in California to minister to gold miners. The Mercantile Library filled the entire block between Golden Gate and Elm Avenue. The extreme southern portion of the avenue was also home to an array of functions, with an animal feed and sale yard at the northeastern corner of Market Street and Van Ness Avenue and other business and clubs radiating throughout the southern blocks of the avenue.⁸

By the turn of the twentieth century Van Ness Avenue stood at far remove from the blowing dunes of the 1858 survey. With the highest echelon of residential wealth bracketed at either end with churches, schools, and industry, the avenue was one of the city's most prominent. San Francisco had expanded up and around the avenue, absorbing

³ San Francisco Board of Supervisors, *San Francisco Municipal Reports 1867-68*, (San Francisco, California: John H. Carmany and Company, 1868), 560-564; Robert Cherny and William Issel, *San Francisco 1865-1932* (Berkeley, California: UC Berkeley Press, 1986) 102-116.

⁴ San Francisco Planning Department, "Van Ness Avenue Area Plan."; Anne Bloomfield, "The Real Estate Associates: A Land and Housing Developer of the 1870s in San Francisco," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. XXVII (1978), 15.

⁵ San Francisco Board of Supervisors, *San Francisco Municipal Report, 1872-1873*, 586, 589, and 595.

⁶ Sanborn Map Company, *Fire Insurance Maps for San Francisco, California* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1886, vol. 2 and 1893, vol. 4).

⁷ San Francisco Planning Department, "Van Ness Avenue Area Plan"; Bloomfield, "The Real Estate Associates," 17.

⁸ Sanborn Map Company, *Fire Insurance Maps for San Francisco, California* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1899, vol. 1 and 1899 vol. 3).

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vast tracts of land and promoting urban expansion through infrastructural improvement and corresponding speculation. Much of this urban expansion was driven by the private sector, with private horse car and cable car interests servicing adjacent streets, private residential developers constructing the flats, and the city's wealthiest building urban enclaves. Civic sponsored improvements largely focused upon grading, paving, cisterns, sewers, and gas lamps, all of which occurred in a largely piecemeal manner. San Francisco Municipal Reports and Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors from the time period contain little reference to the avenue outside of basic infrastructural accounting. The sole exception to this was an 1896 ordinance by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors declaring Van Ness Avenue to be an official city "Boulevard." The Board passed the ordinance in response to a petition from the Van Ness Avenue Improvement Club, and the measure largely served to forbid heavy traffic upon the avenue. Although the Club also sought civic-sponsored trees, shrubs, and plantings in the median and along the sidewalks, historical photographs of the avenue and municipal records indicate that the planting did not occur.⁹ Thus, while the original wide survey of the avenue and the "Boulevard" declaration expressed a continued civic desire for a distinct thoroughfare, the development of the corridor largely occurred within the chaotic context of rampant late-nineteenth century with little or no holistic civic design intent.

The Earthquake of 1906: From Fire Break to Commercial Hub

The substantial width of Van Ness Avenue proved significant both during and just after the Earthquake of 1906. Within fifteen minutes of the shocks, scores of fires caused by lanterns, boilers, gas mains, electrical wires, and damaged chimneys broke out across the city. On Van Ness Avenue, a 30-inch gas main running under the street burst, reportedly sending bituminous pavement flying high into the air. Although the scope and ferocity of the conflagration across the city was unprecedented, San Francisco's Fire Chief, Dennis Sullivan, had laid the foundation for establishing Van Ness Avenue as a fire line even before the earthquake. In the wake of Baltimore's disastrous 1904 fire, the chief had established that the wide expanse of Van Ness Avenue and Market Street as firebreaks in the event of a citywide outbreak.¹⁰ Volunteers, city fire fighters, and troops under the leadership of General Frederick Funston took a consolidated stand along Van Ness Avenue. The fire primarily burned up to the east side of the avenue, with only the lower portions near Market catching fire on both sides. To prevent the flames from spreading, undamaged buildings along the east side were blasted by the army, reducing mansions to smoldering piles. The desperate measures proved effective, and the fire was stopped on April 20th in this part of the city, having jumped the width of Van Ness Avenue in only isolated areas.

Although much of the avenue lay in ruins, Van Ness emerged from the four day inferno relatively intact in comparison to the ravaged Market Street corridor. The western side of Van Ness and the upper northeastern portion of the thoroughfare near present-day Fort Mason and the Aquatic Park remained untouched by the fire.¹¹ Because much of Van Ness escaped severe damage it was immediately targeted for new residential and commercial development as the city quickly sought to rebuild. The area was the center of a speculative boom in the weeks and months following the disaster, as businesses sought temporary quarters and commercial interests sought profits from a frenzy of leasing activity.¹² Between 1906 and 1909, a striking number of residents and businesses moved to Van

⁹ "Designs for the City's Building," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 10, 1896; "Developing the Outside Districts," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 13, 1896.

¹⁰ Stephen Tobriner, *Bracing For Disaster: Earthquake-Resistant Architecture and Engineering in San Francisco 1838-1933* (Berkeley, California: Heyday Books, 2006), 136-138.

¹¹ San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection, "St. Brigid's Church, on Van Ness Ave., after the 1906 earthquake," black & white photographic print, 1906; 1899 Sanborn Insurance Map, vol. 3, 262; Tobriner, *Bracing for Disaster*, 142-146.

¹² "Speculation Stops in Buying Real Property," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 27, 1909.

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Ness Avenue and along with Fillmore Street to the west, Van Ness became San Francisco's premier commercial and economic hub, supplanting the devastated areas of downtown.¹³

In addition to a burgeoning retail trade, Van Ness also became a central entertainment venue for the dislocated city. The Van Ness Theater was erected at Van Ness and Grove in 1907 and was one of the city's most prized entertainment venues until its demolition in 1910. Other more prosaic uses also clambered to the area, including Eddie Graney's blacksmith shop and Samuels Lace House, both of whom rapidly established quarters following the earthquake.¹⁴ Numerous refugee shacks also appeared in the new commercial center as those made homeless by the disaster moved to Van Ness and its surrounding streets, often causing consternation amongst surrounding property owners.¹⁵

Notable infrastructure improvements accompanied the wave of commercial and new residential settlement along the avenue. The intensive reconstruction following the earthquake highlighted the need for uniform paving, which had only existed in isolated pockets and was a mixture of cobble, stone, and macadam prior to the earthquake. This varied paving material was damaged by the earthquake, and observers noted that parts of the avenue were, "cut up like a country road, the dust being very deep and horses having to strain to pull loads over it."¹⁶ Asphalt paving occurred in segments, with portions paved by an assortment of contractors on a block-by-block basis. The paving of Van Ness was largely complete by 1911. Contracts had also been completed for reinforced concrete fire cisterns along the avenue, located underground at the Van Ness intersections of Golden Gate Avenue, Washington Street, Octavia Street, Laguna Street, and Market Street. Improvements in the 1910s also included the extension of underground sewer lines and telephone conduit up the avenue, as the increased business and residential population required these increasingly standard metropolitan amenities.¹⁷ Although Van Ness Avenue was a locus of redevelopment and infrastructural improvement, the changes done on the avenue mirrored developments occurring all over the city, as officials oversaw a massive rebuilding campaign that included the extension of grading, paving and sidewalk work, as well as installation of fire hydrants, street lights, rail lines, sewers, and telephone conduits.

The emergence of Van Ness Avenue as a central economic and social hub was short-lived. Much of the commercial development along the avenue was considered a temporary expedient, and as conditions in the traditional business and retail core of the city improved, many businesses flooded back to newly constructed or repaired quarters. The local press commented on the exodus, noting that "although for a time it was believed the retail district would remain permanently in the Western Addition," the force of the "Downtown Movement" proved too great.¹⁸ In several short years, the identity of Van Ness Avenue had been dramatically uprooted and changed again, leaving a broad avenue in flux. "What Van Ness may become in the future can probably not be imagined," wrote the *San Francisco Chronicle* echoing a widespread sentiment, "it has been deserted by retail trade and will not regain any of it in the near future."¹⁹

¹³ Online Archive of California Photograph Collection, Bancroft Library Photograph Collection "Temp Quarters, Hobart Res. - Van Ness and Washington. City of Paris Dry Goods Company," 1906; "Retailers Leasing on Van Ness Avenue," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 6, 1906.

¹⁴ "Van Ness Theater is Soon to be a Memory," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 27, 1910; "Van Ness Now a Busy Street," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 3, 1906.

¹⁵ Journal of Proceedings of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors 1907, 454.

¹⁶ "Van Ness Now a Busy Street," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 3, 1906.

¹⁷ *San Francisco Municipal Reports, 1910-1911*, 821; *San Francisco Municipal Reports, 1911-1912*, 984 and 990.

¹⁸ "Expansion of Retail Business an Example of City's Enterprise," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 17, 1909.

¹⁹ "The Future of Van Ness Avenue," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 30, 1909.

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #1*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation UpdateForward San Francisco: Connecting the San Francisco Civic Center and Panama-Pacific Exposition

In the autumn of 1911, “Sunny Jim” Rolph swept the San Francisco mayoral election with the campaign slogan “Forward San Francisco.” A noted businessman and Vice-President of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition Company, Rolph promoted a number of major infrastructural developments including the water system, Municipal Railway, bridges, tunnels, and major civic construction. Foremost in this array of improvements was a new Civic Center and City Hall, as well as a venue for a world’s fair—The Panama-Pacific Exposition. The projects were located in two large tracts of prime land, one near the southern base of Van Ness and the other near its northern terminus, and were at the center of major urban redevelopment schemes that would occupy San Francisco for the large part of the decade. As the corridor that connected the two, Van Ness became a link that served to physically, and aesthetically, connect the two major civic undertakings.

City leaders were contemplating massive civic expansion within the area surrounding City Hall even before the destruction wrought by the earthquake. In 1904, the Society for the Improvement and Adornment of San Francisco invited prominent landscape architect Daniel H. Burnham to draw sweeping plans for the city. Embedded in this plan was a design for an expanded Civic Center that would be a monumental focal point surrounded by radiating boulevards extending across the city. Although these grandiose plans were approved by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors before the earthquake, in the aftermath of the disaster the lofty ambitions of the Burnham Plan fell before the immediate necessity of rebuilding. With city leaders, merchants, and citizens focused upon the basic infrastructure of redevelopment, the drive for beautification underpinning the massive Burnham scheme eroded.²⁰

Despite the dismissal of the Burnham Plan, however, the need for a new City Hall remained, and by the time of Mayor Rolph’s election, the redevelopment of City Hall and the Civic Center were at the forefront of municipal affairs. The City solicited proposals for development and received sixty proposals in 1912. The winning plan was that of architect B.J.S. Cahill, who had long served as an architectural advisor to the city, and advocated redevelopment on the same site as the old City Hall rather than the Market Street location proposed by Burnham. An The Mayor formed an advisory commission composed of John Galen Howard, Frederick W. Meyer, and John Reid, Jr., and voters approved an \$8.8 million bond in 1912. The final design consisted of a central plaza bounded by City Hall to the west, the State Building to the north, the Public Library and Opera House to the east, and the Exposition Auditorium to the south. Additionally, corner lots between the buildings were designed to contain secondary civic functions including a Health Building, a Fire and Police Building, and a Power House. Narrow portions of land fronting the complex were reserved for arcades and peristyles.²¹

With only three years remaining until the Panama-Pacific Exposition, construction of the new Civic Center was rushed toward completion. Mass excitement over the construction of the Panama Canal and the celebratory honor of hosting the Panama-Pacific Exposition spurred development, as leaders and citizens sought a grand civic identity that matched the monumental design of the exposition.²² Despite the urgency generated by the pressure of hosting such an extravaganza, however, much of the construction was incomplete at the time of the Exposition, and the Civic Center was dotted with wood signs depicting where the buildings were to be. Only the Exposition Auditorium, Power House, and Central Plaza were completed by the opening day. Ultimately, the creation of the Civic Center would take more than twenty years. City Hall was completed in 1916 – a decade after the original’s destruction. In

²⁰ William Issel and Robert W. Cherny, *San Francisco 1865-1932: Politics, Power, and Urban Development* (Berkeley, California: UC Berkeley Press, 1986) 110.

²¹ United States Department of the Interior, “National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form, San Francisco Civic Center,” October 10, 1978.

²² Rand Richards, *Historic San Francisco: A Concise History and Guide* (San Francisco: Heritage House Publishers, 1991) 194-195; United States Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form, San Francisco Civic Center, October 10, 1978.

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1922, the City acquired and began development of the War Memorial complex, but another decade passed before the War Memorial Opera House and Veterans Building were finished. Some thirty years after the 1906 disaster, the War Memorial Court – located on what had been Fulton Street – was completed according to landscape architect Thomas Church's vision.²³

Construction of the Panama Pacific International Exposition at the northern end of Van Ness Avenue was far more rapid. The Exposition filled 635 acres, extending from Van Ness Avenue to the Presidio. With a five-acre reproduction of the Panama Canal, a “central city” filled with exhibition palaces, lush landscaping and verdant grottos, drill fields, livestock exhibits, amusement concessions, and unparalleled electrical illumination, the Exposition proved a dizzying design feat that was accomplished to acclaim in only six years. Many of the nation's most prestigious firms were represented at the Exposition, with Mckim, Mead, and White designing the Court of the Universe, Thomas Hastings creating a 43-story Tower of Jewels, and Bernard Maybeck conceiving his ancient ruin-inspired Palace of Fine Arts. Other more prosaic marvels lured the crowds, with a 65 acre playland called “The Zone” filling several blocks between Van Ness Avenue and Laguna Street at the Exposition's eastern edge.²⁴

The Exposition was largely built in the ephemeral plaster manner of world's fairs, and was dismantled soon after closing. The massive amounts of fill that created the site from the Bay, however, largely forms the present-day Marina District.²⁵ Only a few structures remained after the closing, with ultimately only the Palace of Fine Arts and a few street alignments serving as the only surviving reminders of the Exposition. The infrastructure needed to move people to the site also proved an important legacy of the event, however, particularly along Van Ness Avenue. As the corridor that connected much of the visiting and local population of the city to the exposition as well as the most prominent linkage between the permanent City Beautiful edifices of the Civic Center and the transient beauty of the Panama-Pacific, Van Ness Avenue played a prominent role. The city pushed to complete the second line of its new Municipal Railway up the avenue in time to carry throngs of visitors to and from the site.

The drive for municipal rail fortuitously coincided with the planning of the Exposition. The motivations behind city sponsored rail service stemmed from a broader demand for progressive civic reform, efficiency, and urban consolidation. Prior to the city's foray into rail service, San Francisco was served by ten private companies, with cable cars criss-crossing the city. In the social and political climate steeped in the Progressive Movement of the early twentieth century, this complicated network of for-profit ventures was derided as corrupt and regressive. The first Municipal Railway line was completed on Geary Street in 1912 to great fanfare. A crowd of 50,000 gathered to commemorate the opening as Mayor Rolph proclaimed that the line was, “but the nucleus of a mighty system of streetcar lines which [would] someday encompass the entire city.”²⁶

The next phase of the new system was the track installed along the length of Van Ness from the Civic Center to the Exposition grounds. Although several of the early, private cable car lines ran in the vicinity of the street, none traversed its length, and this transportation void presented a major threat to the success of the Exposition. In a 1913 report, City Engineer M.M. O'Shaughnessy predicted that during days of maximum attendance it would be necessary to transport up to 60,000 people per hour on rail, a staggering number that far outstripped the city's capacity. Work

²³ Bridget M. Maley, “Historic Resources Evaluation Report: Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, City of San Francisco, California,” California Department of Transportation District 4, Prepared for City and County of San Francisco, Department of Public Works, March 2007, 7.

²⁴ Sarah Lau and Robert Lieber, *The Last Great World's Fair: San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition 1915*. (San Francisco, California: Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, 2004) 34, 50.

²⁵ Lau and Lieber, *The Last Great World's Fair*, 34, 50, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Palace of Fine Arts,” 2004.

²⁶ Anthony Perles, *The People's Railway: The History of the Municipal Railway of San Francisco*. (Glendale, California: Interurban Press, 1981), 27.

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began on the Van Ness track April 6, 1914, and was finished in less than five months, with the tracks and electrical work completed by August 15. In return for their haste, the city granted the contractors, The Mahoney Brothers, a bonus of \$15,000.²⁷ The track was flanked by 259 trolley poles to support the overhead wires that powered the cars. The columns of the poles were composed of reinforced concrete, with a slender, tapered square form, a decorative finial, and cast iron footings with a modest foliated design and square base. The poles were initially erected without attached streetlights, but the city ultimately found the resources to install light fixtures and by the time of the Exposition's opening, pairs of electric streetlights were hung on each trolley pole, making Van Ness Avenue the, "best lit thoroughfare in the city."²⁸

The substantial infrastructural improvements advanced by the mandate of the Exposition were a boon for the business community and merchants of Van Ness, as well as for the general economic recovery of the city. Further, the overflowing crowds of people travelling to and from the Exposition and the accompanying festivities and parades brought attention and business to the avenue itself. The Van Ness Avenue Improvement Association, successor to the Van Ness Avenue Improvement Club, was an ardent supporter of the railroad extension because its members saw it as vital to ensure they benefitted from the Exposition. Unlike the aesthetic aims of the nineteenth century club, who primarily sought boulevard status and civic-sponsored greenery, the twentieth century association was focused upon stimulating business activity, the opening and improvement of streets, sewers, railways, and gas mains. This increasingly pragmatic philosophy reflects Van Ness's transition from an upper-class residential corridor to an increasingly busy commercial thoroughfare. Seeking, "factories, foundries, workshops, warehouses, banks, and stores of all kinds," the civic leaders of the Van Ness Avenue Improvement Association utilized the excitement over the Exposition as a means to highlight the avenue's dynamic business potential.²⁹ Thus, even while the avenue connected the palaces of the Exposition with the as-yet incomplete civic palaces of government, it was increasingly becoming less of a city beautiful boulevard and more of a busy and diverse business and transportation corridor.

The Age of the Automobile: Auto Row and the Rise of Car Culture Along Van Ness Avenue

Following the exodus of post-earthquake retail establishments and during the frenzied planning of the Exposition, another transition was also rapidly shaping Van Ness Avenue. The mixed use character of the avenue persisted, with residences predominating in the upper reaches, and commercial and industrial institutions dominating its middle and lower reaches, but increasingly the avenue came to be defined by a burgeoning sector in both the economy and psyche of America: the automobile. The nascent auto industry and its array of support sectors including sales, repair, and manufacturing found an ideal home in the spaces left by the vacating retail sector along Van Ness. Close to the urban core, yet endowed with more land and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west's largest Auto Rows. The industry first appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but scores of auto related businesses traveled steadily north, flanking the broad Van Ness Avenue from Market to the San Francisco Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops (Map Reference #14). Along with New York, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles, San Francisco proved one of the most prominent distribution centers for the growing auto industry.³⁰ With California leading the country in automobile sales and ownership throughout the 1910s and 1920s, the state proved a ready market for the increasingly standardized and reliable automobiles shipped largely from the middle-western industrial belt. As an early Auto Row, Van Ness Avenue housed hundreds of auto firms throughout the 1910s and 1920s, with Hudsons and Hupmobiles, Cole Aeras and Cadillacs filling glassy showrooms. As a burgeoning sales

²⁷ James Rolph Papers 1911-1930, California Historical Society, MS 1818, Box 67, Folder 4; Perles, *The People's Railway*, 38.

²⁸ "Hundreds of Lights on Van Ness Avenue," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 20, 1915.

²⁹ *Constitution and By-Laws of the Van Ness Avenue Improvement Association*, (San Francisco, California: Pernau Publishing Company, December 1912), 3-4. A pamphlet housed at UC Berkeley Bancroft Library.

³⁰ Sally H. Clarke, *Trust and Power: Consumers, the Modern Corporation, and the Making of the United States Automobile Market* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3.

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corridor, the avenue became a nexus between the productive capacities of the automotive industry and the American consumer. In many senses, the showrooms were a face for the increasingly powerful auto industry, and the array of buildings erected represented an evolving conception of the automobile's central role in the city, state, and nation.³¹

Initially, many of the shops and display rooms were housed in small wood frame buildings, however as the clout of the industry grew, and the importance of branding escalated in a competitive market, larger auto palaces quickly sprung up along the avenue. Throughout the 1910s, 1920s, and to a lesser degree the 1930s, large corner lots along the avenue were developed as automobile showrooms and smaller frontages in between were filled with modest repair shops and used car sales facilities. Undeveloped lots doubled as open air car lots, with bright banners and signs. At the eastern corner of Van Ness and Market Street, the White Garage boasted an auto show room, supplied auto and motorcycle parts, and offered repairs (Map Reference #5). The intersection of Van Ness Avenue and O'Farrell was an anchor for the district, with the Weeks and Day designed Don Lee Building; the Earl C. Anthony Packard Showroom, designed by Bernard Maybeck in 1926; and a 1937 Art Moderne Chevrolet showroom designed by John E. Dinwiddie (Map Reference #8). At the southwest corner of Sacramento Street and Van Ness, the Paige Motor Car Company housed Max Arnold's "high grade automobiles," with the building doubling in size to accommodate increased business in 1924 (Map Reference #14). In the northern stretches of the Row, several looming dealerships designed by engineering firm Macdonald and Kahn expressed a factory-like form reminiscent of the major auto plants of the Midwest (Map Reference #13, 15, 20, 21). Numerous other auto shops lined the street, specializing in everything from upholstery to wood working for the ornate fleet of new autos flooding the growing California market. As the wares within the showrooms evolved, so too did the architectural styling of their surrounds and the Van Ness corridor became defined by the breakneck commercial developments of the industry. The three decades were characterized by remarkably different architectural forms, from simple brick garages to classical pilasters and sweeping Art Moderne curves. Beginning in the 1920s, bright neon signs filled the streetscape, with rooftop billboards and bright signs framing the buildings.

As the popularity and ubiquity of the automobile grew, new requirements and pressures altered the roadway of Van Ness itself. It was one of the busiest roads in the city, with scores of pedestrians, cars, and a rail line, and was soon at the center of growing concerns over transportation safety and standardization. Gruesome accidents involving car wrecks, pedestrian fatalities, and street car injuries regularly filled newspapers, and authorities increasingly sought standardized traffic signaling mechanisms and speed enforcement. In 1915, the city began experimenting with small multi-colored lanterns at the street corner. By 1921, painted white curbing, motorcycle police, and red lights at some intersections were simultaneously implemented to curtail growing numbers of traffic hazards and accidents.³²

When the long-awaited span of the Golden Gate Bridge united San Francisco with the Marin headlands to the north, Van Ness' central arterial identity was sealed. Previously, travelers on the Sausalito Ferry had used the avenue to reach the ferry slips west of Fort Mason, however the construction of the bridge, and the Bay Bridge before it, ushered in the modern era of connectivity in the previously geographically isolated northern peninsula. Van Ness Avenue and Lombard Street became integral auto corridors carrying U.S. 101 and its growing local and regional commercial, commuter, and recreational travel. Aware of the surge of traffic that would accompany the bridge completion, the San Francisco Department of Public Works, in conjunction with the Works Progress Administration (WPA), widened the Van Ness roadway, narrowing the broad sidewalks to 16 feet on both sides of Van Ness in 1936. To accomplish the widening, all of the trolley poles were moved back from the roadway, a process which required many of the adjacent property owners to relinquish basements under the original sidewalks and to build new basement walls under the new narrower sidewalks. Accompanying the widening, the San Francisco Public Utilities

³¹ Peter J. Ling, *America and the Automobile: Technology, Reform, and Social Change* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990), 13, 96-97.

³² "New Traffic Signal System To Be Tried," *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 21, 1915; "Supervisors Join in War on Speeding," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 21, 1921.

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Commission undertook the relighting of the poles, affixing a single tear-drop luminaire to each. The uniform lighting standards replaced the small electric lights from the Exposition era, which had largely been considered a temporary expedient for the occasion, and many of which had already been taken out of service. Other infrastructure was moved as well, including fire hydrants, fire/police call boxes, sign posts, and traffic signals.

In addition to the changes along Van Ness, the area of South of Market was reconfigured in the years before the completion of the bridge, with the South Van Ness extension connecting Van Ness to the southern portion of the city. Transportation planners had long criticized the abrupt termination of Van Ness at Market, stating that the “blind” street caused a central bottleneck. Carved from existing city blocks to cross Mission and overlay the southbound course of Howard, the “Van Ness Avenue Extension” was completed in the early 1930s and was vital in connecting the southern regions of the Peninsula with the northern reaches opened by the bridge several years later.³³

Thus, with the widened traffic lanes, modernized lighting fixtures, and increased through-traffic generated by the bridge, Van Ness Avenue continued to evolve as a city boulevard. Mayor Angelo Rossi praised the changes when he spoke to the Board of Supervisors in 1936, stating that they, “convert[ed] the historic San Francisco boulevard into a thoroughfare second only to Market Street in importance, property values, and beauty.”³⁴ This evaluation represented yet another recasting of Van Ness Avenue, from staid residential boulevard, to local commercial corridor, and ultimately to a busy segment of a growing network of city and state roads connecting the Bay area to the state and region beyond.

This new role also posed significant transportation planning dilemmas throughout the mid-twentieth century. As both a prominent city thoroughfare and a portion of the preeminent north-south U.S. 101, Van Ness Avenue became central in highway development conflicts between citizens of San Francisco and transportation planners. The state embarked upon ambitious highway development plans in the Bay area in 1940, most notably with the massive expansion and modernization of the Bayshore Highway in the South Bay. Because U.S. 101 was transformed into a modern freeway system along the Peninsula the urban portion of the road in San Francisco increasingly came to be viewed as a congested chink in the new system. In 1952, initial construction on the Central Freeway was promoted by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as a rational solution to the bottleneck created by the path of U.S. 101 through the city. The proposed freeway would extend from the Bayshore Freeway at the south, to the approach to the Golden Gate Bridge at the north, cutting a swath through the city and resting largely on elevated piers. In 1955, slightly under a mile of the route was constructed from Thirteenth Street to Mission Street. The second unit was opened four years later from Mission to Turk Street, several blocks west of the Civic Center.³⁵

Accompanying the explosion in post-war highway planning was a disinvestment and disavowal of the city’s rail-based streetcar system. Across the city, rail lines were removed and paved over for use by motor buses. The coaches still ran on electric wires and were often strung on the original trolley poles. The H Line, running up Van Ness since the 1915 Exposition, was abandoned in March of 1950, replaced by motor coach service. The tracks were quickly removed, with a concrete median replacing the rail and the power supply for the bus coaches (also known as trolleys) strung to the original concrete poles.³⁶

³³ Bion J. Arnold, *Report on Transportation Facilitation, City of San Francisco*; City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, Electric Power Bureau Contract No. 19: For Street Lighting Construction on Van Ness Avenue, October 1936, Archival Records on File at San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.

³⁴ City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, Electric Power Bureau Contract No. 19: For Street Lighting Construction on Van Ness Avenue, October 1936, Archival Records on File at San Francisco Public Utilities Commission; *Proceedings of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, 1936*. 555, 604-605; “Supervisors Have Economy Streak,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 7, 1915.

³⁵ “District IV Freeways make Great Strides,” *California Highways and Public Works*, March-April 1955. 1-7; “US 101 in San Francisco,” *California Highways and Public Works*, March April 1955. 20-21.

³⁶ Perles, *The People’s Railway*, 180.

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The state poured millions of dollars into highway modernization, such as the construction on the Central Freeway and its sister roadway the Embarcadero Freeway, but these projects faced simmering citizen protest over road construction in San Francisco that exploded into a full-scale “Freeway Revolt.” Local anger at the seeming indifference of transportation planners to the condensed architectural fabric of the city left the San Francisco Board of Supervisors torn between appeasing the local constituency and realizing statewide transportation goals. Mirroring other urban protests such as that against the Robert Moses led freeway plans in New York City, San Franciscans railed against neighborhood destruction caused by rampant road construction. Ultimately successful, the furor led to a 1959 vote in which the Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to terminate construction on most freeways throughout the city. Work on both the Central Freeway and the Embarcadero Freeway halted, and the massive corridors remained incomplete stubs that fell far short of their intended form. One of the results of this controversy was that the congested urban corridor of Van Ness Avenue retained the mantle of U.S. 101. In contrast to the 1955 depictions of a freeway connecting U.S. 101 to the Golden Gate Bridge, Caltrans reports in 1961 are strikingly modest, stating that, “construction and design activities, except for landscaping and minor projects, are confined at present.” The yearly report noted instead that, “bids were opened for resurfacing Van Ness Avenue,” and the avenue was once again San Francisco’s answer to U.S. 101.³⁷

Paradoxically, as highway construction transformed much of California and millions of automobiles filled the multi-lane roads, the fortunes of Auto Row fell into decline. The freeways, winding outward from urban cores to their sprawling peripheries, allowed rampant population dispersal and commercial interconnectivity. An auto showroom on Van Ness Avenue, with high rent and land values, and compressed space, often proved no match for the cheap rents, convenient parking, and proximity of surrounding suburban dealers. Further, as the romance and mystique of the automobile ceded to a comfortable familiarity and utilitarian ubiquity, the palaces of the earlier era seemed increasingly anachronistic and outdated. By the 1950s, and escalating through the 1960s and 1970s, auto dealers left Van Ness Avenue. Old showrooms stood vacant or were filled with bakeries, restaurants, laundromats, movie theaters, even gymnasiums. Although some prominent dealers remained, with several sales rooms remaining today, the cohesive strip of diverse architectural palaces eroded and Van Ness Avenue once again assumed a new urban character. A targeted plan developed by the San Francisco Planning Department in the late 1980s acknowledged the transitional challenges facing the avenue, citing the need for an increased mixed-use and residential character as well as the necessity of creative adaptation of many of the distinctive auto showrooms along the avenue. The plan also encouraged the planting of trees and greenery along the street and in the median, an echo of the boulevard plans of the late nineteenth century.³⁸

Thus from the 1858 survey to today’s mixed use avenue, a number of distinctive epochs have shaped Van Ness Avenue: residential settlement accompanying the tumultuous nineteenth century San Francisco population boom, the profound impact of the dislocation of the 1906 conflagration and the ensuing commercial rush, the infrastructural mandate and progressive City Beautiful aims of the Panama-Pacific Exposition and Civic Center, and the rise and hegemony of both the automobile and the modern highway in city and regional life. Throughout these periods the avenue has served as a constantly evolving corridor, altered successively to suit the urban aims and motivations of the period. The avenue bears layers from each period, with several pre-earthquake residences in its upper portions, trolley poles dating from the Exposition era, some remaining auto showrooms, as well as modern highway improvements and residential high-rises. These layers indicate a successive re-conceptualization of the corridor that has allowed it to remain a viable and dynamic component of San Francisco’s street system.

³⁷ Walton Bean, *California: An Interpretive History*. (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1968) 529; Genevieve Giuliano and Susan Hanson, *The Geography of Urban Transportation*. (New York: The Guilford Press, 2004) 400; “Bay Area Freeways,” *California Highways and Public Works*, May-June 1961. 1-9.

³⁸ San Francisco Planning Department, “Van Ness Avenue Area Plan.”

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Evaluation

As discussed, the historical development of Van Ness Avenue has four potential periods of significance: the 1858 Van Ness Survey, the earthquake and fire of 1906, the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition, and the rise of San Francisco's Auto Row. In its primary role as a central urban transportation corridor, the avenue lacks specific associations to significant events in local, state, or national history during each of the periods, except for its role as one of the fire breaks during the 1906 fire, which is discussed below. This lack of specific association is specifically addressed in National Register guidance for evaluation, which cautions that, "mere association with historic events or trends is not enough, in and of itself, to qualify under Criterion A" because "the property's specific association must be considered important as well."³⁹ As one of the city's major thoroughfares the avenue displays a general association with important events and trends in the city; however, as the guidelines state these broad associations are not in and of themselves basis for consideration under Criterion A. Like other major corridors in the city, such as Market Street, Potrero Avenue, Mission Street, or Geary Boulevard, Van Ness Avenue served to connect both everyday activities and notable citywide events through its general role as a transportation link. It did not, however, as a city street, have a specific important role within its initial survey, the 1915 Exposition, or the development of Auto Row.

The road was a basic component of the Van Ness Survey, and while illustrative of San Francisco's steady expansion, was not directly associated with significant events or trends that shaped the city and lacks specific significance under Criterion A or 1. Similarly, the transportation role the avenue played during the 1915 Panama Pacific Exposition does not rise to individual significance under Criterion A or 1. The avenue was not a central feature of the exposition undertaking and was instead pressed into service by practical need as the city grappled with accommodating the throngs of visitors to the site. The avenue was not associated with significant events or trends during the event, and upon the exposition's close Van Ness emerged once again as an eclectic residential and commercial corridor. Lastly, the role of the avenue within the development of San Francisco's Auto Row is not significant under Criterion A or 1. Auto Row was characterized by the evolving architectural styles and forms of the row of buildings erected from the 1910s to the 1930s, but the role of the street itself was not an important characteristic. As dealers sought to differentiate themselves and gain market share in the rapidly expanding industry, the architectural form of the auto "palaces" gained extreme importance and prestige. The Van Ness corridor itself does not convey this important architectural and social legacy, which is instead embodied in the buildings that line the avenue.

In its role during the 1906 Earthquake, however, the avenue does have potential significance under Criterion A or 1. The wide avenue served as one of the fire breaks that allowed the city to check the advancing flames and halt the fire that devastated much of downtown. Although the avenue was not originally designed as a fire break, the local fire department recognized that the width of the road could make it useful for this purpose. Subsequently, the course of the fire and the utter inferno of the blaze along the Market Street corridor, thrust the road into service during the days following April 18, 1906, and the avenue itself ultimately did play a central role in the transformative event. This potential significance is undercut by a lack of integrity to the period because the avenue does not retain physical elements or characteristics that could convey significance within the context of the fire event. While the avenue retains the overall outside width, the entirety of the corridor has been altered since the earthquake, including the infrastructural elements of the street itself and the surrounding setting. The character defining features of the road, including its paving, curbing, medians, planting, signage, streetcar equipment, bus shelters, and various utilities have all been substantially altered over time. The original lower commercial area, the grand residential buildings along the mid section, and the more modest residences and business of the north end have been dramatically altered through the construction of the Civic Center, modern high-rise buildings, and construction of predominantly commercial buildings throughout the mid section of the street. As such, the avenue does not convey feeling or association to the

³⁹ NPS, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," *National Register Bulletin 15* (NPS, GPO: 1991, and updated various years), 12.

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time of the disaster or the early days of recovery, but instead displays buildings, landscaping, and street furniture from many time periods throughout the twentieth and twenty-first, centuries. This lack of integrity undermines the avenue's ability to convey potential significance under Criterion A or 1 because its design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association no longer bear a relationship to the 1906 context.

Van Ness Avenue is not directly associated with persons significant in local, state, or national history (Criterion B or 2). Although the avenue was surveyed under the auspices of, and is named for, the influential and Mayor James Van Ness, this is a tangential and commemorative association that does not convey a direct or important historical connection that merits recognition. Again, National Register guidance offers this clarification, "A resource that has a non-commemorative primary function," does not meet Criteria Consideration F for commemorative properties.⁴⁰ Innumerable streets in San Francisco, the state, and the nation bear the names of prominent citizens and sometimes significant persons, and this type of memorialization is common, but the avenue does not have direct associations with Van Ness, or any other prominent figures in history. The development of the transportation corridor was not furthered by any one individual any significant person's civic aims.

Lastly, Van Ness Avenue lacks architectural, design, and engineering significance and does not display particular characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. The avenue and its accompanying street features do not illustrate the work of a master or demonstrate a significant design standard (Criterion C or 3). As a prominent arterial component within the overall street system of San Francisco, a densely settled corridor supporting commercial, civic, and residential activities, and a component of U.S. 101, the avenue's design and planning reflect a myriad of public and private design intents, none of which are significant in local, state, or national history and none of which reflect a sustained or cohesive architectural or engineering program. The avenue was surveyed to a substantial width to promote its development as a comparable thoroughfare to its east-west counterpart Market Street, but this design choice primarily indicated a pragmatic solution for the need for a prominent transportation corridor for what was then the city's northwestern outskirts, rather than a comprehensive architectural or design goal. No coherent design aims accompanied the decisions regarding its width, grading, paving, curbing, or landscaping, which occurred in fragmented segments without overarching coordination. Throughout the 1860s, 1870s, and 1880s, as the avenue slowly consolidated into an upper-class residential corridor and little municipal attention was given to a cohesive design strategy for the avenue. The 1896 declaration of Van Ness Avenue as a "Boulevard" had little lasting effect, as the primary attributes of the declaration: increased landscaping and decreased traffic, largely failed to come to fruition. With the disruption of the earthquake and the subsequent redevelopment of the avenue as an increasingly commercial corridor, virtually all vestiges of the original concept of the "boulevard" nature of the avenue faded.

In the same sense, the relationship of Van Ness Avenue to the early twentieth century City Beautiful boosterism surrounding the development of the Civic Center and the Panama-Pacific Exposition lacks significance under Criterion C or 1. Although the avenue passes through the Civic Center, Van Ness preceded the creation of the center by fifty years and neither it nor its basic streetscape features are a significant design element of the Civic Center plan. The avenue and its street features are instead simply basic arterial components. The Civic Center complex largely extends east from Van Ness Avenue, with its pedestrian elements and plazas concentrated along Polk Street, Larkin Street, and Hyde Street. As the 1987 National Historic Landmark documentation states, the "San Francisco Civic Center is a group of monumental buildings around a central open space (Civic Center Plaza), and additional buildings that extend the principal axis to the east and west." Van Ness Avenue plays a peripheral role in this monumental assemblage that does not merit consideration as a individual contributing element of the district.

Additionally, Van Ness lacked a significant architectural or design role as a transportation corridor between the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition and the Civic Center and the rest of the city. Van Ness had been in place for more than 55 years as an existing roadway and although it was pressed into temporary service as one of the transportation

⁴⁰ NPS, *National Register Bulletin 15*, 39.

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corridors serving fair goers, it had long been planned as the location of one of the city's new municipal streetcar lines. Other than the streetcar, Van Ness received little direct attention as part of the Exposition design and layout. The avenue was not considered a promenade upon which to linger or loiter and was instead a necessary infrastructural element outside of the wonders of the Exposition grounds. The streetcar system's trolley poles, while of a pleasant design in keeping with the general aesthetic of the classicism of the fair, were also relatively simple and expedient infrastructure. In contrast to the light standards envisioned by Walter D'Arcy Ryan in his "Total Illumination Plan" for the Exposition, the electric lights added to the trolley poles in February 1915 were installed with great haste and little design consideration, and were quickly partially shuttered following the event (See DPR 523 for Trolley Poles/Light Standards Map Reference # 2). Additionally, other streetscape elements, including fire hydrants and call boxes from this period, some of which still remain on the corridor, were not part of a significant design or city engineering program but instead representative ubiquitous utilities and infrastructure during the period. Essentially, within the context of the fleeting grandeur of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition and the substantial monumentality of the Civic Center, Van Ness Avenue played a secondary support role that was dwarfed by the design and artistry of both undertakings.⁴¹

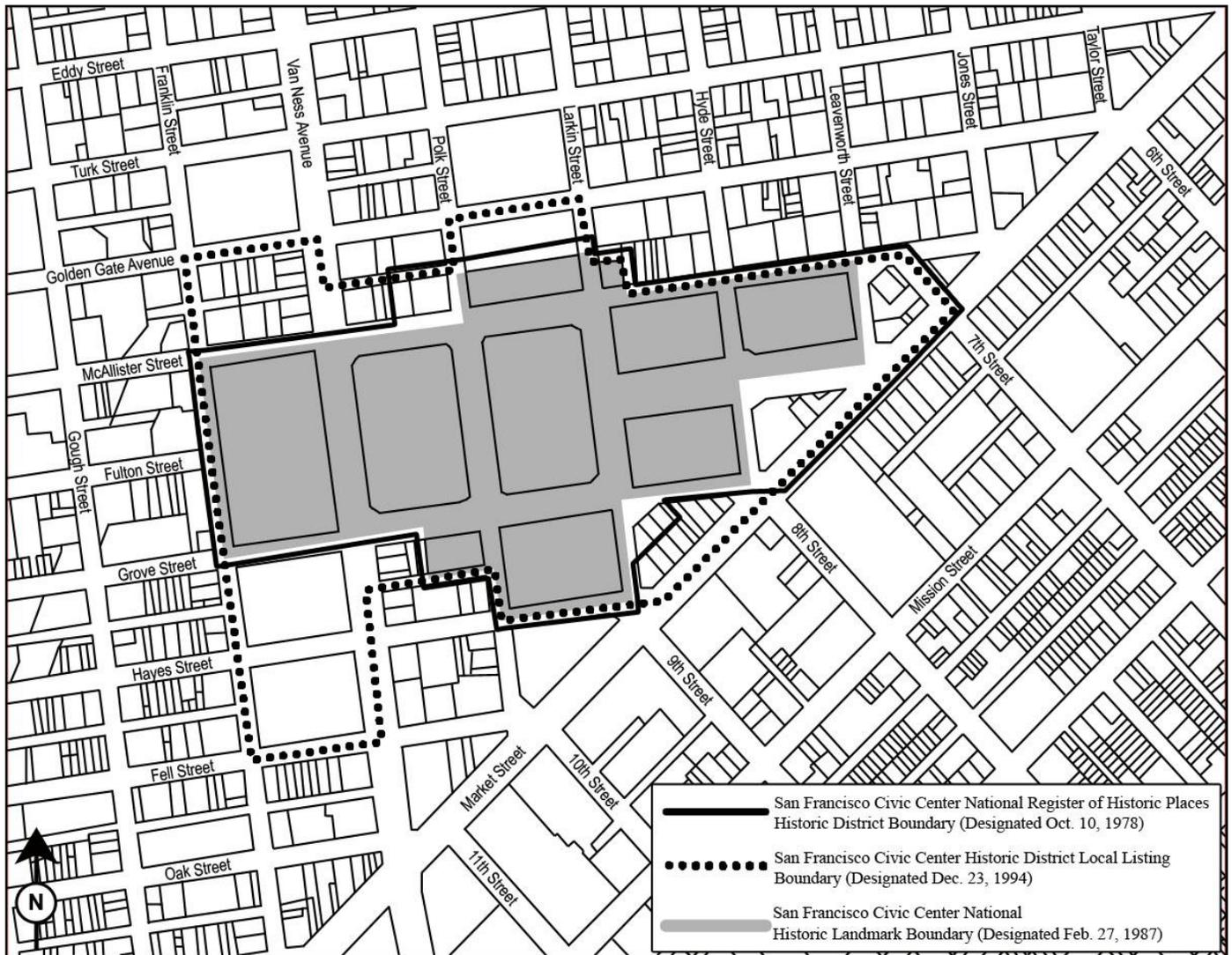
Within the context of "Auto Row" development, Van Ness Avenue also lacks architectural or engineering significance. Although many of the buildings flanking the avenue were, and are, architecturally distinguished and the programmatic cohesiveness of the avenue's surrounding building types may constitute a historic district, the streetscape does not rise to a level of significance as an important example of such infrastructure. As a transportation corridor that linked the thriving businesses of Auto Row to local and regional markets, the avenue played a secondary and largely utilitarian role that was not singularly important or significant under Criterion C or 3. Similarly, as an undistinguished urban component of U.S. 101, adopted into the highway system with the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge, Van Ness Avenue does not embody any architectural or engineering significance as a transportation corridor. The road, and its ancillary infrastructure features, serve as a general arterial connecting the city with the region and are of a basic design and form.

Further, as discussed above, in addition to a lack of significance, the corridor does not retain physical integrity to any one historic period but is instead characterized by overlapping infrastructural layers. All of the features of the roadway have changed substantially over time, with new paving and curb cuts, and installation of medians, modern fire hydrants, street lights, and various other infrastructural elements added throughout the last century. Municipal Railway tracks once coursed the center of the road, only to be removed and replaced with concrete medians, landscaping, and traffic signals. Similarly, the character of the workmanship, materials, setting, feeling, and association of the avenue have changed greatly over time, with residential development ceding to commercial buildings and this in-turn giving way of late to modern high-rise residential. The original uninterrupted street surface has been incised with rails and medians strips, and the sidewalks reduced in width. This steady alteration undermines all of the aspects of integrity excepting location, which is not sufficient in and of itself for NRHP or CRHR consideration.

In rare instances structures themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but the existing street surface, sidewalks, medians, and other street furniture are otherwise well documented and do not appear to be a principal sources of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

⁴¹ For more information on lighting at the Panama Pacific International Exposition, see Laura Anne Ackley, *Innovations in Illumination at the Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915*, (2002), a UC Berkeley Master's thesis on file at UC Berkeley Environmental Design Library.

Figure 1: San Francisco Civic Center Historic District Boundaries



Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: South Van Ness Avenue, camera facing south from Market Street, 3/9/09.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #1
*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 3: Van Ness Avenue, camera facing south toward War Memorial Complex, 3/9/09.



Photograph 4: Van Ness Avenue, camera facing south from California Street, 3/9/09.

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 5: Van Ness Avenue, camera facing south from Pine Street, 3/9/09.



Photograph 6: Van Ness Avenue, camera facing south from Bush Street, 3/9/09.

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 7: Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northwest From Lombard Street, 3/9/09.



Photograph 8: Van Ness Avenue, camera facing south from North Point Street, 3/9/09.

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*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 9: Hydrant at Van Ness Avenue and Green Street, 3/9/09.



Photograph 10: Bus Shelter at Van Ness Avenue and Bay Street 3/9/09.

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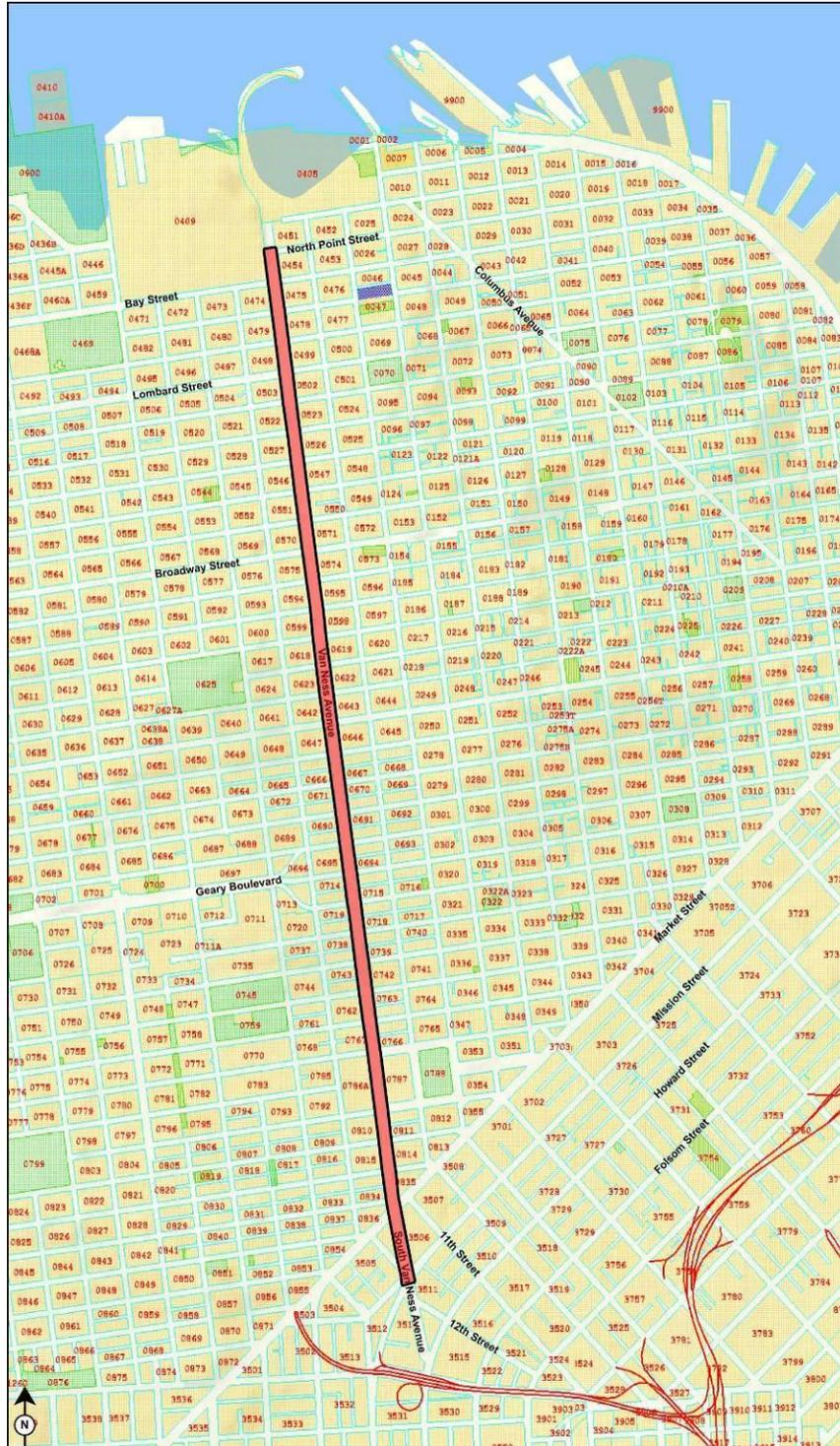
Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 11: Trolley poles and modern poles at Van Ness Avenue and Greenwich Street 3/9/09.

Sketch Map:



State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6L

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

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*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #2

P1. Other Identifier: Van Ness Avenue Trolley Poles / Light Standards

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: Van Ness Avenue, Market Street to North Point Street City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

See Area Map

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

The resource evaluated herein includes 259 original trolley poles and modern replacement light standards that run from Market Street to North Point Street on the edge of the eastern and western sidewalks of Van Ness Avenue. The majority of the poles are reinforced concrete construction, however a small number are replacement metal poles with cobra type heads. The concrete poles are reminiscent of the Corinthian order and have a slender, tapered form with a decorative foliated finial and base (photograph 1, replacement pole photograph 2) (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP28 (Street Furniture)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (multi component resource.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) Representative pole (#271, NW corner of Greenwich and Van Ness), camera facing northeast.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:**

Historic

Prehistoric Both

1914, 1936 light standards, and ongoing alterations (SFPUC)

***P7. Owner and Address:**

County of San Francisco

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)

Polly S. Allen; Meta Bunse
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**

March-April, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)

Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

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*NRHP Status Code 6L

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #2

B1. Historic Name: same

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: trolley poles with wire support for electric streetcars, streetlight standards

B4. Present Use: light standards, wire support for MUNI, signage and traffic signaling

*B5. Architectural Style: utilitarian with Classical ornamentation

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The poles were erected in 1914 to support electrical wiring for the Van Ness Avenue Municipal Railway (see continuation sheet).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: 1936 Original Location: Six feet in toward street center

*B8. Related Features: n/a

B9a. Architect: unknown, although periodicals state that City Engineer M.M. O'Shaunessy prepared initial drawings

b. Builder: Original construction by San Francisco Municipal Railway / Mahoney Brothers, Joshua Hendy Iron Works; replacement cast iron bases constructed by Steiger and Kerr Stove and Foundry Company.

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that the Van Ness Avenue Trolley Poles/Light Standards do not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because they lack integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000). The trolley poles/light standards have also been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Files; City Planning Files; San Francisco Architectural Heritage files; *San Francisco Chronicle*; James Rolph Papers (California Historical Society); Perles, *The People's Railway* (1981); Brignall, *The Last Great World's Fair* (2004); Todd, *The Story of the Exposition* (1921); see footnotes for additional referencts.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)

See continuation sheet, Map 1.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: P. Allen; M. Bunse*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The finial is of cast iron and features a tapered square crown cradled by an abacus and medallions terminating in volute detailing. While all of the finials are original, the bases are a mixture of original cast iron and replacement fiberglass. Some poles are missing the base altogether, and many of those that do remain are very deteriorated (photographs 3, 4, 5, and 6). On the original bases, the north and south sides each feature a removable cast iron door that allow access to the mechanical equipment within. The original doors are stamped "Joshua Hendy Iron Works S.F. CA", a Bay Area foundry commissioned to make the base (photograph 7). Several poles feature cast iron doors stamped "Steiger and Kerr Stove and Foundry Company S.F. CAL" (photograph 8) and were early replacements for the original Hendy products. The modern replacement fiberglass bases do not bear any makers mark and do not have any access doors, as did the cast iron originals (photograph 9).

Tear drop light fixtures project from the upper portion of the pole, slightly beneath the decorative finial. These bracket fixtures were 1936 additions to the pole that replaced the pairs of globe lights hastily installed in preparation for the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition (photograph 10, historic photographs 16 and 18). The 1936 tear drop fixture is mounted on a foliated spiraling cast iron bracket. The brackets are attached to the poles by cinch anchor bolts made by the National Lead Company. The luminaires installed on these brackets in 1936 were General Electric Company's Form 81 pendant ornamental luminaire, accompanied by the same company's No. 193 light alabaster rippled globe, however all of these have been replaced, most recently with the conversion to high pressure sodium vapor lamps (HPSV) (photograph 10). The majority of the poles are painted with buff colored paint. This color is similar to the original installation; however the bases and finials were originally darker in color, in contrast to the body of the pole (see photographs 4, 16, and 20). The sole exception to this is within the Civic Center Historic District, where some of the bases have been painted gold. There is no indication that this was part of the original design (photograph 11).

The overall integrity of the poles is quite low, and the condition is also poor as many of the shafts are spalling and deteriorated (photograph 12 and 19). More than one-half of the bases of the remaining original poles are modern replacement fiber glass without access doors. Of the remaining original cast iron bases, many have replacement or missing access doors without any maker's mark. Both original and replacement bases are very damaged and deteriorated. The cast iron bases exhibit substantial corrosion (photograph 3). The fiberglass replicas are also chipped and broken, pushed askew from the base, and often missing major portions or fasteners (photographs 15a and 15b). Further, although the poles run from Market Street to North Point Street, the uniform aesthetic of the network has been diminished by the insertion of modern support poles (photographs 12, 14, 17). Throughout the entire avenue, modern poles have been introduced to support MUNI wires, traffic signals, and other infrastructural elements, often directly abutting the concrete poles. These insertions greatly alter the visual cohesiveness of the network (see Section B10). For detailed information on the integrity of individual poles, please refer to the attached pole maps (Map 3).

B6. Construction History: (Continued)

In 1915, light brackets were added in preparation for the Panama Pacific Exposition. In 1936, the original lights were removed and new light fixtures and brackets were added. At this time the poles were moved to accommodate a 12-foot road widening. New tear-drop pendant lights and brackets were added to the original concrete poles when they were relocated as part of street widening. Throughout the twentieth century, many of the cast iron bases were removed or destroyed by deterioration or impact damage, and over half of the bases are fiberglass replicas installed in about 1997. Before the insertions of the fiberglass replicas, many of the original bases were missing or replaced with plywood or sheet metal. Similarly, deterioration of the light standards and functional obsolescence led to replacement of many of the lamps and surrounding fixtures at some point after 1997. In addition to components of

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*Recorded by: P. Allen; M. Bunse

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the original poles, a number of modern metal poles have been introduced as infill support structures to carry wires and MUNI lines that cannot be supported by the deteriorated concrete poles (source: City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, correspondence files).

***B10. Significance:**

The Van Ness Avenue trolley poles and light standards were documented in a 1982 San Francisco Downtown Inventory undertaken by San Francisco Architectural Heritage and were found to merit a level “B” (major importance) in their rating system. According to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: “City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources,” this rating does not qualify as an adopted local register for the purpose of CEQA and requires further consultation and review, which is provided herein. The poles are also referenced in the Van Ness Avenue Area Plan component of the San Francisco General Plan (Policy 8.8: Street Lighting); however, they are not listed as a significant or contributing historical resource in this Area Plan. Some of the poles located in the Civic Center National Historic Landmark District (NHLD) were referenced in a 2007 Historic Resources Evaluation Report (HRER) prepared for the Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project undertaken by the San Francisco Department of Public Works (SFDPW). As a local agency project undertaking under Section 106, the project was conducted under the auspices of the Programmatic Agreement (PA) among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Preservation, the California State Preservation Officer, and Caltrans. Sixteen poles are located within the boundaries of the NHLD, on both sides of Van Ness between Grove Street and McAllister Street (See Map 2). These sixteen poles were among eleven elements described in the HRER as proposed character-defining features of the streetscape of the Civic Center NHLD.¹ The HRER/HPSR did not include evaluation analysis of these proposed character defining features, has not resulted in a determination regarding the eligibility of the trolley poles or other features, and the proposed amendments have not been listed as contributing elements of the Civic Center NHLD. The poles have never been fully evaluated under NRHP or California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) criteria and this analysis is provided herein. For evaluation of the sixteen poles located within the NHLD, please see the update sheets for the Civic Center NHLD (Map Reference #3).

Historic Context

The Van Ness Avenue Municipal Railway line was completed August 15, 1914, after a construction project of less than five months. The City established the streetcar in anticipation of the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition and the millions expected to flock to the 635 acre marvel. City officials hastily commissioned the rail line as a means to efficiently transport Exposition attendees to and from the site, and although several private cable car lines ran in the vicinity of the street, none traversed its length, and local businessmen and Exposition promoters felt that this transportation void presented a major threat to the success of the event. In a 1913 report, City Engineer M.M. O'Shaughnessy predicted that during days of maximum attendance it would be necessary to transport up to 60,000 people per hour by rail, a staggering number that far outstripped the city's capacity.²

¹ Architectural Resources Group, “Historic Resources Evaluation Report: Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, City of San Francisco, California,” prepared by Bridget M. Maley, Prepared for California Department of Transportation District 4 and City and County of San Francisco, Department of Public Works, March 2007; Architectural Resources Group, “Historic Property Survey Report: Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, City of San Francisco, California,” prepared for California Department of Transportation District 4 and City and County of San Francisco, Department of Public Works, October 2007.

² James Rolph Papers 1911-1930, California Historical Society, MS 1818, Box 67, Folder 4; Anthony Perles, *The People's Railway: The History of the Municipal Railway of San Francisco*. (Glendale, California: Interurban Press, 1981), 38.

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On a broader level, however, the two miles of rail line on Van Ness Avenue represented an even larger civic undertaking, as San Francisco both rebuilt itself into a modern city in the wake of the devastating earthquake and fire of 1906 and overcame the corruption and graft of the privately owned streetcar services. With a city nearly destroyed by physical disaster, the years following the event proved a frenzy of development, innovation, and widespread boosterism. In the autumn of 1911, "Sunny Jim" Rolph swept the San Francisco mayoral election with the campaign slogan "Forward San Francisco." The slogan crystallized the broad progressive momentum undergirding civic drives for physical development, social reform, and major infrastructural projects including water systems, bridges, tunnels, and momentous civic construction. Foremost in this array of improvements were the white palaces of the new Civic Center and City Hall, which were envisioned as a permanent embodiment of both San Francisco's rebirth and reform and the City Beautiful ideals extolled by the Exposition.

Thus, although the drive for municipal rail coincided with the planning of the Exposition, the motivations behind city sponsored rail service stemmed from a broad impulse for progressive civic reform, efficiency, and urban consolidation. Prior to the city's foray into rail service, San Francisco was served by ten private companies, with cable cars criss-crossing the city. In a social and political climate steeped in Progressivism, this complicated network of for-profit ventures was derided as corrupt and regressive. The first Municipal Railway line was completed on Geary Street in 1912 to great fanfare. A crowd of 50,000 gathered to commemorate the opening as Mayor Rolph proclaimed that the line was, "but the nucleus of a mighty system of streetcar lines which [would] someday encompass the entire city."³

The next major addition to this system was the line that ran the length of Van Ness from the Civic Center to the Exposition grounds. Work began on the Van Ness Avenue alignment on April 6, 1914, and was finished in less than five months, with the tracks and electrical work completed by August 15. In return for their haste, the city granted the contractors, Mahoney Brothers, a bonus of \$15,000.⁴ The track was flanked by 259 trolley poles that held the overhead electrical power supply wires and guy wires in place. In contrast to the Geary Street poles, which were basic designs of tubular steel produced by the United States Steel Products Company, the Van Ness trolley poles were of a more refined and ornamental aesthetic. Reflecting the linking role the system played between the Exposition site and the Market Street and Civic Center area, the design conformed to the stylistic mandate of these major Beaux Arts developments.⁵ The restrained Corinthian elements, coated in a pale buff paint and contrasting finials to match the color scheme of the Exposition, the otherwise utilitarian infrastructure was reflective of important stylistic overtones. From the abacus adorning the finial, to the elegant cast iron base designed by Joshua Hendy Iron Works, the poles were emblematic of the rail line's association with the larger general aesthetics of the Exposition and other Beaux Art projects in and around Market Street and the Civic Center. Although they were emblematic of this stylistic milieu, however, the poles were not specifically part of the design plan for the Civic Center, and were markedly different in form from the light standards being developed within the Civic Center cross streets and plaza (historical photograph 25). In fact, the poles along Van Ness were erected without attached streetlights, but by the time of the Exposition pairs of electric streetlights were hung on each trolley pole, making Van Ness Avenue, "the best lit thoroughfare in the city."⁶ The lights were provided by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company and consisted of "two high-candle power tungsten lamps," a popular and common form of incandescent lighting at the time (historical photographs 16 and 18 depict original lighting fixtures).⁷ The importance of lighting

³ Perles, *The People's Railway*, 27.

⁴ James Rolph Papers 1911-1930; Perles, *The People's Railway*, 38.

⁵ "Plans Ready for Track on Market," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 8, 1912; "Van Ness Avenue Municipal Road," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 24, 1912.

⁶ "Hundreds of Lights on Van Ness Avenue," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 20, 1915.

⁷ "Many Lights for Van Ness Avenue," *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 5, 1915.

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mirrored the Exposition's attention to illumination and throughout the event, the Exposition grounds were aglow in an array of modern lighting that was "absolutely unique and unequaled."⁸

Only three days after the official closing of the fair grounds, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted to turn off every other one of the Van Ness trolley pole lights. With the departure of the throngs visiting the Exposition, the need for the extensive lighting system along Van Ness dissipated and the Board undertook the measure as a symbol of civic economy.⁹ Simultaneously, however, the city was embarking upon ambitious lighting schemes in other parts of San Francisco. The "Path of Gold" and "Golden Triangle" lighting systems were both directly inspired by the aesthetic and technological model provided by the Exposition. These much-touted lighting systems featured the high current luminous arc lamps employed at the Exposition, lighting technology that was already in effect in other major cities yet new to the business districts of San Francisco. The 1916 Path of Gold standards (San Francisco City Landmark #200) boasted design work by preeminent sculptor Arthur Putnam, with an intricate depiction of the "Winning of the West" at their base. The 1918 Golden Triangle standards (San Francisco City Landmark #233) held glass fixtures of San Francisco Golden Carrarra Glass and intricate Corinthian detailing. Funded by a mixture of public and private monies, these lighting systems garnered much praise both locally and from afar, with electrical engineer Walter D'Arcy Ryan stating that, "San Francisco has shown the country how a city's business district should be illuminated to best advantage."¹⁰

Paradoxically, in order to fund these downtown lighting ventures, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors further cut expenditures for Van Ness lighting. Thus, by the late 1910s, the light standards along Van Ness provided uneven illumination, with some lights missing, dark, or broken.¹¹ The original ribbon of light, stretching from the Civic Center to the Exposition, proved fleeting as economic concerns and the secondary status of the Van Ness Avenue business district undermined the impetus of the Exposition aims.

Fifteen years passed before any significant attention was given to the Van Ness Avenue poles and lights. When city officials were preparing for the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge, Van Ness Avenue once again emerged as a critical transportation corridor for San Francisco. Although the avenue was originally surveyed to an enormous width of 125 feet, the avenue's broad sidewalks, center trolley track, and bustling traffic flow caused congestion and traffic hazards that officials feared would be exacerbated by the opening of the new bridge. Under a project funded by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the traffic lanes within the existing avenue were widened by six feet by narrowing the sidewalks on both sides of the street.

The WPA project included excavation, relocation, and re-installation of all 259 trolley poles, which proved a substantial undertaking that required adjacent property owners to reconfigure any existing basements that extended underneath the sidewalks. Contracting firm Macdonald and Kahn undertook the project and completed the work in March of 1937. In addition to moving the poles, the firm coated each in a wash of "concreta," a sealant that gave the surface a stone-like texture.¹²

⁸ Hallie Brignall, *The Last Great World's Fair: San Francisco's Panama-Pacific Exposition 1915* (San Francisco: Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, 2004), 12; Frank Morton Todd, *The Story of the Exposition* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1921), 342-349; Ackley, Laura Anne, "Innovations in Illumination at the Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915," (an unpublished thesis submitted to University of California Berkeley, 2002. On file at the Bancroft Library.

⁹ "Supervisors Have Economy Streak," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 7, 1915.

¹⁰ "San Francisco's Path of Gold," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 26, 1925; "The Path of Gold Light Standards: Final Case Report Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board," February 20, 1991, on file at San Francisco City Planning; "Golden Triangle Light Standards Case Report (Case No. 1999.481L)," September 6, 2001, on file at San Francisco City Planning.

¹¹ "Bright Lights Will Make A Path of Gold," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 15, 1916.

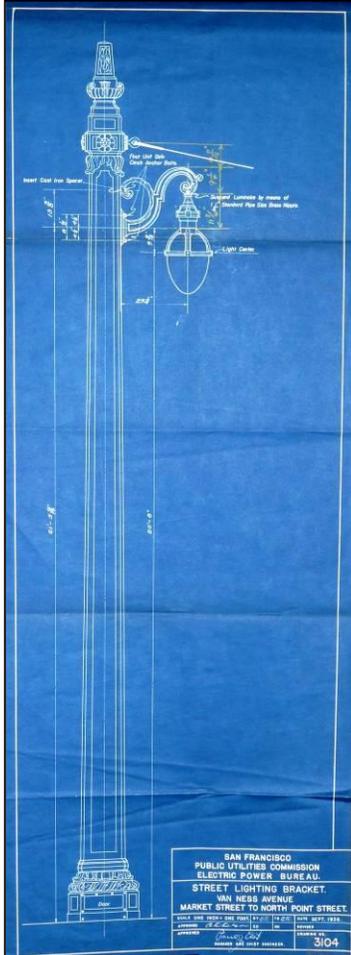
¹² Information relating to the movement of the poles is on file at the City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission in the Van Ness Avenue correspondence file, (Municipal Railway Contract No. 173); "Street Widening Project Started," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 24, 1936; "Wider Street Plans Studied," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 16, 1936. The DPR 523L (1/95)

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Detail of typical trolley pole showing new bracket and light fixture added to each pole. Plans signed by Chief Engineer Ost, September 1936. (Plans on file with SFPUC).

Under a separate contract, the newly moved poles were adorned with new lighting standards, developed by the City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. Manager and Chief Engineer Paul J. Ost designed the spiraling brackets and tear drop luminaires. Unlike the original light fixtures, which consisted of modest pairs of globes projecting from the poles on metal conduit a few feet below the top, the new lights were hung singly from the top of the pole on brackets (photographs 1, 10, 20). The bracket design alluded to the same classical imagery as those developed in the wake of the Exposition, but the hardware and lighting elements were standardized components provided by General Electric. The lighting of the avenue received little of the fanfare that accompanied the Path of Gold and Golden Triangle light systems, with only a brief media mention of the street's new lighting on April 15, 1937. Attended by officials of the Van Ness Avenue Improvement Association and the Downtown Association, the small ceremony reflected the relatively prosaic status of the updated light system.¹³

The relocated poles and new light standards remained in place even as the San Francisco Municipal Railway underwent significant transitions in the mid-twentieth century. As early as 1917, the city had ordered five motor coach buses from the White Motor Company, the first foray in a conversion from track based transit to motor coach transit that would span a number of decades.¹⁴ By the 1930s, many were advocating the transition from the track-based rail to trackless trolley coaches along Van Ness Avenue. Citing concerns over noise and overcrowding, the rail based system was derided by Van Ness business interests as regressive and backward. City officials appeared to agree, with Mayor Angelo Rossi requesting a budget appropriation for the conversion in 1936.¹⁵ Although the Van Ness Avenue tracks remained in service for another fifteen years, the move away from rail was part of a

wider transition toward automobile-based solutions for public transportation. As the automobile rose in popularity in the early twentieth century, the technological developments of the auto industry were translated to municipal transportation efforts. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, operations of the Municipal Railway were increasingly supplanted by motor coach service, with the trolley car increasingly seen as a curious relic.

By the close of World War II, the decline in streetcar ridership was marked. In the years that followed, nationwide declines in passenger ridership indicated the growing power of the automobile, as better roads and highways and increased auto ownership altered transportation patterns across the country. The fall in ridership and corresponding

WPA project also included installation of new light standards (light poles) on the cross streets adjacent to City Hall and the new Opera House and War Memorial buildings. The cross street light poles installed in 1936 were not part of the Van Ness trolley system and were not surveyed for this project.

¹³ "Van Ness Avenue Lamps Turned On," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 15, 1937; "City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Electric Power Bureau Contract. No. 19," October 1936, on file at City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Van Ness Avenue correspondence file.

¹⁴ Perles, *The People's Railway*, 89.

¹⁵ "Mayor Urges Railless Cars on Van Ness Avenue," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 15, 1936; "Trolley Track Removal From Van Ness Urged," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 14, 1936.

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increases in municipal operating costs led to the abandonment of many lines, as service was consolidated. To address the fundamental shift in transportation patterns, Mayor Roger Lapham sponsored a \$20 million bond issue in 1947, calling for the complete overhaul and modernization of the antiquated transportation system. Between 1947 and 1952 the Van Ness Avenue rail line, as well as the Market Street rail line and Muni's D, E, and F lines were all abandoned and converted to motor coach use, with tons of trackage ripped from the center of busy urban streets (photograph 27).¹⁶ The removal of the Van Ness line took six months and involved the construction of a 14-foot concrete median where the tracks had run. The contract was given to Charles L. Harney, and the project cost the city \$400,000.¹⁷ Soon after the removal of the tracks, 54 red eucalyptus trees were planted in the median, with citizen groups and transportation planners heralding the plantings as a tribute to Van Ness' boulevard history.¹⁸ Although all of the trackage was removed, the 259 trolley poles remained in place to support the overhead wiring for the new fleet of Muni buses. Despite the massive conversion of the entire system, the poles remained a component of the bus service, with a basic infrastructural role.

Van Ness Avenue became an increasingly congested artery for both local traffic and through traffic on U.S. Route 101 and the poles came to carry a wide array of signage and traffic signals (photographs 13 and 17). The bracketed luminaires shared the poles with road signs, traffic signals, caution signs, and an array of tourist and directional material affixed to and/or bolted on the poles. With such continued intensive use and alteration, the concrete poles also suffered notable deterioration, including spalling of the concrete and corrosion of both the base and brackets. Largely to augment the overloaded poles, Muni and other city agencies installed a number of modern metal poles into the system, designed to support Muni wiring and vehicular traffic signals. Period photographs from the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s indicate the varying integrity of the 259 original poles. Many missed various original elements, supported new additions, and stood back-to-back with modern support poles (photograph 23).¹⁹ By the mid-1980s, internal correspondence of the City and County of San Francisco repeatedly expressed concerns, such as: "many are in such deteriorated condition that they no longer can support overhead trolley wires." By this time, the ad-hoc remedy of installing metal poles immediately adjacent to the original poles was increasingly seen as unsatisfactory, as the insertions "added to the visual clutter of the sidewalk."²⁰

In addition to the visual clutter, authorities worried about the cast iron bases because many were missing access doors or were missing bases completely and public safety required covering the exposed wiring with "sheet metal, plastic, and plywood."²¹ Records indicate that a lack of funding and consensus over the appropriate course of action precluded any holistic replacement or rehabilitation of the poles and their bases until the late 1990s. Letters on file at the Public Utilities Commission indicate that a bid for replacing all damaged or missing cast iron bases with fiberglass replicas was received from fiberglass manufacturer W.J. Whatley, Inc. on June 15, 1997. Similarly, correspondence relating to the replacement of the 1936 luminaires extends from the early 1980s to the 1990s.

¹⁶ Perles, *The People's Railway*, 175

¹⁷ "Van Ness Avenue Track Removal Starts Monday," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 21, 1952.

¹⁸ "Van Ness Decoration," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 11, 1953; "Dividing Strip Proposed for Van Ness," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 24, 1950.

¹⁹ Three photographs from the San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection reflect this condition: "Heald College - School of Architecture at Sutter Street and Van Ness Avenue," [graphic], 1964 Aug. 11, Photo ID Number: AAB-5719, Folder: S.F. Streets - Van Ness Ave - 1950-1980s; "Two unidentified people in a car at Fulton Street and Van Ness Avenue," [graphic], n.d, Photo ID Number: AAB-5579, Folder: S.F. Streets-Van Ness Ave-1950-1980s; "Hippopotamus restaurant and bar, Pacific and Van Ness," [graphic], 1964 Aug. 11, Photo ID Number: AAB-2685, Folder: S.F. Restaurants-Hippopotamus.

²⁰ Information relating to the movement of the poles is on file at the City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission in the Van Ness Avenue correspondence file

²¹ All information relating to the Van Ness Avenue trolley poles is on file at the City and County of San Francisco Public Utilities Commission in the Van Ness Avenue correspondence file. The modern correspondence is in an undifferentiated file folder "Van Ness Avenue."

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*Recorded by: P. Allen; M. Bunse

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Although the files do not indicate exactly when the cast iron bases and luminaires were replaced, field work in March of 2009 found that over half of the bases were fiberglass replacements for the original, and all the luminaires are modern replacements of the originals.

Evaluation

As discussed in the historic context, the construction history of the 259 Van Ness Avenue trolley poles dates from two distinct historic periods: 1914 and 1936. For clarity, this evaluation will address potential significance in relation to the two periods separately.

1914: Development of the Municipal Railway / Panama Pacific International Exposition

The concrete shaft, decorative finial, and if it remains, the cast iron base of each pole date from 1914 and are associated with both the overall development of the Municipal Railway and San Francisco's targeted infrastructural preparation for the Panama Pacific International Exposition (historical photographs 16 and 18 show poles with original 1914 light fixtures). Within the overall context of the development of the Municipal Railway, the Van Ness municipal transportation corridor itself is not significant, as it was one of many such rail lines developed by the city and does not have individual significance within that context. As a link between the Exposition grounds and the newly reconstructed City Hall and Market Street, however, the network of trolley poles reflected an aspect of the carefully honed design sensibility of the City Beautiful and Beaux-Arts ideals undergirding the Exposition, as well as the Civic Center and other public works construction of the period. This association, as a physical link between the temporality of the Exposition and the permanence of Market Street and the civic construction, merits consideration under Criterion A (Criterion 1) because the poles are an example of the profound impact that City Beautiful design and social ideals had on even the most mundane of urban infrastructural construction. However, the poles have lost substantial integrity and no longer convey this civic association, either within the San Francisco Civic Center Historic District or along the length of the avenue (see "Integrity Discussion" section, below).

The relatively ornate Van Ness poles, especially in comparison to the utilitarian poles in the first municipal line on Geary Boulevard, also reflected the elevated design mandate of the Exposition and the Beaux Art classicism of public works like the Civic Center and other large-scale commercial buildings along Market Street, such as the rebuilt Palace Hotel and the 1914 Call Building. The trolley poles once embodied distinctive characteristics of this type and period of construction under Criterion C (Criterion 3), but have since lost historic integrity, both within the San Francisco Civic Center Historic District and along the length of the avenue. While the overall San Francisco streetcar system itself was not significant in its architecture or engineering, the network of poles along Van Ness provided a linear architectural connection with the white palaces of the Exposition, those of city governance at the Civic Center, and those of commerce along Market Street. Records indicate that the poles were designed by the Office of the City Engineer, who was responsible for basic construction all over the city. As an infrastructural element, the poles possessed the artistic values of vaunted Beaux-Arts classicism that related the otherwise utilitarian streetcar line to this overarching architectural language. Although the poles did not represent any significant advances in concrete construction or technology, the aesthetic language of this part of the streetcar system was a significant design expression. The elevated appearance of the poles was an important statement about the status of urban public transport and the artistic value inherent in civic construction in a city that was newly engaged in municipal transportation. The substantial loss of integrity discussed below, however, impairs the ability of these poles to convey this potential significance.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: P. Allen; M. Bunse

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

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1936: Widening and WPA Lighting

The second period of potential significance relates to changes to both Van Ness Avenue itself, and the trolley poles lining its sides, in 1936. The traffic lanes of Van Ness were widened and the sidewalks were narrowed in 1936 as part of a joint municipal and WPA project conducted in preparation for increased traffic expected with the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge. Construction crews not only moved the poles outward to new locations, they also removed the Exposition-era light fixtures (pairs of globes) and installed new light fixtures (historical photograph 20 and photographs 1 and 10 showing poles with 1936 light fixture). Thus, the current light fixtures attached to the 1914 trolley poles date from this period, and are not related to the Panama Pacific International Exposition. Thus, as “light standards,” the poles relate to a Depression era WPA and Golden Gate Bridge infrastructural context that is entirely unrelated to the evaluation of significance for the 1914 period. This 1936 context differs markedly from that relating to other San Francisco light standards, most notably the Path of Gold standards and the Golden Triangle standards, which were direct antecedents of both the design ethos and illumination standards of the Panama Pacific International Exposition.

Integrity Discussion

Evaluation for eligibility for listing in the NRHP and CRHR requires that a property have both historic significance and historic integrity. Although the poles may have once possessed significance under Criteria A and C, they display a marked loss of physical integrity that undercuts their ability to convey significance from either the 1914 or 1936 potential periods of significance. The deterioration, infill, and widespread replacement of major design features undermines nearly all aspects of integrity of the poles, as recognized by the National Register: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Without basic physical integrity, the poles cannot convey historical significance to their period of significance.

The design, materials, workmanship, association, feeling, and setting of the poles was substantially degraded when the rails of the original streetcar system were completely removed in the early 1950s. The 1914 rails that ran up the center of Van Ness Avenue were replaced by concrete medians with landscaping and trees as “Muni” adopted modern wheeled electric buses or trolleys (photograph 27). While the original design of the poles is still evident overall, many individual poles were replaced outright with modern metal poles (photograph 2, and Map 3). About 13% (33 of the original 259 poles) of the poles have been replaced by metal poles and an additional 16% (46 of the original 259 poles) are immediately flanked by a modern metal pole installed to support MUNI wires, street lights, and/or signage. This widespread replacement and installation of new metal poles adjacent to the original poles diminishes the integrity of the group of original poles. As constructed, the 259 poles presented a uniform aesthetic that ran the length of the street (photograph 24). This setting has been compromised by the removal of original poles and installation of replacement poles, leaving the pole network visually cluttered and eroding integrity of design, setting, feeling, and association (photograph 5).

The integrity of the slender, unadorned shaft of most of the original poles has been compromised by insertions cut into the pole for the installation of modern traffic signals, utility conduits, and signage (photograph 13). Approximately 20% (52 poles), have traffic signals affixed. About 64% (165 of the original 259 poles) have some sort of street signage affixed to them with bolts or metal bands. In the same manner that the addition of modern poles alters the original design intent, so too do these modern physical alterations diminish the integrity of design, setting, feeling, and association of the group of poles.

The replacement of 117 of the original cast iron bases (45%) with fiberglass replicas profoundly diminishes the integrity of workmanship and materials of the original poles. The original cast iron bases bore maker’s mark “Joshua Hendy Iron Works S.F. CA” on the access doors. Some of those doors were replaced by cast iron doors

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made by “Steiger and Kerr Stove and Foundry Company S.F. CAL.” Both the expression of workmanship, and the access doors themselves, are completely lacking in the fiberglass replacement bases (photographs 7, 8, 9). Further, because many of these fiberglass replacements are chipped, cracked, and broken, the lightweight nature of the modern material is evident and differs markedly from the heavy cast iron mass of the original bases. Although the bases do retain some integrity of feeling and association, much of this association is not from the historic period, but instead derived from replicated modern materials. According to the National Register, the retention of feeling and association alone is never sufficient to support eligibility of a property for the National Register, particularly when much of this association and feeling is maintained by historic re-creation.²²

The replacement of the 1914 light fixtures with 1936 fixtures also diminishes the integrity of original design, materials, and workmanship within the Panama Pacific context. Neither the 1936 brackets, nor the 1936 pendant luminaires constitute changes to the poles that have gained significance in their own right. The brackets and luminaires, while pleasant, did not have a specific important role within the context of local WPA projects, the larger Golden Gate Bridge project, or within the ongoing construction of the adjacent Civic Center or other public works in this part of San Francisco. The poles do not convey a significant relationship to important events or broad patterns in local, state, or national history (Criteria A and 1). Viewed in relation to the major undertakings of the WPA and the infrastructural development of the Golden Gate Bridge, the brackets and lights were a minute component of vast public works construction projects and do not embody significant characteristics. Neither the 1914 or 1936 light standards on Van Ness Avenue matched those designed and installed within the Civic Center area, nor was the design of the Van Ness poles directly related to the design standards or development of other construction projects in the area (photographs 25 and 26). Like the original standards, patterns for the work were drawn by a city official, in this case PUC Chief Engineer Paul J. Ost. The project was one of thousands spearheaded by the WPA, and the relatively simple insertion of the lighting fixtures was not a significant design or engineering feat that is an important representative of a type, period, or method of construction, nor are they the work of a master (Criteria C and 3). The insertion of the 1936 light standards in many ways replicated earlier City Beautiful designs for other lighting standards in the city, including the Path of Gold and Golden Triangle Standards. The incandescent lamps were not advanced in design, but rather represented standard best practice seen across San Francisco and the nation. Incandescent luminaires of that type had been in use for decades, and were largely selected because of General Electric’s ubiquity and standardization. These elements have since been removed as well.

The poles are not significant under Criterion B (Criterion 2) or Criterion D (Criterion 4) under either potential period of significance. The 1914 trolley poles, their 1936 alterations, and their subsequent changes and modern alterations do not have a direct or important association with any historically significant individuals. Similarly, the poles are not likely to yield any significant information in their physical construction technology or material. The simple reinforced concrete poles were moved in 1936, and that project, along with their continued alteration ever since, are otherwise well documented. They are not important sources of historical information in and of themselves.

With a history relating to two historic periods, the Van Ness Avenue trolley poles represent the major changes that have continually shaped the avenue as a transportation corridor. The poles have long functioned as an infrastructural and streetscape element along Van Ness Avenue, but the poles have lost historic integrity through a series of changes to the poles themselves, and most importantly, to the system they once served. (For illustrations of these changes see comparative photographs 16 and 17, 18 and 19, and 20 through 22, which depict conditions from the historic period and those of today). The poles we see today are, in fact, an amalgam of undifferentiated modern and historic materials. More than half of the poles have modern signs or traffic lights affixed to or bolted to the shaft. Approximately one-half of the original poles are missing their maker’s mark, access doors, and base, and instead have

²² United States Department of the Interior, National Register Bulletin: How To Apply The National Register Criteria For Evaluation, 1995. Accessed online at <http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/pdfs/nrb15.pdf>, April 15, 2009.

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a modern fiberglass replica base without doors or maker's mark. A number of the poles have been removed and replaced, and many more are flanked by, modern metal poles. Although the poles as a group, extending from Market Street to North Point Street, might otherwise have potential historic significance under NRHP Criteria A and C (CRHR Criteria 1 and 3) from the 1914 period of significance, as resources lacking integrity to this period they are not eligible for listing in either the NRHP or the CRHR because they cannot convey their potential significance through physical integrity to their potential period of significance.

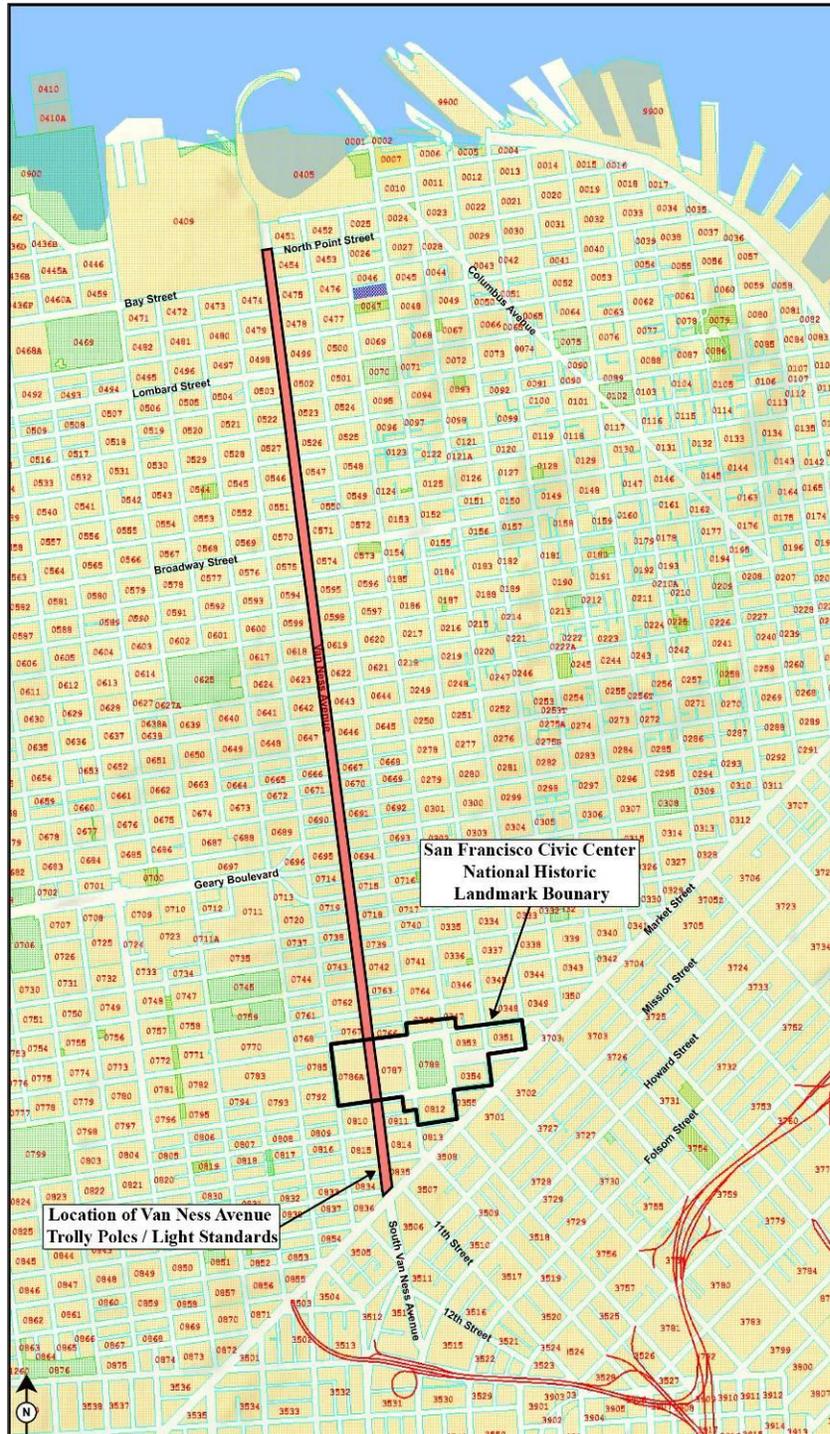
*Recorded by: P. Allen; M. Bunse

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

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Map 1: Location of Van Ness Avenue trolley poles/light standards



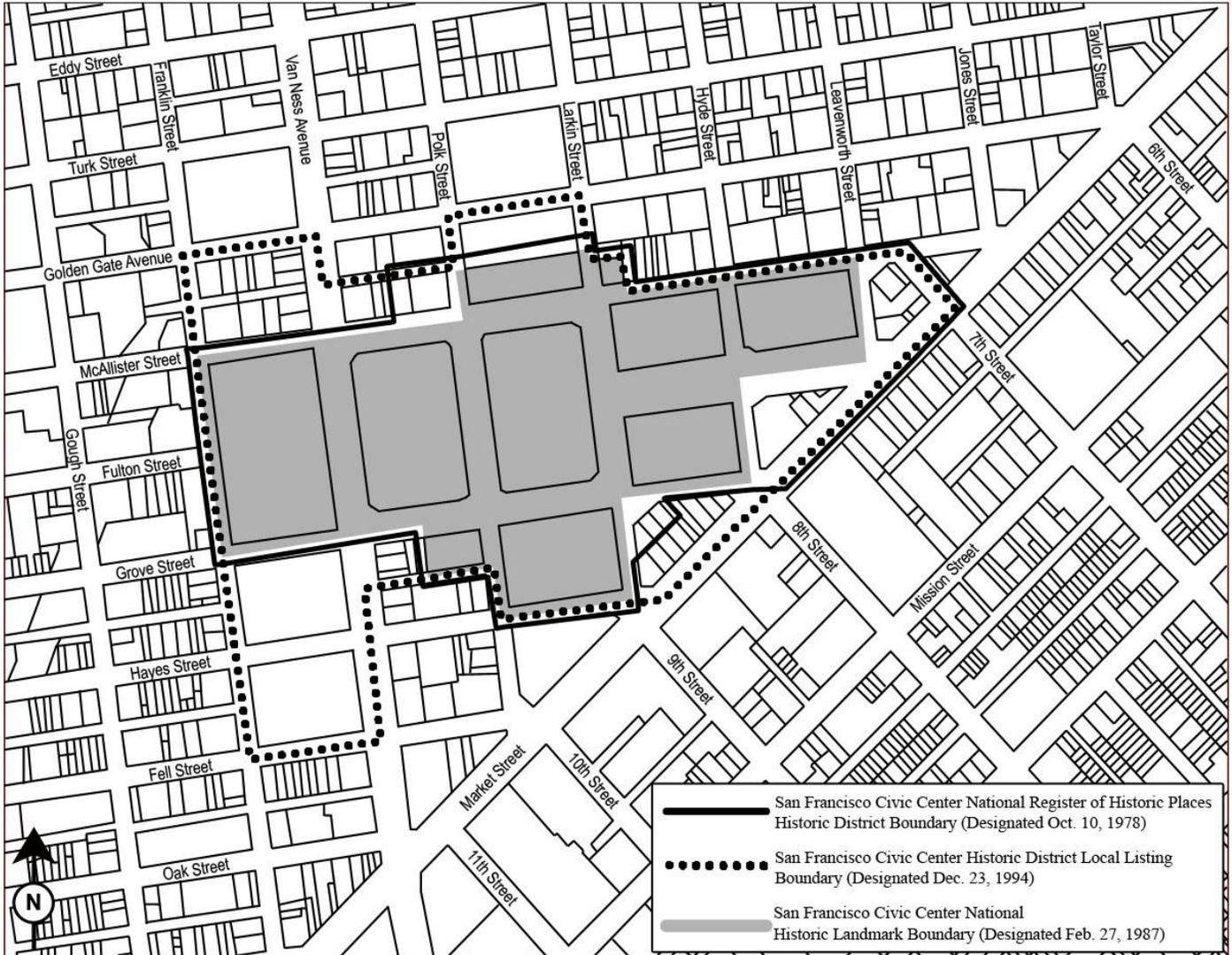
*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Map 2: Civic Center Historic District Boundaries



*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



**Photograph 2: Replacement modern metal pole, Pole 67,
southwest corner of Van Ness Avenue and Turk Street, 4/1/2009.**

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



**Photograph 3: Original pole and base, missing access door, Pole 196,
east side of Van Ness between Jackson and Washington, 4/1/2009.**

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 4: Part of base missing, Pole 265, between Greenwich Street and Filbert Street, 4/1/2009.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 5: Electric traffic signal and MUNI signal equipment inserted and signage added to Pole 287, southwest corner of Van Ness Avenue and Chestnut Street, 4/1/2009.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 6: Partial base, traffic signal equipment inserted, and signage on Pole 227, southwest corner of Van Ness Avenue and Vallejo Street, 4/1/2009.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 7: Mark of "Joshua Hendy Iron Works, S.F., Cal." on original base access door on Pole 298, southeast corner of Van Ness Avenue and Francisco Street, 4/1/2009.

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #2

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

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Continuation

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Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 8: Mark of “Steiger & Kerr Stove & Foundry Co., SF CA,” on iron replacement base access door on Pole 211, northwest corner of Van Ness Avenue and Pacific Street, 4/1/2009.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 9: Replacement fiberglass base without foliated details or access doors, Pole 228, southeast corner of Van Ness Avenue and Vallejo Street, 4/1/2009.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 10: Detail showing exterior wiring inserted in Pole 264, with original finial and 1936 bracket and modern luminaire, Van Ness Avenue between Greenwich and Filbert streets, 4/1/2009.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 11: Exterior wiring, signage, and flower baskets on Pole 41, showing gold paint on original base, between McAllister Street and Grove Street, 4/1/2009.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 12: Alterations to Pole 157, including insertion of traffic signal equipment, signage added, base removed, and modern metal pole installed adjacent. Located southwest corner of Van Ness Avenue and California Street, 4/1/2009.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 13: Pole 137, alterations include insertion utility conduit and exposed wiring, southwest corner of Van Ness Avenue and Bush Street, 4/1/2009.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 14: Block between Sutter Street and Post Street, showing missing poles replaced by modern metal poles, 4/1/2009.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

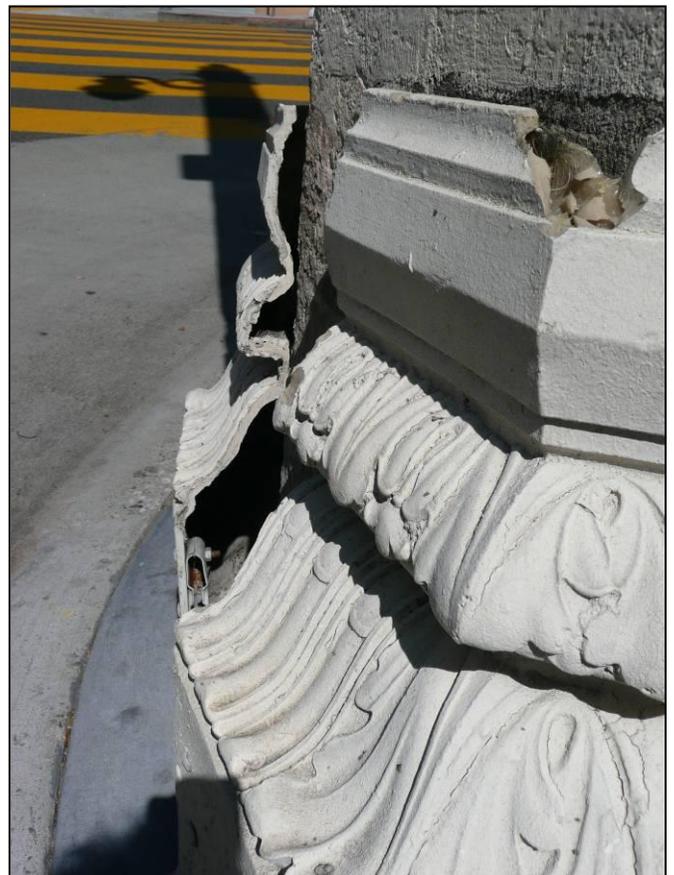
Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 15a and 15b: Example of fiberglass replacement base (this one with foliated detailing), no access doors, Pole 308, at the southeast corner of Van Ness and Bay, 4/1/2009.



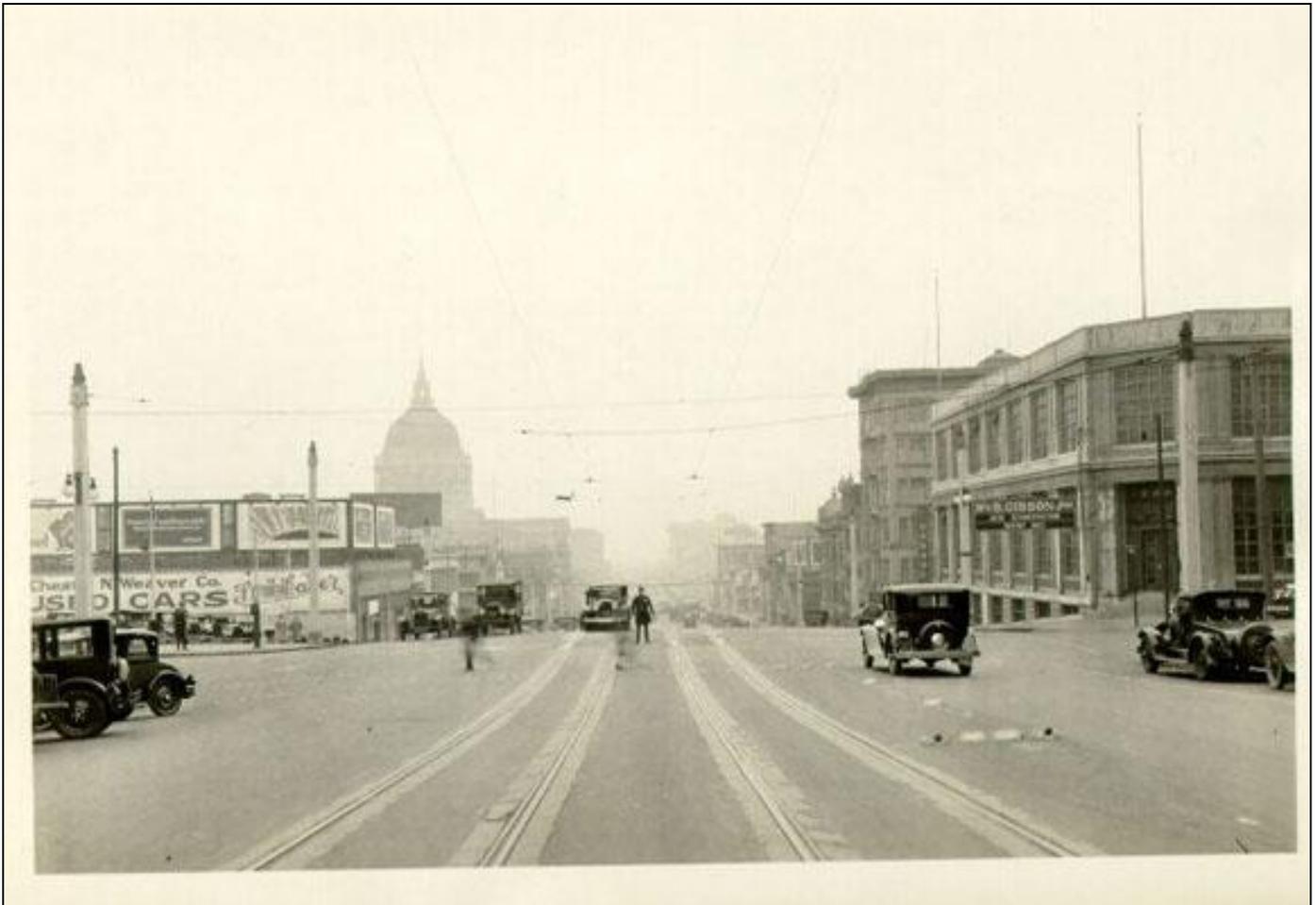
*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs:



Photograph 16: Trolley Poles with original light fixtures at Van Ness Avenue and Eddy Street, 1929 (Pole 82 at east and Pole 81 at west, camera facing south). Photograph courtesy of San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection. See current condition of Pole 82 in Photograph 17 below.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs:



Photograph 17: Pole 82 with insertion of traffic signal equipment, signage added, and modern metal pole installed adjacent, Van Ness Avenue and Eddy Street, 4/1/2009 (shown in Photograph 16 above).

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 18: Trolley Pole with original light fixture at Van Ness and Hayes Street, 1910s (Pole 17, camera facing south). Photograph courtesy of San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection. See current pole condition in Photograph 19 below.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 19: Pole 17, with insertion of traffic signal equipment, signage added, and installation of adjacent modern metal pole, Van Ness Avenue and Hayes Street, 4/1/2009 (shown in Photograph 18 above).

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 20: Trolley Poles with 1936 light fixtures at Van Ness Avenue and O'Farrell Street, as of 1943, (Pole 101 in foreground and Pole 98 in background at diagonal, camera facing southeast). See current pole condition in Photograph 21 below. Photograph courtesy of San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



**Photograph 21: Replacement metal pole in location of Pole 101,
Van Ness Avenue and O'Farrell Street, 4/1/2009 (shown in Photograph 20 above).**

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



**Photograph 22: Traffic signal equipment inserted in Pole 98, Van Ness Avenue and O'Farrell Street, 4/1/2009
(also shown in Photograph 20 above).**

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



**Photograph 23: Pole 127, Van Ness Avenue and Sutter Street, as of 1964.
Traffic signal equipment has been inserted in the pole and a modern metal pole installed immediately adjacent.
Photograph courtesy of San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection.**

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 24: Van Ness Avenue looking north from Fell Street in 1935. This photo was taken just before the 1936 WPA project and the original pairs of lights are still in place. The poles line the corridor with their original and uniformly uncluttered aesthetic. Photograph courtesy of San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 25: Original Civic Center light standards along Grove Street in 1915. Photograph courtesy of California State Archives (Department of Public Works, Architecture (Durkee Collection), State Buildings, San Francisco, Photo F 3253: 242B (27)).

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



**Photograph 26: Another iteration of Civic Center light standards, in 1945.
Photograph courtesy of San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection.**

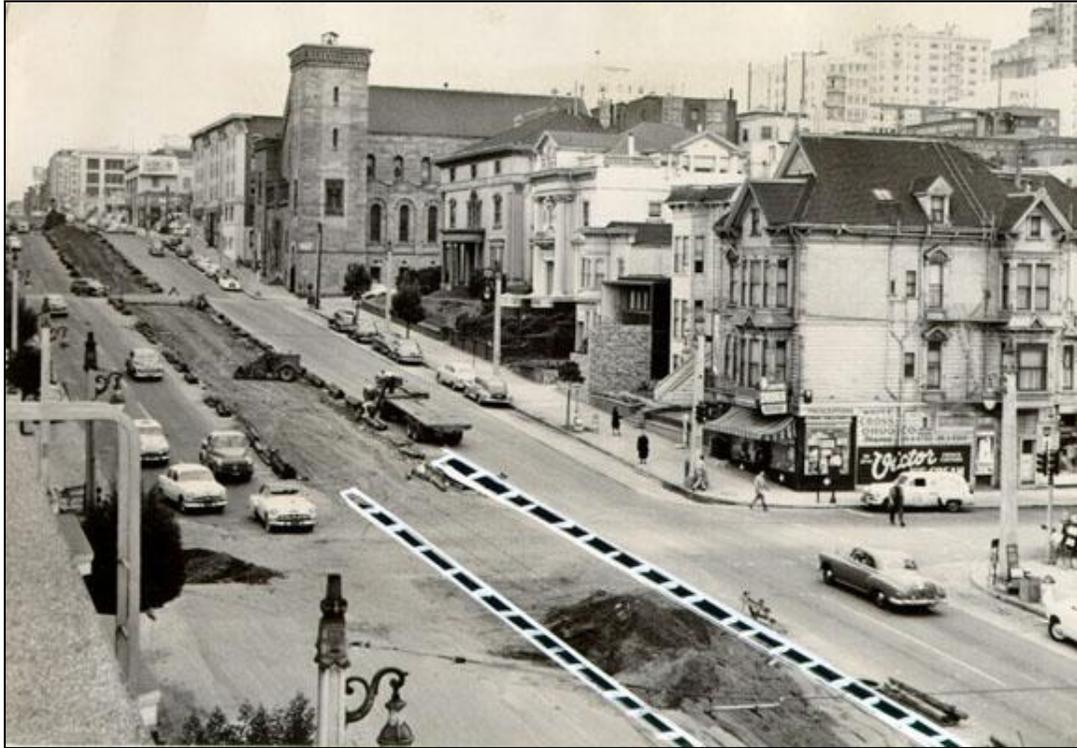
*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 27: Track removal on Van Ness Avenue at Vallejo Street in 1952. Note contrasting color of finials and brackets. Also, the result of the WPA street widening (sidewalk narrowing) project is still visible in different color of pavement along sidewalks. Photograph courtesy of San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection.

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #2

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

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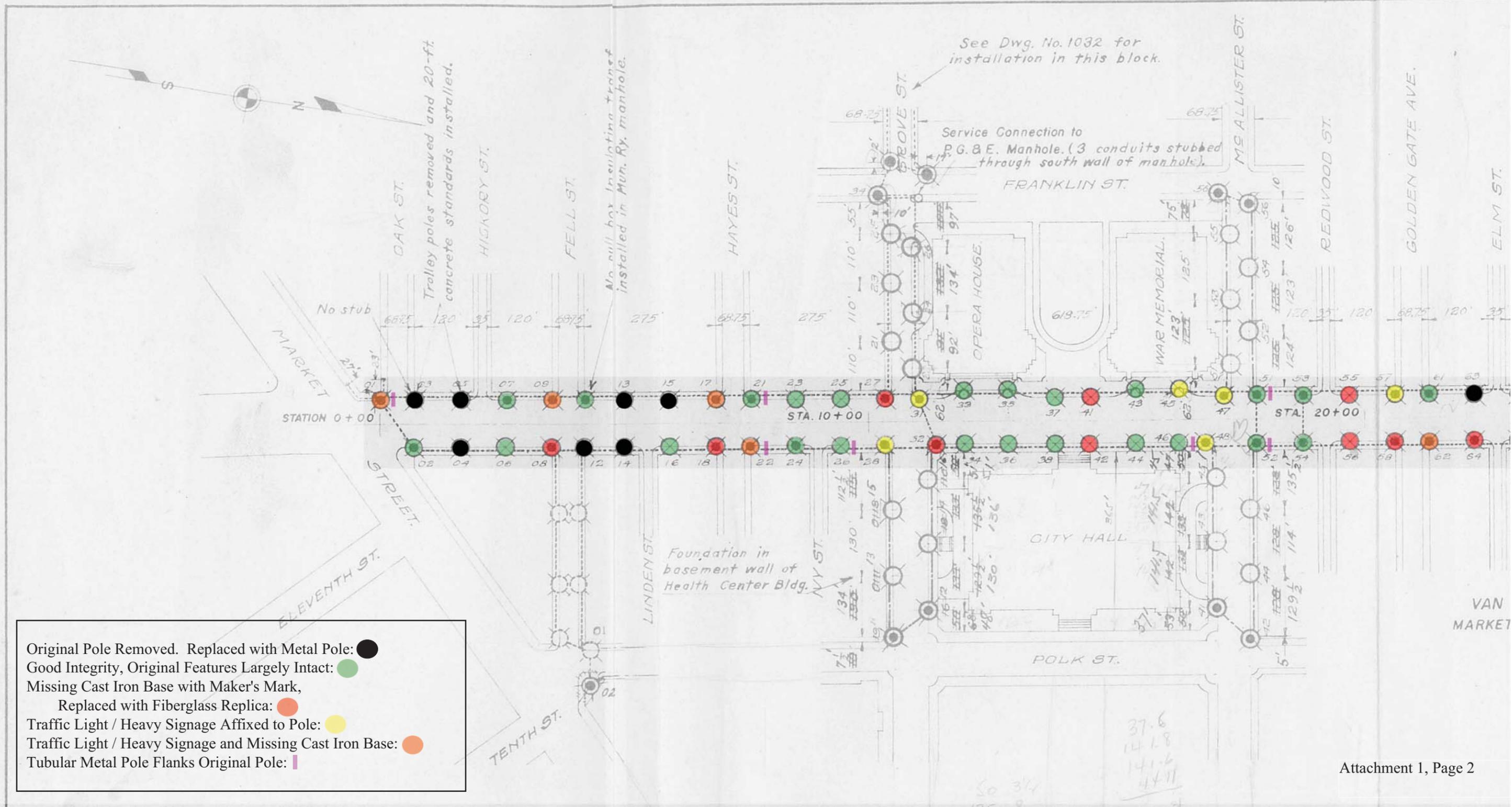
Attachment 1: Oversize Pages Follow Below

SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
ELECTRIC POWER BUREAU

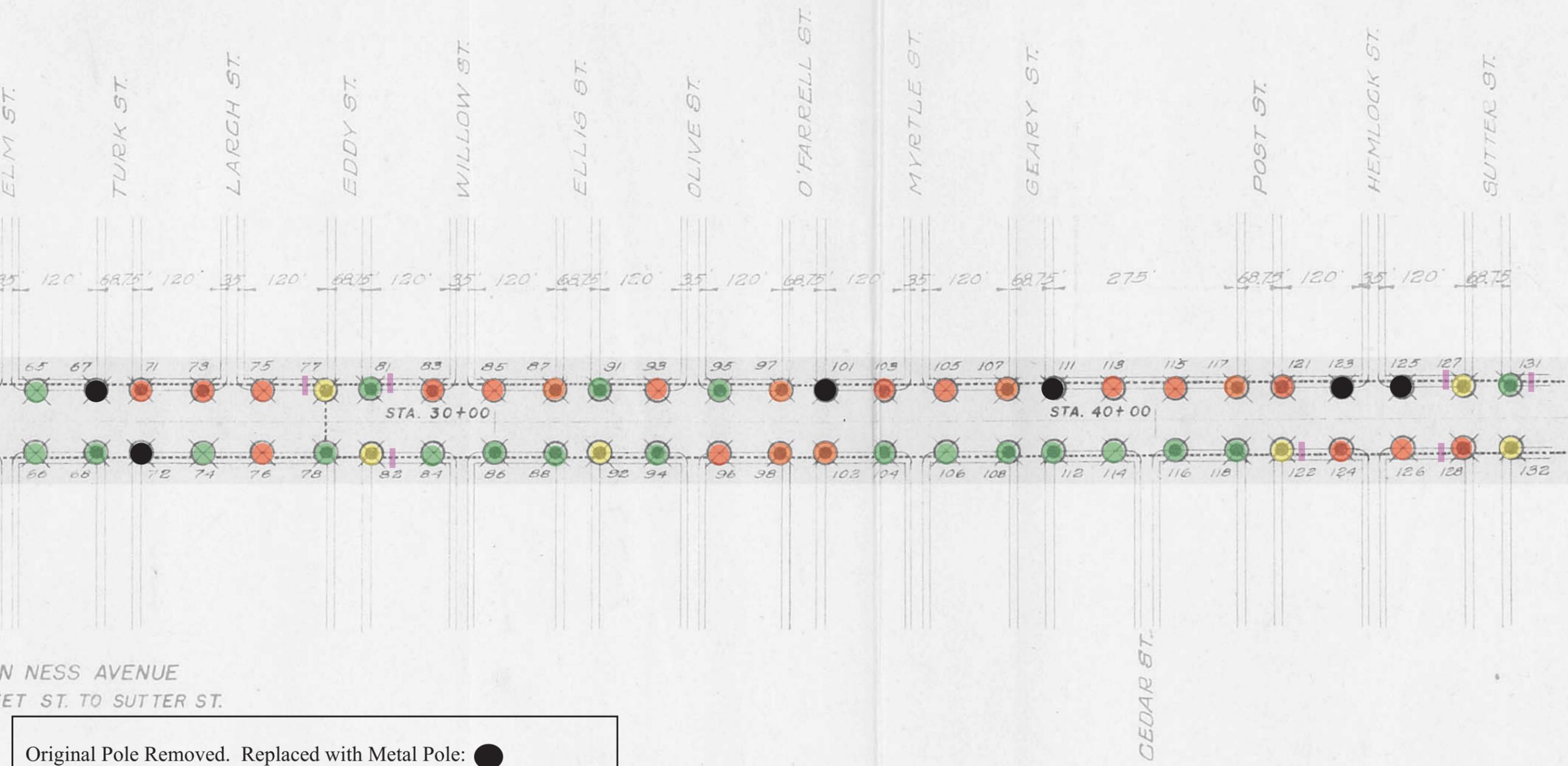
STREET LIGHTING SYSTEM

VAN NESS AVENUE
MARKET STREET TO NORTH POINT STREET.

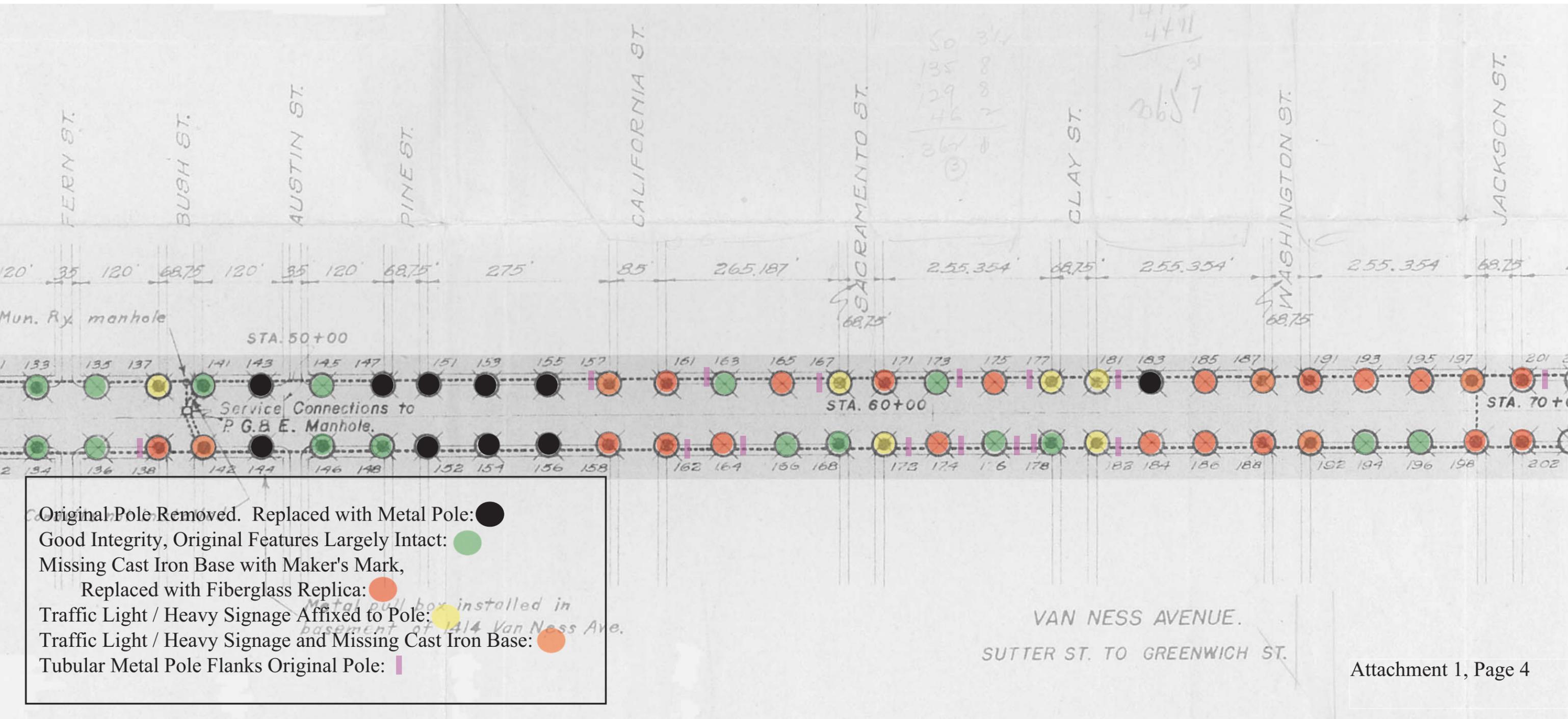
SCALE	1 INCH = 200 FEET.	BY <i>ER</i>	TR. <i>ER</i>	DATE	SEPT. 1936.
APPROVED	<i>A. C. Olsen</i>	CH.	OK	REVISED	Nov. 1936. <i>Aug. 1937</i> <i>B.W.G.</i>
APPROVED	<i>Paul D. ...</i> MANAGER AND CHIEF ENGINEER.			DRAWING NO.	3100



- Original Pole Removed. Replaced with Metal Pole: ●
- Good Integrity, Original Features Largely Intact: ●
- Missing Cast Iron Base with Maker's Mark,
Replaced with Fiberglass Replica: ●
- Traffic Light / Heavy Signage Affixed to Pole: ●
- Traffic Light / Heavy Signage and Missing Cast Iron Base: ●
- Tubular Metal Pole Flanks Original Pole: |



- Original Pole Removed. Replaced with Metal Pole: ●
- Good Integrity, Original Features Largely Intact: ●
- Missing Cast Iron Base with Maker's Mark,
Replaced with Fiberglass Replica: ●
- Traffic Light / Heavy Signage Affixed to Pole: ●
- Traffic Light / Heavy Signage and Missing Cast Iron Base: ●
- Tubular Metal Pole Flanks Original Pole: |



50 3/4
 135 8
 129 8
 46 2
 36 0
 ③
 141
 4411
 2657

Original Pole Removed. Replaced with Metal Pole: ●

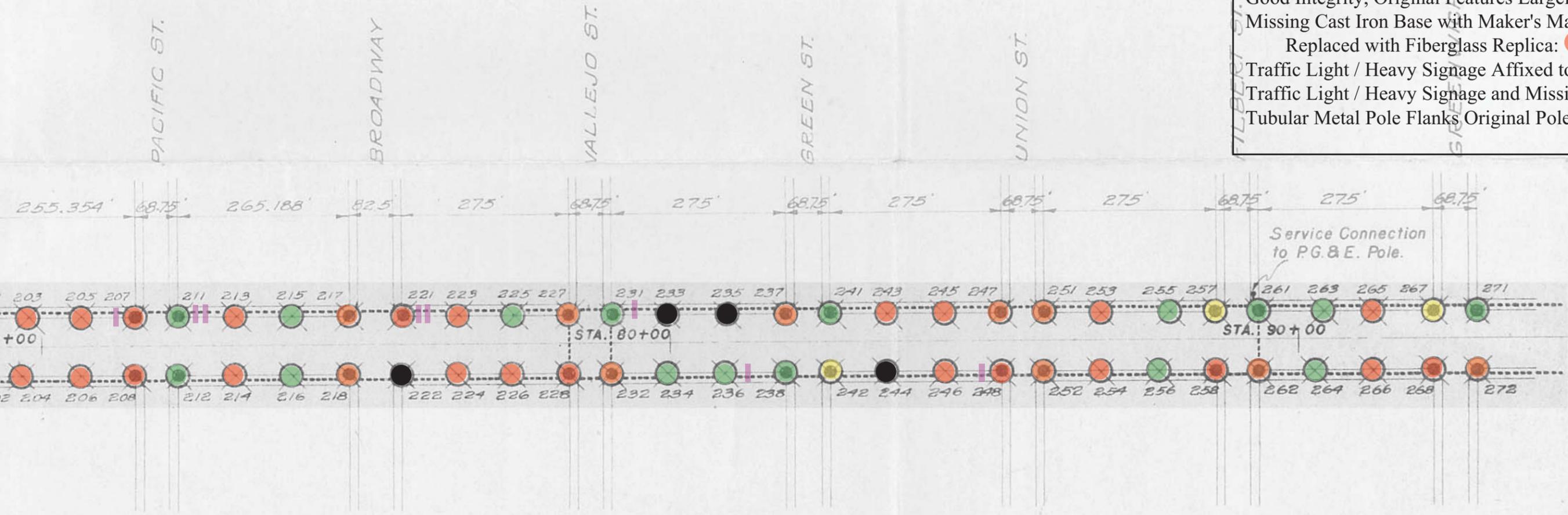
Good Integrity, Original Features Largely Intact: ●

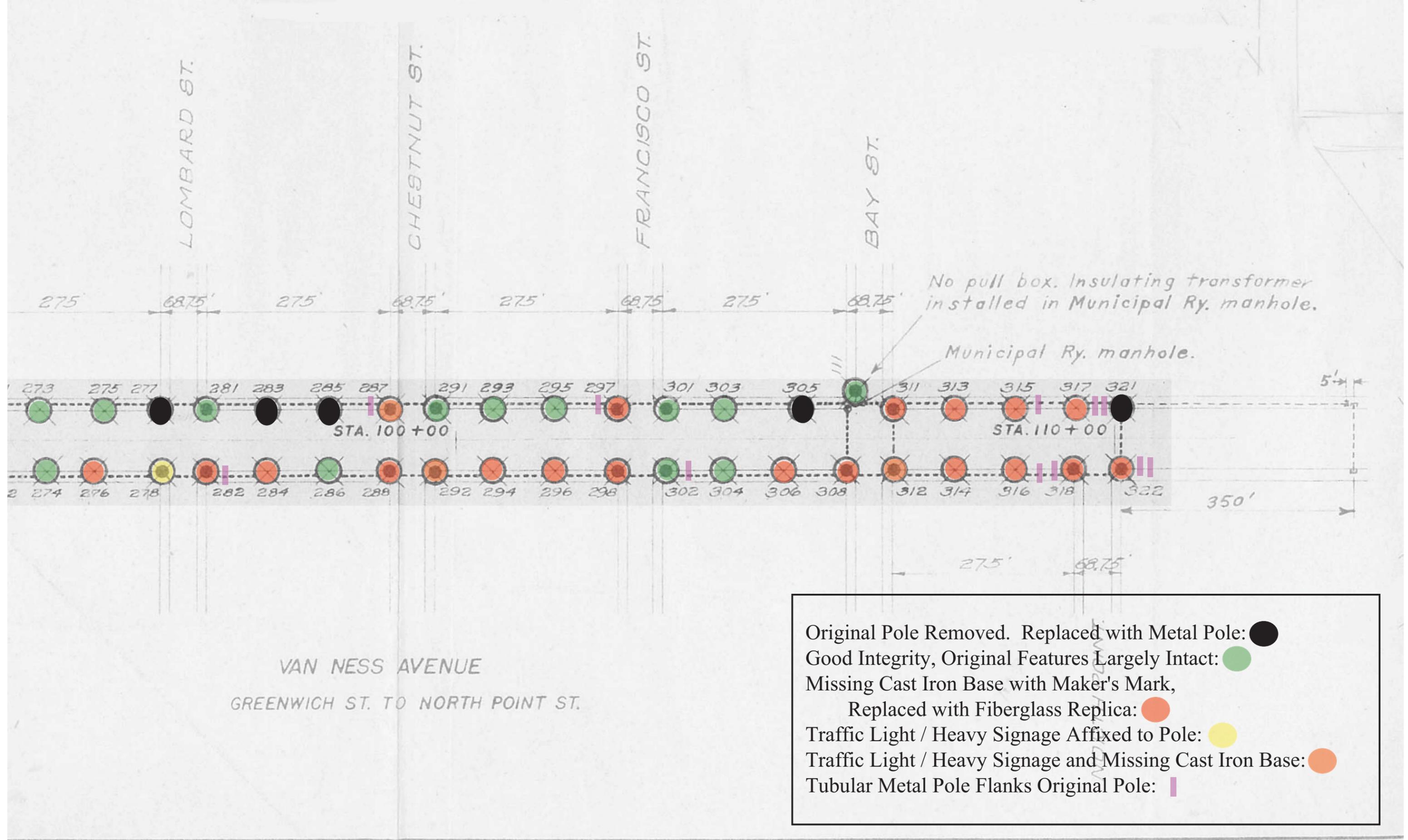
Missing Cast Iron Base with Maker's Mark,
Replaced with Fiberglass Replica: ●

Traffic Light / Heavy Signage Affixed to Pole: ●

Traffic Light / Heavy Signage and Missing Cast Iron Base: ●

Tubular Metal Pole Flanks Original Pole: |





P1. Other Identifier: San Francisco Civic Center National Historic Landmark District

*P2 e. Other Locational Data: Vicinity of Van Ness Avenue and Market Street, San Francisco, CA (See Figure 1 on Continuation Sheet for full boundary)

***P3a. Description:**

The San Francisco Civic Center was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) on October 10, 1978. Subsequently, the Civic Center was designated as a National Historic Landmark District (NHL) on February 27, 1987. Since this designation, the district was designated as a San Francisco City Landmark District on December 23, 1994 (the boundaries of the NRHP District, NHL and the San Francisco City District are different, see Figure 1 on Continuation Sheet). Several contributors to the District also have individual landmark status. The San Francisco City Hall building was listed as San Francisco City Landmark No. 21 on March 9, 1969. In addition, the War Memorial was listed as San Francisco City Landmark No. 84 on January 9, 1977. Also, the Birthplace of the United Nations/War Memorial Complex is California Historical Landmark No. 964 (May 13, 1985).

The 1978 NRHP Historic District Nomination and 1987 National Historic Landmark Nomination forms are attached to this Update Sheet.

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** HP14-Government Building, HP12-Civic Auditorium

***P8. Recorded by:** Polly S. Allen and Meta Bunse, JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, 1490 Drew Ave, Suite 110, Davis, CA 95618

***P11. Report Citation:** JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report (HRIER) for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***B10. Significance:**

This update sheet has been prepared to present information relating to several inconsistencies in the historic record that have arisen since its designation as an NHL in 1987. At the time of designation, the contributing buildings were:

- City Hall
- Civic (Exposition) Auditorium
- Public Library
- State Building
- Federal Building
- War Memorial Opera House
- Veterans Building
- Department of Public Health Building
- Civic Center Powerhouse

The designation also identified two "notable landscape features," the Civic Center Plaza and the Memorial Court. The designation did not include any other landscape or streetscape elements as character defining features.

In 2007, the District was included in the identification efforts conducted as part of studies undertaken for the Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project undertaken by the San Francisco Department of Public Works (SFDPW) (included as an attachment to this document).¹ The Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, as a local agency project

¹ Architectural Resources Group, "Historic Resources Evaluation Report: Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, City of San Francisco, California," prepared by Bridget M. Maley, prepared for Caltrans District 4 and San Francisco Department of Public Works (SFDPW) (1/95)

undertaking under Section 106, was conducted under the auspices of the Programmatic Agreement (PA) among the Federal Highway Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and Caltrans (2004).

The HRER/HPSR for the Streetscape Improvement Project did not present any new evaluations or findings of eligibility within the San Francisco Civic Center NHL. Nevertheless, the HRER/HPSR did include newly prepared descriptions of the landscape and streetscape features within the NHL. These descriptions proposed landscape and streetscape character-defining features within the district that had not been identified or described in either the 1978 National Register Nomination or the 1987 NHL Nomination. The amendment also proposed a different period of significance for the property than the period of significance established in the NHL designation. Because the HRER/HPSR was completed under the PA's Standard Conditions under the Section 106 process, the report did not include evaluation analysis of these proposed additional elements, and has not resulted in a determination regarding the eligibility of those elements, the proposed amendments have not been listed as contributing elements of the Civic Center NHL.

The HRER/HPSR did not propose amendments to the 1987 NHL Nomination that is on file with the NPS, but instead amended the 1978 National Register Nomination. In doing so, the proposed amendment introduced a new period of significance that conflicts with that established in the NHL nomination and approved by the Keeper. The designated period of significance for the NHL District is 1913-1951, a period that includes both the architectural development of the Civic Center, as well as its pivotal role in the founding of the United Nations (UN) and the signing of peace treaties with Japan in the post-war period. The 2007 continuation sheets propose a period of significance of 1912-1936, a period that spans only the construction of the Civic Center buildings and excludes the district's role in the formative days of the UN and the execution of early Cold War treaties. The author mistakenly cited the 1978 National Register Nomination, referring to it as the NHL document: "the NHL Landmark nomination, authored in 1978, does not define a specific period of significance, yet lists a specific significant date as, 'Civic Center Plan-1912'." This confusion between the 1978 National Register Nomination, which did present only a 1912 period of significance, and the 1987 NHL Nomination that broadened the period of significance to 1913-1951, has led to conflicting information regarding the district property. Nevertheless, the current recognized period of significance for the NHL is 1913-1951.

In addition to proposing a change to the period of significance, the HRER/HPSR briefly describes eleven streetscape and landscape elements as "character defining features" within the district: City Hall landscape planters, City Hall entrance staircase, War Memorial Opera House staircase, War Memorial Veterans Building entrance, War Memorial Opera House landscape planters, War Memorial Veterans Building landscape planters, War Memorial Complex curb cuts, streetlights with baskets (trolley poles, see DPR 523 for Map Reference #2), two fire hydrants, and a single fire alarm and police telephone box. Other than a brief description of each element, there is no justification for including the features and the amendment does not evaluate the elements using either NRHP or NHL criteria or integrity considerations. The HRER/HPSR did not include evaluation analysis of these proposed character defining features, has not resulted in a determination regarding the eligibility of these features, and the proposed amendments have not been listed as contributing elements of the Civic Center NHL.²

Some of the elements, namely the planters, staircases, and curb cuts, appear to be part of the original construction of the buildings (dating between 1913 and the mid 1930s) and appear to directly relate to the historic context of the district as approved by the Keeper, but the other features exhibit few direct historical associations. The streetlights/trolley poles, fire hydrants, fire alarm, and police telephone box are all infrastructural elements that are not associated with the district and

Works, March 2007; Architectural Resources Group, "Historic Property Survey Report: Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, City of San Francisco, California," prepared for Caltrans District 4 and San Francisco Department of Public Works, October 2007.

² Architectural Resources Group, "HPSR: Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project," October 2007.

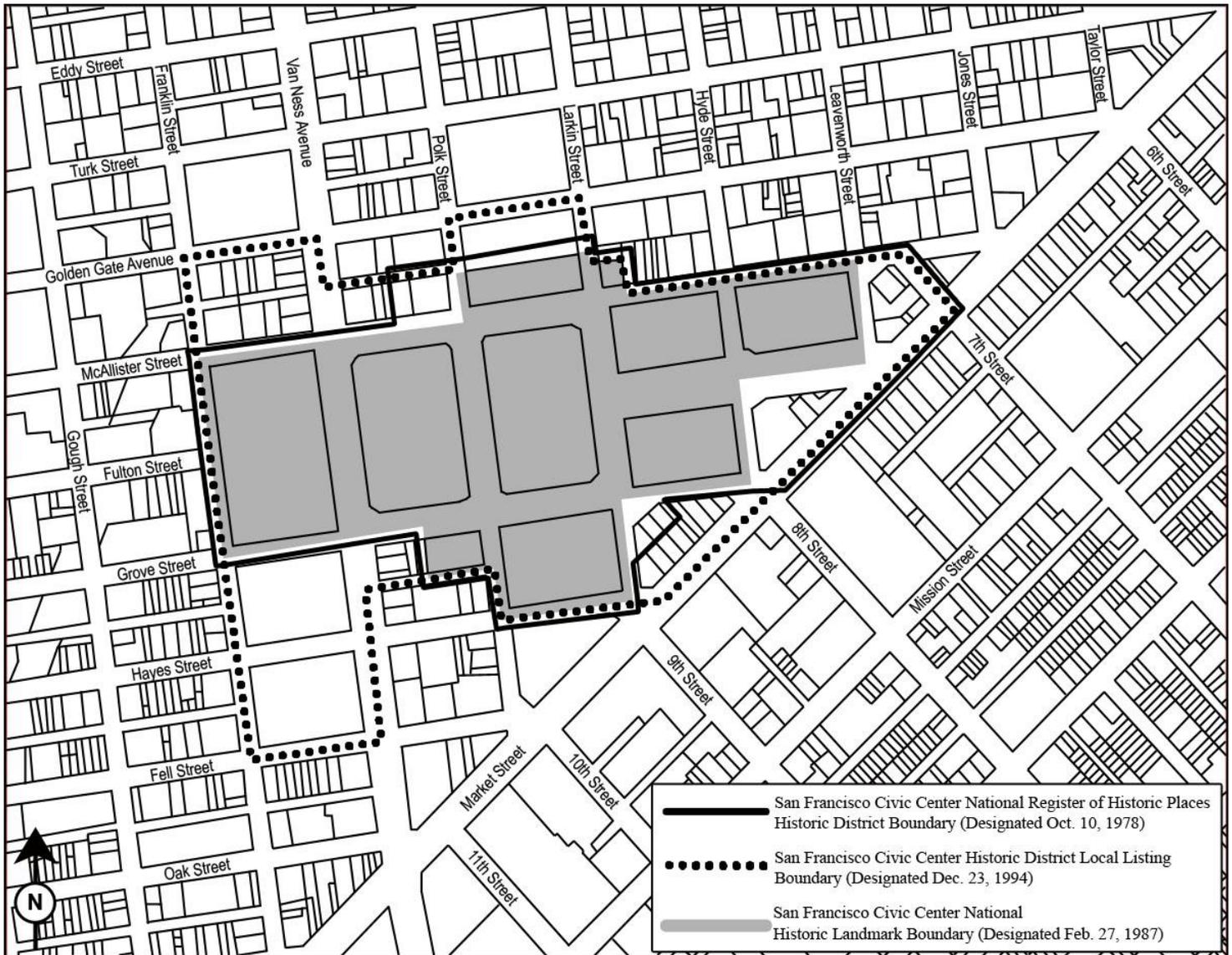
were designed and installed throughout other areas of the city; as such, they are not specifically or uniquely associated with the Civic Center area. The fire hydrants predate the construction of the Civic Center complex and are found elsewhere along Van Ness Avenue and throughout the pre-earthquake parts of the city. The fire/police call boxes were also installed city-wide and such infrastructural elements are common outside the district, like those found along the length of Van Ness Avenue. Similarly, the streetlights on Van Ness Avenue are part of a system of 259 trolley/streetlight poles all along that avenue and have a complex history in their role as trolley wire support poles within the 1914 development of Municipal Rail along that corridor. Later, all of the Van Ness poles were altered as part of the 1936 preparations for the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge. The trolley poles intersect the Civic Center NHLD between Grove and McAllister streets on each side of Van Ness Avenue (Photograph 1) and do not appear any of the other major streets within the district. The design of the poles was not part of the Civic Center plan. The trolley poles actually differ markedly in appearance and style from the light standards that were erected in the Civic Center during the historic period (Photograph 2). The trolley poles, erected for the Municipal Railway, were infrastructural features that do not share the same direct historical context or associations for which the Civic Center is important. Although the avenue and the trolley poles passes through the Civic Center, neither it nor its basic streetscape features are a significant design element of the Civic Center plan. The avenue and its street features are instead simply basic arterial components. The Civic Center complex largely extends east from Van Ness Avenue, with its pedestrian elements and plazas concentrated along Polk Street, Larkin Street, and Hyde Street. As the 1987 National Historic Landmark documentation states, the “San Francisco Civic Center is a group of monumental buildings around a central open space (Civic Center Plaza), and additional buildings that extend the principal axis to the east and west.” The streetscape elements of Van Ness Avenue play a peripheral role in this monumental assemblage (see full evaluation, historic context, and photographs of the trolley poles, Map Reference #2).

As part of this present study, several elements of street furniture and infrastructure were fully evaluated on DPR523 forms, including the Van Ness Corridor (Map Reference #1) and the trolley poles (Map Reference #2). These other evaluations concluded that these resources were “not eligible” for listing in the NRHP, nor as part of the NHLD. The other elements proposed as character-defining features in the 2007 HRER/HPSR were outside the study area for the Van Ness BRT project and may require full documentation and evaluation to be considered contributing elements of the district property.

Attachments:

1. **1978 San Francisco Civic Center NRHP Nomination Form**
2. **1987 San Francisco Civic Center NHL Nomination Form**
3. **2007 “HRER: Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, City of San Francisco, California” and NHL Continuation Sheets**

Figure 1: Civic Center Historic District Boundaries



Photographs:



Photograph 1: Van Ness Avenue looking north from Fell Street in 1935. Van Ness Avenue intersects with the National Historic Landmark District in the block along the west side of City Hall.
Photograph courtesy of San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection.



Photograph 2: Original Civic Center light standards along Grove Street near City Hall in 1915. These light standards have long since been removed and replaced by more than one type of light standard since the time of this photograph. Photograph courtesy of California State Archives (Department of Public Works, Architecture (Durkee Collection), State Buildings, San Francisco, Photo F 3253: 242B (27)).

Attachment 1: National Register of Historic Place Nomination Form for the San Francisco Civic Center Historic District, entered into the National Register October 10, 1978.

PH 0664570

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC San Francisco Civic Center *H.D.*

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Roughly bounded by Golden Gate *avenue, 7th*
Franklin, Hayes and Market Streets

CITY, TOWN
San Francisco

STATE
California

___ VICINITY OF

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Sixth

COUNTY CODE
San Francisco 75

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Multiple Ownership

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER Room 167, City Hall

CITY, TOWN

San Francisco

STATE

California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1934 - Present

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

California Historical Society, Schubert Hall, 2099 Pacific Avenue

CITY, TOWN

San Francisco

STATE

California

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The San Francisco Civic Center consists of a principal aggregation of monumental buildings around a central open space, with additional buildings extending the principal axis at either end. It includes all or part of 16 city blocks, six of which have been combined into three double blocks to accommodate larger features. There are seven major buildings, two secondary buildings, a large plaza and three unrealized building sites within the Civic Center proper. Within the boundaries of the historic district there are eight additional buildings, two of which were specifically designed to conform in one or more ways with the Civic Center; three are only temporary, and three predate the Civic Center. Some of the street rights-of-way have been turned into pedestrian areas which preserve the visual avenues formerly provided by public streets. There is a mixture of public and private ownership and public and private use within the district.

The buildings and sites are as follows: (entries keyed to Map 1).

Map Ref.	Property	Date	Address	Owner
1	Marshall Square	1870	-	City
1a	Pioneer Memorial	1894	-	City
1b	Dept. City Planning Bldg.	1941	100 Larkin	City
1c	Parking	-	24 Grove	Lease fr. City
1d	Brooks Hall Ramp	1958	-	City
2	Four Corners	1912	-	Multiple
2A	Wells Fargo Bank Bldg.	1908	1256 Market	Wells Fargo
a.	Parking	-	41 Grove	Wells Fargo
b.	Parking	-	30 Larkin	Wells Fargo
2B	Civic Center Power House	1915	320 Larkin	City
2C	Standard Station	ca. 1930	401 Polk	Lease fr. City
2D	Dept. Public Health Bldg.	1932	101 Grove	City
3	Exposition Auditorium	1915	99 Grove	City
4	City Hall	1915	400 Van Ness	City
5	Civic Center Plaza	1915	-	City
5a	Brooks Hall	1958	99 Grove	City
5b	Civic Center Garage	1960	355 McAllister	City
6	Public Library	1916	200 Larkin	City
6a	Library Annex	1945	45 Hyde	City
7	California State Bldg.	1926	350 McAllister	State
8	Orpheum Theater	1926	1182 Market	Orpheum Theater Co.
9	City Hall Annex	1931	450 McAllister	City
10	War Memorial	1932	-	City
10a	Opera House	1932	309 Van Ness	City
10b	Veterans Building	1932	459 Van Ness	City
10c	Memorial Court	1936	-	City
11	Federal Building	1936	50 U.N. Plaza	U.S.A.
12	United Nations Plaza	1975	-	City/BART
13	1 United Nations Plaza	1927	1 U.N. Plaza	C. Randel
14	Buker's Pet Store	ca. 1907	1170 Market	George M. & Nazenig Mardikin
15	McCarthy's Cocktail Lng.	ca. 1907	1172 Market	Catherine McCarthy
16	7th and McAllister Bldg.	1906	79 McAllister	Hanns & Gerda Kainz
17	The Methodist Book Concern	1907	83-91 McAllister	The Methodist Book Concern
18	Vacant	-	-	City/BART

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 2

Property Owners -- San Francisco Civic Center

✓ George M. and Nazenig Mardikian 1170 Market Street San Francisco, CA 94102	✓ Orpheum Building Co. 1182 Market San Francisco, CA 94102
✓ City and County of San Francisco Real Estate Department 450 McAllister San Francisco, CA 94102	✓ Chairman, Board of Supervisors County of San Francisco City Hall San Francisco, CA 94102
✓ Catherine McCarthy 1172 Market Street San Francisco, CA 94102	✓ Wells Fargo Bank 1256 Market Street San Francisco, CA 94102
✓ Methodist Book Concern 83-91 McAllister San Francisco, CA 94102	✓ Bay Area Rapid Transit District 800 Madison Street Oakland, CA 94612
✓ Hanns and Gerda Kainz 79 McAllister San Francisco, CA 94102	✓ United States Government, GSA Regional Historic Preservation Liaison Public Buildings Service 525 Market San Francisco, CA 94103
✓ C. Randel 35 Fulton Street San Francisco, CA 94118	

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CONTINUATION SHEET

1

ITEM NUMBER 6

PAGE 1

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (continued)

Title of Survey:

California History Plan: Inventory of Historical Features

Date of Survey:

1967 State Level

Depository for Survey Records:

Department of Parks and Recreation, History Preservation Section

Street and Number:

1416 Ninth Street

City: Sacramento

State: California

Title of Survey:

Junior League of San Francisco, Inc.

Date of Survey:

1968 Local Level

Depository for Survey Records:

Special Collections Room, San Francisco Public Library

Street and Number:

Civic Center

City: San Francisco

State: California

Title of Survey:

1975-1976 Architectural Inventory

Date of Survey:

1976 Local Level

Depository for Survey Records:

San Francisco Department of City Planning

100 Larkin Street

San Francisco, California

Title of Survey:

San Francisco City Landmarks:

City Hall

War Memorial: pending

Orpheum Theater: pending

Date of Survey:

ongoing Local Level

Depositor for Survey Records:

San Francisco Department of City Planning

100 Larkin Street

San Francisco, California

Form **RECEIVED**
(July 1969)

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet)

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MAR 8 1978
NATIONAL
REGISTER

(Number all entries)

7. Description (continuation sheet 1)

1. Marshall Square

Marshall Square is bounded by Larkin, Fulton, Hyde and Grove Streets. The Department of City Planning (100 Larkin Street) is located on the west side of the block facing the Civic Center Plaza across Larkin Street. A long sloping driveway to Brooks Hall (1d) under the Plaza runs the length of the Fulton Street side of the block. The Pioneer Memorial is located at the corner of Hyde and Grove Streets. The remainder of the block (1c) is used as parking lots (24 Grove Street).

1a The Pioneer Memorial consists of groupings of bronze statuary on a central stone base and four projecting piers. A female "California" with a bear at her feet and a shield and a spear in her arms occupies the central pedestal. Two allegories and two tableaux on the piers are entitled "Early Days," "Plenty," "In '49," and "Commerce." In addition there are four bronze relief scenes, five relief portraits and numerous medallions, plaques and inscriptions. The cornerstone is dated September 10, 1894.

1b The Department of City Planning is an irregularly shaped, flat-roofed, one-story building constructed on a wood frame. It is an example of late moderne architecture, with strips of white walls, blue windows and rounded corners.

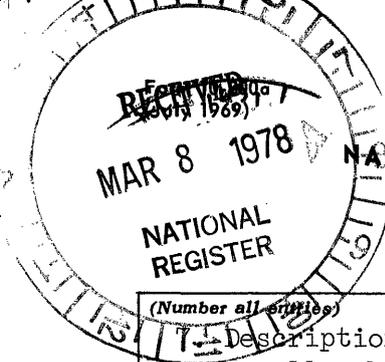
2 Four Corners

2A Southeast Corner: Wells Fargo Building-The southeast corner of the Civic Center consists of three small privately owned lots situated principally at the northwest corner of the block bounded by Market, Larkin and Grove Streets. The central piece of property, which is fully occupied by a long, two-story brick structure (1256 Market Street), extends through the block to Market Street. The other two lots (41 Grove Street and 30 Larkin Street) are used for parking.

The brick structure is a simple building, originally constructed as a stable and coach house in 1908 on old City Hall Avenue. Hence the angle at which it sits. On the Civic Center side, the building has three ground floor arches and six rectangular second floor windows. The building was remodelled in 1966 when it was taken over for use as a Wells Fargo Bank and offices. It is painted white and blends with the light granite of the main Civic Center structures.

2B Northeast Corner: Civic Center Power House-The power house is a small, squarish building in the northeast corner of the small lot at the northeast corner of Larkin and McAllister Streets. It is constructed of reinforced concrete and has concrete exterior walls decorated with a few very simple classical details.

The only entrance faces Larkin Street and consists of a double door framed by a simple molding. Above the door is inscribed "Civic Center Power House" and above that a simple cornice. The facade is unadorned except for quoins at the edges and a very simple roll-molded cornice above. The McAllister Street facade is identical, with the addition of a copper rainspout at the west end, but without the door. The other



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- Description (continuation sheet 2)
- walls abut adjacent buildings. There is a monitor skylight on the roof and a high steel stack rising from the back corner of the building supported by two prominent girders. The rear walls of adjacent buildings behind the power house are nearer the height of other Civic Center buildings and contain classical cornices and other elements which harmonize with the Civic Center.
- 2C Northwest Corner: Standard Station-The northwest corner of the Civic Center at Polk and McAllister Streets has been occupied by a Standard Oil service station since the station was forced to move from its previous location on the site of the present War Memorial about 1930. There have been several false starts on a consolidated Fire and Police Station in the lot, which is owned by the city.
- 2D Southwest Corner: Department of Public Health-The Department of Public Health Building (101 Grove Street) sits on a rectangular lot at the east end of the block bounded by Polk, Grove and Ivy Streets. It covers the full rectangular lot at ground level, but there is a light court above the ground level at the rear of the building, and it therefore assumes a "U" shape above the first floor. The structure is of reinforced concrete clad in gray California granite, executed in the Italian Renaissance style on its public faces. The facade on Ivy Street and the west wall are gray industrial brick. The main entrance is in the re-entrant corner at Grove and Polk Streets, angled to face the Civic Center Plaza.
- The ornamental facades are decorated in two principal horizontal bands above a smooth granite base. A two-story lower level consists of a rusticated wall cut by plain rectangular windows. This is capped by a plain, flat belt course, above which is another two-story section with a smooth wall cut by a similar configuration of windows. Alternate windows on the third floor are framed by a simple pediment of voluted brackets and a slightly projecting balcony. The top of the facade consists of a simple band of dentals over tryglyphs, with a balustrade over all. The Polk Street facade contains seven windows evenly spaced across the wall at each level. There is a door in the third window space from the Ivy Street corner on the ground floor, and an elaborate projecting bronze frame at the Ivy Street corner which holds an electric sign that reads "Hospital." The Grove Street facade contains fifteen windows at each level with a door in the fourteenth window space on the ground floor and alternate pedimented and balconied windows on the third floor.
- The re-entrant corner at Polk and Grove consists of a high arched doorway in the first two floors, and one window in each of the third and fourth floors, above the belt course. The third floor window is framed just like those on the other facades but with a longer balcony. The door in the base is recessed in a sculptural niche flanked by blue and gold iron lamps. The glazed door is set in a simple bronze frame which itself is framed with a simple molding. A round window above the door is set in a bed of rushes and other leaves carved in relief in the granite around the window. The doorway is capped with a keystone volute which also serves as a central bracket supporting the balcony of the third floor. There is a caduceus on the keystone and garlands flanking it.



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7. Description (continuation sheet 3)

The secondary walls on Ivy Street in the light court and on the west end contain modified cornice lines of granite and brick. There are three drive-ways at ground level on the Ivy Street side.

INTERIOR

The main entrance opens into a small lobby with rich gray marble walls and floors. There are three pronged bronze sconces on either wall of the lobby and a bronze handrail up a few steps. Hallways are lined with marble wainscoting to the door tops on all four floors, and oak trim is around doors and transoms. The Grove Street entrance is a smaller version of the main entrance. The parts of the building reached by these two entrances serve the Department of Public Health as office and laboratory space and provide some facilities for public clinics. The Polk Street entrance opens on a small plain lobby from which a stairway rises leading to a rear section of the building not connected to the main office areas in front. This smaller rear area was originally a separate facility for women prisoners and is still marked by barred windows at the rear of the building, but it is used today by the city as a clinic. The rear entrances are to another unconnected section of the building used as the Central Emergency Hospital.

3. Exposition Auditorium- The Exposition Auditorium (99 Grove Street) fills the block bounded by Grove, Larkin, Hayes and Polk Streets and faces the Civic Center Plaza across Grove. Its four stories are erected on a steel frame clad in gray California granite on the main facade and brick on the sides and rear. The raised octagonal roof of the main hall is visible from the plaza. The Auditorium is designed in the Beaux Arts style with elements of both French and Italian Renaissance blended successfully together.

The main facade is symmetrically arranged in five planes with a dominant central feature flanked by a pair of advancing pavilions and receding wings. The two-story base is rusticated, and the superstructure above contains pedimented windows, except in the central feature where three large arches reach through the full two tiers. A cornice caps the superstructure and a false attic rises above it over the three central planes.

The three high arches in the central feature rise between four piers in the base level, and four pairs of engaged Doric columns which stand on the piers in the superstructure. The rusticated base is divided by a long marquee made of wood and covered with copper sheeting. Beneath the marquee there are ticket windows in the piers and the bottoms of the arches are glazed doors. Over the marquee, there is a small second floor window in each pier. Cornices at the tops of the piers are held on elongated brackets and serve as bases for the pairs of columns. There is a long vertical panel between the columns of each pair. The columns carry a heavy but regular dentilated cornice over the fourth floor. The vertical line of each pair of columns is carried through the cornice for the height of the attic, in an ensemble that consists of bronze flag pole stands on granite bases on either side of a round cartouche. The attic wall over the central bay bears the inscription "Exposition Auditorium."

The rusticated base of the projecting pavilions on either side of the central feature contain a large-linteled showcase window in the ground floor with a pair of small windows above it. The cornice of the base sits on two



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Description (continuation sheet 4)

pairs of brackets which frame the windows of the second floor beneath it, and at the same time serves as a base for two pairs of freestanding Doric columns in the superstructure. The columns are tied by a balustrade at the base, above which is a large window with a rounded pediment and a smaller unadorned window, both louvered to accomodate mechanical equipment inside. Each pair of columns extends through the heavy cornice of the fourth floor with festooned urns on granite bases. Between the pairs of urns is a large elongated cartouche in a bed of cornucopiae.

The receding wings contain opening on each floor. On the ground level there are plainly framed doors that match the showcase windows in the adjacent pier. Windows in the third floor have rounded pediments and balustraded balconies on brackets.

The sides and rear of the Auditorium are brick except for granite angle features on Polk and Larkin, around the corner from the main facade. There are three vousoired windows on the ground floor of each angle feature, and a small pair of windows on the second floor. A single third floor window has a round pediment and elongated balcony with ancones. There are two pairs of doric pilasters in the superstructure, which carry the cornice. The remainder of the rear and sides have a simple cement coursing above the second floor and a cornice at the top of the wall. The rear facade contains five planes reflecting those of the front. There are brick pilasters in the projecting pavilions and the central feature contains two high service doors with a simple cement molding and coffered wooden doors.

A remodeling of the building in 1964 resulted in some minor exterior alterations. The westernmost pier in the central feature of the main facade was slightly extended under the marquee with a glass cage to accomodate the principal escalator to Brooks Hall. A new undersurface was installed with new lights on the underside of the marquee. Iron door frames at the base of each arch were replaced with bronze.

Many windows in the brick sections of the sides and rear were bricked in, and protruding concrete fire stairs were added on Polk and Larkin Streets. The projecting pavilions on the rear were extended toward the sides. Well matched brick was used in all alterations on the sides and rear and great care was taken in the appearance of the building.

INTERIOR

The internal functions of the Exposition Auditorium are clearly expressed by its external design. The principal auditorium is reached through entrances at the base of high arches. Two secondary halls are reached through clearly defined doorways in each of the receding wings. Vertical circulation is principally through banks of elevators in the protruding pavilions. The elevators serve balcony levels of the main auditorium and smaller conference rooms on the third and fourth floors of the wings. Circulation on each floor is by long hallways around the cavity of the main auditorium, and across the front of the building. Seating capacity is 7800 in the large auditorium and 900 in each of the side halls. Nineteen smaller conference rooms hold 30-125 people.

The interior of the Auditorium was completely remodeled in 1964. Except for the substitution of escalators for staircases in some instances, the building functions just as it did before the remodeling. The principal



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7. Description (continuation sheet 5)
 changes have been in improving acoustics in the main auditorium and lighting throughout. In the hallways, the forms of the old vaulted ceilings remain but the details are removed. There have never been elaborate interior spaces.

4. City Hall-The San Francisco City Hall (400 Van Ness Avenue) occupies the double block bounded by Polk, McAllister, Van Ness and Grove Streets. Generally rectangular in its ground plan, the building consists of two squarish office wings linked functionally and symbolically by a high central dome. The dome rests on a rectangular base which is expressed on two long facades in large pedimented porticos. Long **Doric** colonnades in the office wings are expressive of the more practical uses to which they are put.

The City Hall is erected on a steel frame clad in gray Raymond granite. The dome rises over 300 feet above the street, higher than the Capitol in Washington, D.C. The office wings contain four stories above ground and a partially exposed basement. The building is in a late French Renaissance or Baroque style with the principal design feature, the dome, derived from several great domes of the European Renaissance--St. Peter's, Les Invalides, the Val de Grace and St. Paul's.

The principal facade on Polk Street consists of a long **Doric** colonnade over a rusticated base. The wall is broken by a central pedimented portico and slight projecting pavilions at the angles. The base consists of the first floor and exposed basement, the columned superstructure consists of the second and third floors, and an attic is slightly recessed behind a balustrade over the third floor.

Three arched entrances in the base are reached by a steep flight of steps. The arches are voussoired and contain lavishly ornamented masked keystones flanked by cornucopiae. Intricate door frames and sconces, and a balustrade between the columns in the next level, are all burnished iron painted blue and gold. The balcony is carried on festooned brackets. Six **Corinthian** columns in the superstructure carry a **Doric** entablature with ornamented metopes and a triangular pediment. There are two pairs of columns at the ends of the portico and two single columns more widely spaced between. Between and behind the columns are three French windows opening onto the balcony, large windows overhead in the third floor, and large flat cartouches at the top of the wall. The dentilated pediment encloses a sculpture group designed by Henri Crenier, with a female "San Francisco" beckoning commerce and navigation.

Smooth re-entrant corners effect the transition from the portico to the identical flanking office wings. Between the portico and each angle pavilion there are eight rectangular windows in each of the four levels. The windows in the base are each capped with an ornamental keystone. Each vertical pair of windows in the superstructure is set in a wall slightly recessed behind a row of **Doric** columns. The columns are tied with an iron balustrade at their bases and carry an ornamented entablature above, with bucranes, amphorae, shields, helmets, medallions and heads of beasts in the metopes. The attic floor behind the interrupted balustrade is crowned with a band inscribed with a wave motif. Alternate windows are flanked with a broad shield design. A short false roof is little more than a coping. The angle features contain a single rectangular window in the base with a lavishly ornamented festooned keystone beneath a second floor balcony. A vertical pair of windows in the



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1 Description (continuation sheet 6)

superstructure is flanked by Doric columns which carry a small pediment that stops short of the continuing wave frieze that crowns the wall. The tympanum encloses a large shell and sea monsters.

The Van Ness facade is identical except for a few details in the central portico. The entrances in the base are rectangular rather than arched and are surmounted by cartouches in beds of elaborately detailed paraphernalia. Between each entrance caryatids designed in the Art Nouveau manner carry the balcony of the next level. The windows in the superstructure of the Polk Street facade are replaced by two-story arches on Van Ness presently glazed with reflective glass. The sculpture group in the pediment, also by Henri Crenier, consists of Wisdom, flanked by the Arts, Learning and Truth on one side and by Industry and Labor on the other.

The Grove Street and McAllister Street facades, virtually identical to each other, are simplified versions of the principal facades. Slightly protruding pavilions at the angles are linked by simply fenestrated walls, with pilasters in the superstructure. There are eleven windows in each floor of the long central feature. The angles contain three windows in each floor, with six Doric columns in the superstructure carrying a flat cornice. The columns are arrayed like those of the central porticos of the main facades. The seventeen windows of the attic sit behind a balustrade over the third floor and beneath the encircling wave frieze.

The great central dome sits on a square base of four giant pendentives positioned between the central porticos on the main facades and the large light courts in the office wings. Great semicircular clerestory windows in the base facing the courts light the lower reaches of the domed space. The drum of the dome is encircled by free standing columns carrying a broken cornice. A balustrade ties the columns at their bases and an entablature of triglyphs and ornamental metopes encircles the drum above. There are tall pedimented rectangular windows in the drum between the columns. The vertical line of each column carries through the cornice with an urn and set back behind the ring of urns is an inner drum with pilasters behind each urn and torches over each pilaster. Between the pilasters of the inner drum are generous garlands.

The dome itself is constructed on a steel frame, sheeted with copper and coated with lead. It was originally highlighted with gold. The vertical lines of the columns around the drum rise through the dome to an encircling skullcap of surface decoration. Small bullseye windows look out from under hooded shells between these vertical striations. An encircling iron balustrade at the top encloses a tall spired lantern built on a base of four low arches looking to the cardinal directions. Four taller arches rise over the base with pairs of freestanding fluted Doric columns flanking the arches and carrying a broken cornice. An urn carries through the cornice over each column, and a tall, slender, tapering steeple rises from the center and is crowned with a torch.

There are two pieces of sculpture on the City Hall grounds. A statue of Hall McAllister, a distinguished pioneer attorney, faces McAllister Street on the northside of the building. A seated Abraham Lincoln, copied from the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., executed by Haig Patigian, faces the Civic Center Plaza.



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INTERIOR

The interior of City Hall is arranged exactly as it appears from the outside, with a central ceremonial hall and circulation area tying together the two office wings. This ceremonial area crosses the building from the Polk Street portico to its counterpart on Van Ness. On either side of the high central domed space there are broad public entrance halls with low ceilings, treated severely with a forest of modified Tuscan columns made of Indiana sandstone. In between, the dome rests on a square centerpiece that fills the long central rectangular light court of the office wings from front to rear.

Rising from the center of the ground floor of the domed space is a broad staircase which spills out on to the floor beneath a straight climb to the principal landing. The balustrade and numerous freestanding torcheres on the main floor and principal landing were cast by Leo J. Meyberg in iron and bronze and painted blue and gold. This square centerpiece with galleries all around it tying it to the main building through its floors, runs clear up to the inner vaulting of the great dome. In effect, from inside, this cupola rests on the intersection of two short transepts, forming in plan a cross. The north and south transepts contain galleries to serve each floor and great windows to light the interior. A monumental staircase leads directly to the Supervisors Council Chamber. Opposite this and across the domed space is the Mayor's Office. These motifs are magnificently framed in the east and west transept recesses, which are entirely open from the first floor up. The side transepts, which are merely cross corridors in plan, are screened with columns carried across in three bays (with an interpolated sub-order) to mask the floor levels and break up the light.

Each of these transept recesses is spanned with four giant arches between which oblique pendentives merge into and carry the circular cornice which marks the base of the dome. The coffered inner dome springs from a closely spaced ring of **Corinthian** columns and terminates in an open lantern through which the eye finally rests on a boldly carved cartouche at the apex of the paneled upper dome.

Like the exterior porticos, the inside of the domed space consists of a rusticated base surmounted by a two-story **Corinthian** superstructure. The columns and pilasters of the superstructure carry a correct **Corinthian** entablature which is surmounted by a short wall. Above the wall in the east and west transepts are sculptural groups by Henri Crenier, set in large semi-circular sections which are framed by the pendentives which carry the dome. The sculpture and other large decorations are made of Portland cement, effectively simulating the real stone used elsewhere.

Everywhere there is a wealth of magnificent architecture and decorative detail. Four large medallions in the spandrels of the pendentives represent Liberty, Equality, Learning and Strength. In the east transept there is a clock over the central doorway on the second floor, set in a wreath with eagles and urns on either side. The sculptural group above it represents Father Time flanked by History and a youth with a torch representing future generations. In the west transept the cartouche over the large central arch at the top of the stairs is based on the seal of San Francisco.



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It would be impossible to describe the abundance of detail which enlivens the domed space, other than to say that it derives from Roman, Renaissance and Baroque models generally. Despite the variety of sources and the quantity of detail, it is nevertheless applied with a strict adherence to function. Jean Louis Bourgeois assisted Arthur Brown in the design of this magnificent interior; Paul Deniville executed the designs in decorative plaster and artificial stone.

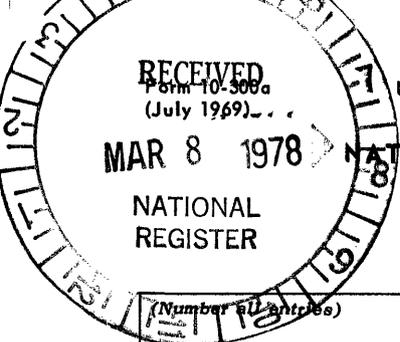
Apart from the domed space, there are ornamental treatments in the chambers of the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's Office, which are located in the Van Ness and Polk Street porticos, respectively. The public meeting room of the Board of Supervisors at the top of the grand central staircase is lavishly paneled in Manchurian oak. Corinthian pilasters, a beautifully coffered ceiling, and three arches opposite the entrances which open out on the columned porch are the principal architectural features. The Mayor's Office is a simplified variation of the Supervisors Chambers.

The two office wings meet behind the porticos and are linked by galleries in the north and south transepts of the domed space. The entire basement and ground floor areas are utilized, but the higher floors are grouped around large central light courts on either side of the dome. The basement is used for storage, mechanical equipment and office space. The ground floor offices, which are directly accessible from the entrance halls and secondary corridors flanking the domed space, house the municipal functions in most frequent public demand. With the light courts above, these offices are roofed with skylights and enclose large spaces. The second, third and fourth floors are more nearly arranged like an office building, with continuous encircling hallways on each floor opening onto offices on either side. In addition to office space, there are simply executed court rooms on the third and fourth levels. A bank of three elevators apiece rises from each of the entrance hallways. New elevators were installed in 1966.

The variety of interior marbles used in floors, wainscoting, carved staircases, pilasters and ashlar walls came from Colorado, Alabama, Vermont and Italy. The wood is Manchurian oak. The ornamental bronze mailboxes and package boxes, most notable in the entrance halls, were specially designed by the American Mailing Device Corporation of New York City. Sculptural niches in the entrance halls are occupied by busts of former Mayors Phelan and Rolph (by Haig Patigian) and Angelo Rossi (by R. Cravath).

5. Civic Center Plaza-The Civic Center Plaza is bounded by Polk, McAllister, Larkin and Grove Streets. Where Fulton Street once cut through the block from east to west, there is now a paved pedestrian area lined with tall flag poles. A long rectangular pool sits in the center of the paved area with rows of sycamore trees on the sides. To either side are park areas circumscribed by concrete walks; a central square lawn is flanked to the east and west by rows of olive trees.

Underneath the south half of the block is Brooks Hall (99 Grove Street), a 90,000 square foot exhibition area connected to the Civic Auditorium by ramps to both basement and first floor levels. Staircases near the corners of Larkin and Grove and along Polk Street lead to the Hall. A truck loading ramp enters the hall from a straight sloping drive that runs the length of the Fulton Street side of Marshall Square. Under the north half of the



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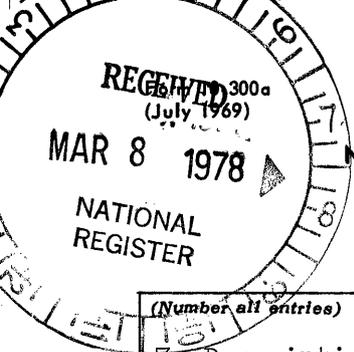
block is a three level 1464 car parking garage (355 McAllister Street) with automobile access on Larkin and McAllister Streets. It can also be reached by staircases near the plaza pool and two staircases and an elevator pavilion near the McAllister Street side of the Plaza.

6. San Francisco Public Library-The San Francisco Public Library (200 Larkin Street) occupies the block bounded by Larkin, Hyde, Fulton and McAllister Streets. It takes up all but the northeast corner of the block, which is occupied by a temporary structure used in part as a library annex. The library is erected on a steel frame clad in gray California granite, and sits on a plinth of grass held by an encircling retaining wall. The building is shaped in its ground plan somewhat like a giant "P" with a squarish main building and an ell continuing the south facade the full length of the Fulton Street frontage. The Larkin and Fulton Street sides are the principal facades, and together with the end of the ell on Hyde and a flat pavilion around the corner from Larkin on McAllister Street, are treated in the Italian Renaissance style. The remainder of the McAllister Street facade is more simply expressed. The other exterior walls on the north and the east, largely behind the temporary building, and two interior light courts are ordinary brick. Inside and out the building is in excellent condition.

The ornamental facades consist of a rusticated basement crowned by a belt course, and surmounted by a high story consisting of discreetly projecting corner pavilions joined by unbroken ranges of graceful arches without a dominant central feature. Over all is a high entablature which forms the well of the top story and contains smaller public rooms. The architectural details are delicate and restrained and are used with intention and comprehension of function.

The main facade faces the Plaza across Larkin Street. Three large central doorways on the ground floor are flanked by two large rectangular windows cut into the rusticated wall on either side. An interrupted series of shallow steps approaches the doorways, each of which is framed with a flat decorative molding and topped by crossettes adorned with garlands and fleur-de-lis, and a central cartouche. The doors are in two layers, with coffered outer wooden storm doors, and inner doors of glass in ornamental bronze frames. The doors are set back behind ornamented posts and lintels decorated with scenes from classical mythology. Flanking the doors are free standing copper plated lamps. The cornerstone at the southwest corner of the building is marked "Anno Domini MCMXV." 1915

There are seven arches in the superstructure, those at either end belonging to flat pavilions framed by pairs of doric pilasters. There are rosettes under each plainly molded arch, fleur-de-lis at the springline, and round shields in the spandrels. Under the sill are a pair of tablets on which are inscribed the names of famous authors. The windows themselves are set in a crosshatching of cast iron mullions. Between the pavilions are five more arches, recessed together behind a row of free standing Ionic columns. Each arch is flanked by columns so that adjacent arches have a column between them. The bases of the columns are tied together with a low balustrade, in the center of each stands a giant (7'8") cement figure on a pedestal. The figures, representing Art, Literature, Philosophy, Science



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and Law were sculpted by Leo Lentelli. Their rough texture, fluid molding and romantic quality are in contrast to the regularity and rationality of the Italian Renaissance framework of the building. The play of light and shade over statues, columns and arches in this central feature serves to give interest and accent to the entrance facade.

On the third floor a great panel over the five central recessed arches of the second level is inscribed "The Public Library of the City and County of San Francisco/ Founded AD MDCCCLXXVIII Erected AD MCMXVI/ May This Structure Throned on Imperishable Books Be Maintained and Cherished From Generation/ To Generation For The Improvement and Delight of Mankind." Above the flanking pavilions there are two windows over each arch and a pair of urn-decorated panels over each pair of pilasters. Crowning the entablature is a regular cornice and antefixa. Set back slightly behind the antefixa is a short false front which steps up from either end to a high point at the center.

The side facade on Fulton Street is a simplified variation of the entrance facade on Larkin. Between identical pavilions at the angles, the ground floor consists of a single central ornamental doorway flanked by six windows on each side. There are thirteen arches separated by Doric pilasters in the superstructure, with each bay identical to those at the angles of the main facade, except for names on the panels and shields in the spandrels. In the third floor entablature there is a pair of windows over each arch in the superstructure, and a single urned panel over each single pilaster.

The end of the ell on Hyde Street and the west end of the McAllister Street facade are exact restatements of the entire pavilion ends of the main facades. The remainder of the McAllister Street facade is a frank expression of the library stacks with seventeen high, narrow rectangular bays separated by simple piers, all beneath a greatly simplified entablature.

INTERIOR

The functions and organization of the library's interior are clearly indicated by the exterior design. The main entrance facade is denoted by its more articulated treatment; the main reading rooms are expressed in the ranges of bays on the two principal facades; rooms of lesser importance are manifest in the more ordinary windows on ground and top floors; and the stack areas, generally on the north side of the building, are expressed in the simpler treatment of the McAllister Street facade.

The nature of the plan is equally obvious inside. From the entrance vestibule, the view is clear through a magnificent succession of ceremonial spaces: up a staircase to the main room on the second floor which serves as a center of circulation. From the staircase area and from the main room there is ready access to the two main reading rooms of the library. These reading rooms are connected to smaller and less imposing public rooms on the first and third floors by secondary staircases near each of the main reading rooms, and by a pair of elevators which rise from the entrance vestibule on either side of the ceremonial stairway. The public spaces are all grouped along the Larkin and Fulton Street sides and in the center of the building, and closed stack areas are on the McAllister Street side. Large interior courts for light and air, located at either side of the



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central main room are visible from windows in hallways, secondary stairs and other places, and these further contribute to a ready apprehension of the plan of the building.

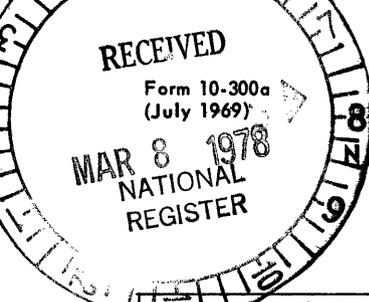
The principal ornamental public spaces are those which constitute the ceremonial progression and the two main reading rooms. The ceremonial spaces are especially noteworthy and the crowning architectural feature of the library.

The ceremonial progression begins in the vaulted entrance vestibule, a space loosely divided into three cavities by large piers. The outer cavity, just inside the main doors, is separated from the others by glass partitions. The vestibule contains large wooden lamps, mostly unoccupied sculptural niches, and ornamented doorways opening to various service spaces which are grouped around it. It is ornamented with classical details, principally in the vaulted plaster ceiling, including urns, nymphs, griffins and various kinds of stylized flowers and leaves in an arabesque pattern. The details are entirely in relief, with none painted or etched, allowing for the full effect of the play of light and shade. Beneath the plaster ceiling, the materials used in the vestibule as well as throughout the ceremonial passage are a combination of travertine and a highly successful and practically indistinguishable imitation travertine. In general, the real travertine is used on floors and steps, columns, door trim and lower wall areas and the imitation material elsewhere. The creator and designer of these materials and their forms is Paul Deniville.

From the vestibule, the ceremonial passage continues up a formal staircase to an enclosed landing skylighted dramatically from the sides. The stairs climb between rusticated travertine walls, each surmounted by a high loggia and capped with a caissoned barrel vault. Along the side walls behind the loggia are two large murals, each cut into five panels interrupted by travertine pilasters. The murals depict a California landscape and seascape in broad, flat areas of unmodulated earth colors that harmonize well with their travertine surroundings. They were painted as part of the Works Project Administration in 1931-32 by Gottardo Piazzoni and added to the unadorned panels of that time. Two additional panels were installed in 1975.

The ceremonial passage terminates fittingly in the truly monumental main room. The room is sixty-five feet square and forty-two feet high and contains large scaled architectonic features equally suitable to a monumental classical exterior. The entrance and three other huge arches, one on each wall, are framed in a plain molding carried on giant free standing ionic columns. A heavy impost encircles the room beneath a colonnade of fluted composite pilasters. The arches contain doors below and large clerestory windows above set in beautifully worked bronze frames of crosshatching mullions and classical trim. The ceiling is cut with deep octagonal caissons. The room was originally called the "delivery room" but has lost that function and some of its symbolic significance along with it. It now houses card catalogs and information services.

The two major reading rooms also receive special architectural treatment. The Literature and Philosophy reading room was a general reading room originally. It is situated off the main room and runs almost the entire length of the Fulton Street facade. It measures 30 by 195 feet and holds 25,000 volumes



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 on open shelves. The History and Social Science reading room off the stair-
 case area opposite the main room was originally called the Reference Room. It
 runs the length of Larkin Street facade, measures 30 by 100 feet, and holds
 15,000 volumes. Both rooms are modeled after early Renaissance halls. They
 are long with high, white painted plaster walls above stained oak book
 shelves and wainscotting and varicolored stenciled wooden beams across the
 ceiling. The floors are now linoleum, but were originally cork. There are
 two giant sopra porta murals (12 by 47 feet), one in each reading room,
 depicting the American migration from New England to California. The murals
 were painted by Frank Vincent DuMond originally for the Panama Pacific
 Exposition. The rest of the library is relatively plain. Public spaces
 contain wainscotting and shelves beneath light colored walls, with travertine
 floors and trim in hallways and linoleum floors in library rooms. Most of
 the original functions of the rooms are at least generally the same today.
 Only two rooms have been thoroughly remodeled, but lighting has been improved
 throughout the building. Old chandeliers and light fixtures remain only
 where they perform an important ceremonial function. An old storage area
 under the main delivery hall was converted to the Science and Technology
 Room in the 1950's. The Lurie Room on the first floor was remodeled in 1974
 to serve as a multipurpose meeting and screening room. The Fulton Street
 entrance which is a smaller version of the main entrance vestibule, is
 closed off and used as an office area.

There are seven stack levels on the north side of the building where
 most books are kept. The superstructure and shelves are of special steel
 construction; floors are heavy translucent glass and marble. Lighting is
 predominantly natural, through high bay windows on the the McAllister Street
 and interior court sides of the stack wing. The stacks were originally
 designed to hold 500,000 volumes.

The original accessories, still the predominant fixtures throughout,
 were custom designed with a high regard for the general harmony and fitness
 for this building. Despite the large number of separate contracts required
 for the furniture, metalwork and other accessories, there is a high degree
 of unity in the designs. The decorative style in the trim and furniture
 was originally described as "old Italian."

6a. Library Annex(45 Hyde Street) The temporary structure at the northeast
 corner of the library block is a three story, rectangular building erected
 on a wood frame. Its flat, white walls are completely unadorned except for
 rows of rectangular windows on each floor.

The Library Annex is used by the library and other city departments
 and was built for the Navy Department in 1945 for \$123,730. It was built
 under the aegis of a war emergency and has never met the city building code.
 In 1948 it was sold to the Library Commission for \$10,000.

7. California State Building. The State Office Building (350 McAllister
 Street) is a basically rectangular structure occupying the south half of the
 block bounded by McAllister, Larkin, Golden Gate and Polk Streets. The north
 half of the block contains the State Building Annex which is about the same
 size. The newer building was constructed in 1957 and is attached to the old
 State Building in the center of the block to allow the buildings to function
 as one large building. Visually they appear as separate structures in such



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a manner that the aesthetic integrity of the old building remains unassailed.

The State Building is six stories high, constructed on a skeleton of steel and sheathed in gray California granite and terra cotta simulating granite. The Italian Renaissance style of the building is fully realized on the long main facade which faces across McAllister Street to the Civic Center Plaza and on the ends of the main forward section of the building. A rear section is set back from Polk and Larkin Streets and receives a more simplified classical treatment.

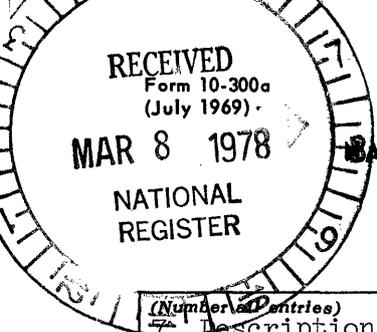
The entire main facade is lightly rusticated. It is broken up into a high three-story base surmounted by a two-story superstructure of glazed arches and pedimented windows set off by composite pilasters, with a simple top-floor entablature. The most interesting feature of the facade is the entrance motif with three high arches in the center of the base which open onto an open air vaulted vestibule. Each arch is framed with a compound molding and capped with a keystone volute, each of which carries a classical mask. Above each keystone is an elaborate cartouche set in imbricated leaves on the voussoirs. In the spandrels, medallions enclose symbols of labor, justice, education and agriculture. Beneath the medallions are large bronze lamps, like the towers of a Moorish fort. Under the arch are guilloche panels set with rosettes, rising from the spring to the keystone, which is incised with a caduceus. The vestibule is vaulted behind the arches and barrel shaped with caissons behind the piers. Corinthian-like pilasters in the piers carry a simple cornice at the spring of the vault. Three elaborate framed doorways enter the building from the vestibule. Each doorway is set within a frame of cable, and egg and dart molding above which is a bay leaf band overhung by a lintel set on voluted brackets. There are three plain windows above the lintel. The doors are oak and glass.

On either side of the arches are nine simple rectangular windows evenly spaced across the facade on each floor. The cornerstone at the southwest corner of the building reads "Anno Domini MCMXX." On either side of the arches are free standing flag poles rising out of a base of generous bay leaf and guilloche roll moldings.

The second level is dominated by thirteen glazed arches marked with voussoirs, a recessed molding and a keystone volute. There are rosettes under each arch on either side of the keystone above the springline. Between the arches are twelve vertical pairs of rectangular windows with a simple pediment over the larger lower windows, and a vertical panel over each upper window. A composite pilaster is set between each arch and each pair of windows, with a pair of pilasters at the extreme ends of the facade.

A smooth architrave and regular cornice sit at the base of the top floor entablature. Above each arch and a pair of windows in the second level, there is a small rectangular window in the entablature; above each pilaster is an urned panel. The wall is capped by Greek *antefixae* and the squat roof is trimmed with cooper.

The sides are treated like the main facade with three windows on each floor in the base; a central glazed arch and two flanking vertical pairs of windows with attendant pilasters in the second level; and three plain windows with panels in the entablature. Behind the main facade there is only one window on each floor, two pilasters in the second level and two panels in the



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entablature, all set with frets, balustrade, architrave, cornice and antefixae. The other public wall surfaces are simplified versions of the main facade. There are three rectangular windows in each floor of the rear sections of the building which face on Larkin and Polk Streets. The treatment of the base is identical to other base areas, but the superstructure is only ornamented with pediments over the two outside windows on the third floor. The crowning fretwork is articulated only as a smooth band, the cornice above it is simplified and the entablature is unadorned.

The back of the building was initially adorned like the rear sides with four windows across from either end and brick in between. Now only two windows at each level are exposed; everything else between is cut out for the connection between the old state building and its annex.

INTERIOR

The interior of the state building contains a highly functional organization of offices on every floor. The only exception is the two-story Supreme Court on the fourth floor which was extensively remodeled in 1956. The court was originally trimmed with oak, simply cut with classical details. Today it contains walls of sheepskin panels, mahogany court furniture and and theater seats for 120 spectators.

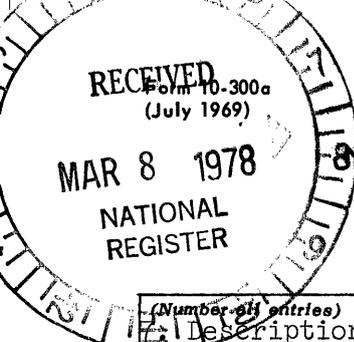
8. Orpheum Theater-The Orpheum Theater (1182 Market Street) is an irregularly shaped building at the west end of the block bounded by U.N. Plaza, Market and Hyde Streets. It is a four-story reinforced concrete structure with an auditorium at the rear and office and commercial space on Market Street. The principal facade is covered with elaborate Spanish Gothic decoration, after the Cathedral of Leon. The rear walls are blank, with a re-entrant corner at U.N. Plaza and Hyde and a cornice height equal to other Civic Center buildings.

The Market Street facade of the Orpheum consists of wide bays defined by Spanish Gothic verticals which carry through the cornice as torches. Within each of the bays of varying widths, office windows are set in iron frames. A decorative arcade on the ground floor is open at the theater entrance and encloses storefronts elsewhere, and a smaller arcade of office windows on the second floor carries as a cornice. The central bay over the theater entrance is more elaborately treated with a spired false front which rises above the wall of the building. Elsewhere behind the crowning cornice there is a short wall with a brief coping of Spanish tile.

Inside the 2000 seat auditorium is no less exotic than the exterior, with huge decorative towers flanking the stage and sumptuous ornamentation on wall and ceiling surfaces.

Commercial remodelings have obscured some of the grandeur of the old theater with flat painted interior walls over the brilliant colors of the original decoration, oversized and out-of-character signs on the exterior and walled and redecorated store fronts. None of these alterations have permanently damaged the building.

9. City Hall Annex (450 McAllister)-The City Hall Annex is located at 450 McAllister across from the City Hall. It is a six-story generally rectangular structure built of reinforced concrete. The McAllister Street facade is clad in terra cotta, in a simple reflection of the design of City Hall. It contains a two-story rusticated base with a central arched entrance, and is



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surmounted by a coursing of fleur-de-lis over which rises a two-story smooth superstructure crowned with a simple cornice. Fenestration is very simple, reflecting the functional office building inside.

10. The War Memorial-The San Francisco War Memorial consists of a pair of identical monumental classical structures, the Opera House (309 Van Ness Avenue) and the Veterans Building (459 Van Ness Avenue) on either side of a formal court. The complex is set in a double block bounded by Van Ness, McAllister, Franklin and Grove Streets, and faces the City Hall across Van Ness Avenue.

Opera House

The Opera House is erected on a steel frame with reinforced concrete floors and walls. It is clad in terra cotta simulating Raymond granite used in its base, steps and columns. The building is generally rectangular in shape except for a high scenery loft at the rear and a pair of staircase wings which project from the sides near enough to the front that they appear as receding planes of the main facade. There are four principal stories above ground and a mansard roof.

The building is a late and rather severe example of the Beaux Arts style with decorative treatment encircling the building at all levels. The ground floor base is deeply rusticated and cut with ranges of arches. The two-story superstructure has a rusticated wall of lower definition and the same ranges of arches everywhere except the front facade which is more elaborately designed. The attic is set back behind a balustrade, and a Mansard roof caps the whole. Details of both ornament and function are everywhere masterfully executed.

The principal forward facade on Van Ness is reached by a series of long granite steps. The facade contains seven arches in the base, glazed and fitted with handsome bronze and iron frames. The five central arches serve as the main public entrances to the building and the other two, partially infilled, as secondary service entrances to ticket offices. Each arch is defined by voussoirs and ornamental keystones with masks of lions heads. The central and outer keystones also serve as brackets for protruding balconies in the next level. There are eight bronze sconces in the spandrels, and a flat belt course runs above the base.

In the superstructure, eight large pairs of freestanding, fluted doric columns rise over the piers between the arches below and flank seven recessed arches just behind them. Each arch is outlined with a curved ornamental molding and capped with a simple ornamental keystone flanked by swags. The two outer arches are sculptural niches; the five inner arches open back to an open vaulted vestibule with five glazed arches to the mezzanine foyer. At the base of the columns is an interrupted balustrade, segments of which protrude as shallow balconies at the central and two outside bays. Above the columns is a simple entablature crowned with an interrupted balustrade.

Set back behind the crowning balustrade is a short rectilinear attic floor with windows behind each section of balustrade. The wall terminates in a stylized frieze incised with a wave design exactly like its counterpart on the City Hall. Above the attic floor is a leaded copper mansard roof, striated with vertical expansion joints and culminating in a simple roll molding.



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Description (continuation sheet 16)

Slightly set back from the main facade and protruding out of the north and south sides of the building from ground to roof are two vertical staircase cavities. For the most part they are simply treated with the basic rusticated background wall textures of the main facade standing out as the principal feature of interest. The transition from front facade to staircase wing is accomplished in a series of folding planes of this basic wall texture. There are three square windows in a vertical line on both east and west walls of the wing. On the outside of each wing, there is a glazed arch in the base and a more elaborate motif in the superstructure with two pairs of doric pilasters flanking a sculptural niche with a balustrade.

The court side of the Opera House consists of a rusticated wall with ten arches ranged across each tier from the staircase wing to the rear of the building. Each arch in the base has a lion masked keystone and bronze sconces in the spandrels. The five forward arches are completely glazed entrances; the rear arches are infilled except for windows and a door in the last arch. The arches in the superstructure are set in an ornamental molding with a balustrade at the base.

The Grove Street side of the Opera is identical to the court side with the addition of a marquee cantilevered over a circular driveway which runs the length of the building. The marquee is made of wood and sheeted with copper. It is suspended from rods attached to the spandrels between the arches and is attached to the building at the impost.

The rear of the Opera House is dominated by a large arch that cuts through the base and superstructure with two smaller arches on either side in each tier. The main arch springs from the coursing between the two levels and is topped by an ornamental keystone. Huge sliding metal-plated doors in the arch accomodate Opera scenery. Between the top of this arch and the entablature above is a large, rectangular horizontal panel.

Above the Opera House in the rear is the large scenery loft which, like the building itself, is divided by a coursing into two principal rusticated wall sections. The front and rear are incised by large rectangular panels in the center flanked by smaller vertical panels which contain pedimented windows with protruding balustraded balconies carried on brackets. The narrower north and south ends of the loft have a similar arrangement of unadorned panels. There is a simple cornice at the top of the wall surmounted by a mansard roof.

INTERIOR

The interior of the Opera House is everywhere clearly and efficiently organized, and its decorative treatment is always direct and in the service of the functions of the building. Within the tradition of Opera Houses, it is not lavish, yet there is an appropriate sense of richness about it that is achieved principally through the correct use of classical elements and the fine treatment of details. The simplicity and proportions of the ceremonial spaces are such as to appear equally appropriate to a monumental exterior.

The main Van Ness Avenue entrances open onto a simple vaulted vestibule where tickets are sold in windows at either end. The entrance vestibule opens onto a grand foyer across the front of the building, with stairs rising from either end in the wings, and corridors running off down the sides of the



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17 Description (continuation sheet 17)

building. This organization is repeated with modifications at three higher levels.

The ground level foyer receives the greatest decorative attention outside the concert hall. A plaster barrel vaulted ceiling with dentilated trim is carried on pairs of cast stone fluted **Doric** columns. The walls are also cast stone and the floors are marble. Coffers in the white ceiling are set with rosettes and painted gold. Fantastic blue and gold bronzed-iron light fixtures, both hanging and freestanding, resemble those in City Hall. Simply pedimented doorways set in arches open from the foyer into the orchestra seating section of the main hall.

The main hall itself is first a functional space enlivened and given a sense of splendor by its classical detailing. The side walls are reflections of the exterior, with a rusticated base carrying a superstructure of high arches set between plain pilasters. Balustrades link the bases of the pilasters, there are horizontal panels over festooned keystones, and a simple cornice runs just beneath the ceiling. The arches are latticed and hung with drapes, originally to camouflage organ pipes but now utilized to house stage lights. At the stage, a massive proscenium arch is carried on re-entrant fluted pilasters with statuary groups by Edgar Walter in the spandrels. The arch itself contains a central swath of caissons between fluting. The high ceiling is filled by a large smooth oval surface in a classical molding. A magnificent aluminum sunburst chandelier, 27 feet in diameter, spurts from the center of this oval. The stage itself is equipped with the most advanced features. The orchestra disappears, the stage can be raised and lowered in whole or in part, and the scenery is conveniently stored above the stage.

Seating (3302 with 300 standing) is arranged more like a movie theater than a traditional Opera House, with two principal balconies suspended directly from wall to wall without supporting columns. There is only one horseshoe section of box seating. The west end of the building contains dressing rooms and offices at all levels. The basement contains a bar, buffet and small emergency hospital.

Veterans Building

The exterior of the Veterans Building is virtually identical to the Opera House and will be described only as it differs. Aside from changes in the use of some arches, principal differences are:

Because the Veterans Building sits on higher ground, in order to be at the same level as the Opera it is approached by a shorter flight of steps. The superstructure of the main facade has all seven arches receding to a longer open vestibule than in the Opera House. There is no driveway or marquee on the side of the Veterans Building. There is no scenery loft, nor a high central arch on the rear facade; rather, there are seven arches across both the base and the superstructure.

INTERIOR

The interior of the Veterans Building is like a small opera house with a museum on the top. An auditorium occupies the center of the building for the lower three stories. On each of the lower floors a corridor encircles the auditorium cavity, opening onto offices and meeting rooms across the hall. The museum is organized in the same way, with a central two-story, skylighted

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7. Description (continuation sheet 18)

sculpture court (now closed off and used as a movie theater) surrounded by a corridor which opens onto exhibit space on the outside. Principal staircases rise from near the four corners of the encircling corridor on the first floor and elevators rise from the front lobby opposite the entrances.

The principal entrances open onto Van Ness Avenue. Through the entrances is a large vestibule with a smooth plaster vaulted ceiling carried on great piers. Grouped about the vestibule are a variety of facilities. Behind the extreme arches in the base of the facade, there are veterans offices to the south and the museum bookstore to the north. The projecting wings whose counterparts carry staircases in the Opera, contain uses less functionally related to the shape of the wings. In the southern wing a Trophy Gallery leads to a Souvenirs Gallery. Each gallery contains marble floors, cast stone walls and columns and a vaulted ceiling. In the northern wing, a secondary entrance vestibule from McAllister Street contains elevators to the museum. Across the vestibule from the entrances are three elevators interspersed with two doors to a small anteroom which opens onto the Veterans Auditorium. A good copy of Houdon's George Washington stands in the main vestibule.

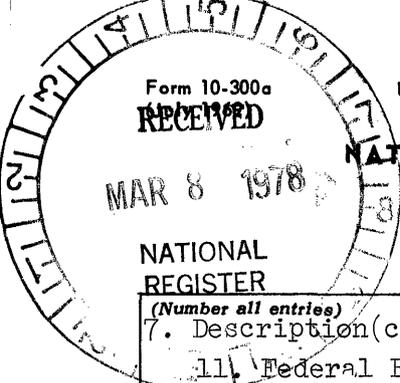
The auditorium is similar in design to the main hall of the Opera House, the principal difference being its size and subdued detailing. The auditorium holds 1100 people and has only one balcony. The arches of its side walls contain eight giant murals by Frank Brangwyn depicting earth, air, fire and water and their benefits to mankind. The murals originally hung in the Panama Pacific International Exposition. The proscenium arch is simpler and smaller than in the Opera and contains no statuary in the spandrels. The ceiling is irregularly coffered and a traditional bronzed chandelier hangs from the center.

On each of the first two floors, the encircling corridor has barrel ceilings and a red tile floor. The ceiling in the basement and the third floor was built with exposed beams. Wood trim in the hallways and offices is birch. The rear of the basement contains all the mechanical equipment for both buildings and is relayed to the Opera House in conduits through a tunnel under the court.

In 1971, the third floor was turned over by the Veterans to the museum for offices and classrooms. At the time minor renovations were carried out in various parts of the building by Robinson and Mills. The ceilings of the third floor were lowered and spaces behind the office doors were repartitioned and remodeled for the museum. A small cafe was added in the museum and the bookstore was installed off the ground floor vestibule. The bookstore was enlarged in 1976 by the same architects.

Memorial Court

The War Memorial Court occupies the area between the Opera House and the Veterans Building. It is enclosed on its east and west sides by blue and gold ornamental iron fencing between the two buildings. A "U" shaped driveway passes along its edges, from Franklin Street to the forward fence between the building wings and returns to Franklin Street. The area enclosed by the driveway consists of a central lawn encircled by a sidewalk lined with box hedges and sycamore trees, and lighted by ornamental lamps of iron.



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7. Description (continuation sheet 19)

11. Federal Building

The Federal Office Building (50 U.N. Plaza) occupies the entire block bounded by U.N. Plaza, Leavenworth, McAllister and Hyde Streets. It is a generally rectangular building with a large central court. There are five principal stories and a mansard roof above. The building is erected on a steel frame clad in gray California granite in a generally French Renaissance manner.

The classical styling is fully realized on the U.N. Plaza, Hyde and Leavenworth St. sides, but the U.N. Plaza side, with its long colonnade, is the principal facade and contains the major entrance. Re-entrant corners at U.N. Plaza and Hyde and at U.N. Plaza and Leavenworth contain secondary entrances. The McAllister side is treated more simply between two projecting pavilions, at the angles, but it retains a refined classical quality, nonetheless.

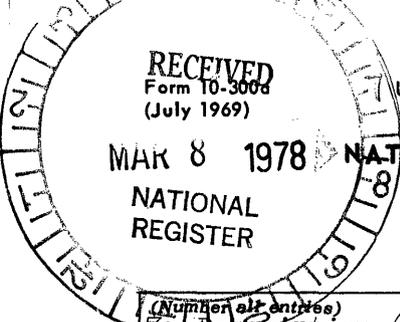
On all sides there is a two-story base of rusticated blocks surmounted by a higher two-story tier, variously treated, but with an essentially similar fenestrated smooth background wall surface. The second tier is surmounted by a simple cornice, above which is an interrupted balustrade. On all but the central section of the McAllister facade there is another story set back behind the balustrade and capped by a mansard-type roof.

The U.N. Plaza facade contains three high arched entrances in the center of the rusticated base. Each arch is glazed and set in an iron frame painted silver and gold. There are silver and gold iron lamps in the spandrels. The arches are vousoired, with shields set in leaves on the keystones. The central shield contains a crest of stars and stripes and the other two contain eagles. On either side of the arches there are eight windows on each of two floors. Every other window on the ground floor bears a massive mask of a classical face on its keystone. Two of the masks are of men and two are of women. The windows are paired vertically, with the second story window being smaller. The vertical pair of windows at either end of the facade is set back in a slightly receding plane which carries to the roof. The cornerstone at the southwest corner of the building reads "Henry Morgenthau Jr./ Secretary of the Treasury/Louis A. Simon/Supervising Architect/George O.Von Nerta/Supervising Engineer/Arthur Brown Jr./Architect/1933."

The second two-story tier contains 23 windows on each floor with 22 free-standing fluted Doric columns between each vertical pair of windows in the principal forward facade. There is a Doric pilaster behind each column and one on either side of the vertical pair of windows in the receding plane at either end of the facade. There is a horizontal panel between the windows of each floor and an interrupted balustrade between the bases of the columns.

The Hyde St. and U.N. Plaza facades are identical and both simplified variations of the U.N. Plaza facade. There are fourteen windows in each floor of the base with the last vertical pair at either end set in a receding plane which carries to the roof. Giant keystone masks are carried over every third ground floor window. The second tier is identical to that on U.N. Plaza without the columns and with only fourteen windows on each floor and seven Doric pilasters. In addition, a circular service driveway drops down to the basement level on Leavenworth.

The Hyde and Leavenworth facades join the U.N. Plaza facade in identical curving re-entrant corners. In the base of each is a glazed arch identical



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12. Description (continuation sheet 20)

to those on U.N. Plaza, with an eagle in the keystone and lamps in the spandrels. The second tier contains a single vertical pair of windows flanked by freestanding fluted Doric columns with Doric pilasters behind. There is a balustrade beneath the windows.

Flanking pavilions on the McAllister Street facade are identical to the Hyde and Leavenworth facades with three windows at each level. The receding central section of this wall contains a rusticated base with a single glazed arch in the center. There are stars and stripes on the keystone and cast iron lamps in the spandrels. There are eight windows on either side in the ground floor and nine windows on the second floor. Low, freestanding balustrades run from the arch to the pavilions, exposing the basement to light and air. The second tier simply contains 19 vertical pairs of windows with horizontal panels between them. There is the same regular entablature and balustrade found elsewhere at the top of this section of the wall, but there is no fifth floor or mansard roof.

The shape of the central court reflects that of the exterior of the building, being generally rectangular with re-entrant corners. It is faced with gray industrial brick from the exposed basement to the top of the building. Fenestration and cornice molding mirrors that on the street side, except for the central sections of the long sides of the court which face each other. These central sections reach from ground to roof and are veneered in granite. Both contain a large rectangular glazed entrance between sconces. set in a rusticated two-story base. A second tier contains a vertical pair of windows and a protruding balcony beneath the lower window. There are quoins at the corners and a simple pediment over all. The south side rises one more story marked by a central window set above a simple coursing and below a band of frets. There are dormer windows in the mansard roof above the court.

INTERIOR

The interior contains an identical hallway on each of four principal floors which encircle the building, opening to offices on either side. Vertical circulation is principally through elevators at the central entrances on U.N. Plaza and Leavenworth, and main staircases at the re-entrant corners. Ceremonial space is limited to a vestibule reached by the three central arches on U.N. Plaza and minor flourishes at each of the other entrances.

The entrance vestibule is a high barrel vaulted room with niches at either end. Above the spring of the vault, described by simple cornice, the ceiling is caissoned. Beneath the cornice, the walls are cast stone. There are three large, barrel shaped glass chandeliers in iron frames hanging from the ceiling which serve as models for the hallway lights throughout the building. Three high infilled arches with pedimented doors open onto the central circulation hallway from the vestibule. Across the hallway is the elevator lobby with four elevators with polished brass doors and oak panels. The hallways have red octagonal floor tiles and a barrel vaulted ceiling hung with chandeliers. There is a low marble mainscotting and unadorned marble trim around dark stained wooden office doors.

12. United Nations Plaza-Construction of the one acre United Nations Plaza began in January 1975 as part of the Market Street Beautification Project in conjunction with the Bay Area Rapid Transit Station.

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7. Description

The Plaza is almost complete except for a fountain which is still under construction. Fulton Street, between Market and Hyde, and Leavenworth, between Market and McAllister, have been converted to a pedestrian plaza. The entire area is paved in brick, with granite borders echoing the Civic Center buildings. Rows of trees line the sides of each street. An 80-foot bronze flag pole will fly the United Nations flag. The architects of the project are Mario Ciampi and Associates, John Carl Warnecke and Associates and Lawrence Halprin and Associates.

13. 1 United Nations Plaza is a very small structure, triangular in plan, which faces on U.N. Plaza behind the Orpheum Theater and across from the Federal Bldg. It was originally constructed as a two-story residence over a ground floor commercial space. The building is constructed of reinforced concrete in the Zig Zag Moderne style. Dark copper panels group the windows in a vertical composition between concrete piers which culminate in a zig zag skyline. There are decorative relief panels at the tops of the piers. The original interior has been remodeled.

14. Buker's Pet Store is a small brick building with a simple classical cornice. Its store front has been remodeled.

15. McCarthy's Cocktail Lounge is a small brick building with a simple classical cornice. A decorative glass transome has been painted over and obscured by the present sign. The building was remodeled in the 1930's and has an attractive wood interior and very handsome etched glass doors.

16. 7th and McAllister Building. A small, two-story brick building designed in a classical manner on an odd shaped lot. It was remodeled in 1975 with a glass wall on 7th Street. Its original, narrow corner store front with iron mullions, and bracketed cornice and entrance hood, is intact.

17. Methodist Book Concern. The Methodist Book Concern is a five-story brick and terra cotta building designed in a version of the Neo-Classical Revival. The principal facade is dominated by brick piers which culminate in round arches at the top of the facade. There is banded polychrome brick work in the second floor, and lavish terra cotta keystones and window trim, particularly in the ground floor office entrance. The fine original ground floor, iron store front with its small transom windows is intact.

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7. Description

Of the 19 buildings in the Civic Center Historic District, 9 are significant to the character of the District, 5 are neutral and could be replaced by appropriately designed buildings without loss of character to the District, and 6 are non-conforming intrusions which detract from the integrity of the district.

<u>Map Ref.</u>	<u>Building</u>	<u>Significant/ Integral</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Non-conforming Intrusion</u>
1a	Dept. City Planning			X
2A	Wells Fargo Bank Bldg.		X	
2B	Civic Center Power House		X	
2C	Standard Station			X
2D	Dept. Public Health Bldg.	X		
3	Civic Auditorium	X		
4	City Hall	X		
6	Public Library	X		
6a	Library Annex			X
7	California State Bldg.	X		
8	Orpheum Theatre	X		
9	City Hall Annex			X
10a	War Memorial Opera House	X		
10b	Veterans Building	X		
11	Federal Building	X		
13	1 United Nations Plaza		X	
14	Buker's Pet Store			X
15	McCarthy's Cocktail Lounge			X
16	7th & McAllister Bldg.		X	
17	Methodist Book Concern		X	

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Civic Center Plan - 1912 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Multiple

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE Civic Center History

The land on which the Civic Center now stands was originally sand dunes and chaparral. Shortly after the street grid of San Francisco was laid out in 1847, the extreme southwest corner of the grid, bounded by Market, McAllister and Larkin Streets, was set aside as the Yerba Buena Cemetery. When shifting sands uncovered the graves the cemetery was moved, and in 1860 the land was given to the City Parks Department. In 1870, still undeveloped, the land was declared a City Hall Reservation and City Hall Avenue was laid out parallel to Market Street between the present-day intersections of Grove and Larkin Streets and Leavenworth and McAllister. The land between Market and City Hall Avenue was divided and sold to start a fund for a city hall, except for a 100-foot swath across from Eighth Street, which remained under public ownership as Marshall Square.

A monumental structure (hereinafter, Old City Hall) was designed to occupy the remainder of the triangle of the land bounded by City Hall Avenue, Larkin and McAllister Streets. Ground was broken in 1872, but principally because of corruption in the city government, it was not completed until 1897 at a far higher cost than originally projected.

In 1899, B.J.S. Cahill, with the encouragement of Mayor Phelan, put forth a Civic Center scheme which would clear up land titles clouded by dubious practices of the promoters of the Old City Hall, and at the same time create an imposing setting for existing and proposed civic structures in a blighted area. The plan would have opened up Market Street for over two blocks near the junction of Market and present-day Civic Center. The street would have split in two paths, leaving a large central area for new development. The plan would have brought the Old City Hall, the Mechanic's Institute, the Post Office, Hibernia Bank and other monumental structures previously scattered over the area and obscured by lesser edifices into a single grand design. A direct extension of the Golden Gate Park Panhandle would intersect Market near the western terminus of the new project. New developments were halted on two sites which would have blocked the project, but when a third went ahead, the Civic Center was scrapped. The plan failed for many reasons, but principally because of general distrust of large governmental projects.

In 1904, the Society for the Improvement and Adornment of San Francisco was formed under the leadership of former Mayor Phelan. The Society invited Daniel Burham to provide the city with a grand plan and suggested to B.J.S. Cahill that he design a Civic Center. Again, Cahill proposed using existing structures and land already owned by the city as the least expensive approach and the most likely to be realized. This plan was, in fact, very similar to the one which was later used. A central plaza was located just as the present plaza, with major buildings facing it on all sides. The Old City Hall was already on the east and the Mechanics Pavilion on the south. Another major structure was proposed for the north and a pair for the west side, with a newly plotted Panhandle Extension running out Fulton Street to Steiner, and then angling up through Alamo Square to the Panhandle.

Daniel Burham's plan for San Francisco was ready in 1905, with a Civic Center playing a vital role in the whole concept. He envisioned the Civic Center as scattered around

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

BOOKS

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10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 46.56 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 0	5 5 1 8 5 0	4 1 8 1 4 9 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1 0	5 5 1 0 1 0	4 1 8 1 0 8 0

B	1 0	5 5 1 8 5 0	4 1 8 1 0 8 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D	1 0	5 5 1 0 2 0	4 1 8 1 4 8 0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the center line of the intersection of Seventh Street and Market Street, the boundaries of the district are as follows: The boundary proceeds southwest on the centerline of Market Street (all boundaries run along the centerlines of the streets) to the intersection with Grove Street, then west on Grove to Block 355, Lot 12, and along the eastern and southern boundaries of lot 12 to its intersection with Block 355, Lot 8. It then follows the eastern boundary of Lot 8 south to Market Street, proceeds southwest along the line of Lot 8 and then northwest on the line of Lot 8 to

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Michael R. Corbett / Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage

DATE

November 22, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

2007 Franklin Street

TELEPHONE

(415) 362-5154

CITY OR TOWN

San Francisco,

STATE

California

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Kevin M. Elton SHPO

DATE 2/22/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR OF OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST William Tolson
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 10/10/78
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 DATE Oct 4, 1978



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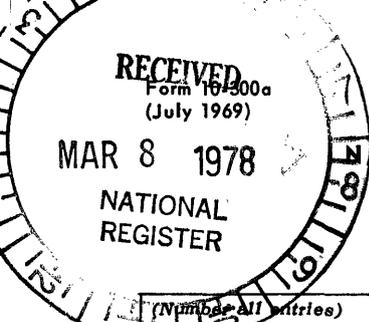
the central part of the city, with all the major points connected by a generally circular series of boulevards. The plan was totally impractical but it fired the imagination of the public and was approved by the Board of Supervisors shortly before the earthquake in 1906.

With the city in ashes and the old City Hall in shambles, Burnham and his supporters felt that it would be an easy matter to implement the plan with its grand new boulevards and public places which would no longer require cutting through the city. Like other cities that had suffered great holocausts, however, San Francisco grew back on the same property lines as before and before the public would entertain any talk of beautification and "adornment," the old commercial and residential areas were substantially rebuilt.

In 1909, Burnham was asked to revise his plans for the Civic Center. His deputy, Willis Polk, handled the design, placing a semi-circular grouping at the corner of Van Ness and Market, where it could meet the direct Panhandle Extension. Stirred by the impracticality of the plan, Cahill revised his 1904 plan slightly and argued persuasively that the Burnham/Polk proposal was too expensive, disruptive to traffic and business and likely to be delayed by litigation. The Burnham/Polk plan was put before the public and easily defeated.

In 1910, the Panama-Pacific International Exposition Company formed to hold a major world's fair in 1915. A vice-president of the Exposition Company, James Rolph (or "Sunny Jim") ran successfully for mayor in September 1911. Rolph's effective campaign, tied to continuing reform, ran under the slogan "Forward San Francisco." The Municipal Street Railway, Hetch-Hetchy water project and other important and practical civic improvements were part of his program. But the idea of a Civic Center, in his hands, became a catalyst for the rest as a symbol of the new unity of the population under a new and honest political era. He associated the Civic Center with the Exposition; the Civic Center would permanently exhibit the grandeur which the Exposition would only briefly evoke, and it would demonstrate convincingly to the world that San Francisco had not simply recovered from the earthquake but had become a thriving and civilized metropolis of international importance.

After Rolph's election, steps towards realization of the Civic Center were taken quickly in hopes of completing at least the City Hall and Auditorium for the Exposition. In January 1912, suggestions were solicited and over 60 submitted proposals for a plan for the newly approved Civic Center. They tended to fall into two types--those at Van Ness and Market and those based on the old sites of the old City Hall and Mechanics Institute, with the latter heavily predominating. Cahill's 1909 plan was endorsed by the Board of Supervisors and the issue of the general location was turned over to an architectural commission under the auspices of the Exposition, consisting of Willis Polk, William B. Faville, Clarence Ward, Harris Connick, Edward Bennett and John Galen Howard. Polk and Bennett voted for Van Ness and Market



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but all the others chose the old site. As Howard explained, the old site was nearer the city's activities, it had more space, only minimal street changes would be necessary both for ceremonial and circulatory purposes, more impressive views would be possible and it would be cheaper and less likely to incur litigation. It was more amenable to the Panhandle Extension route and it offered better opportunities for growth. Most importantly, it did not interrupt the commercial life of Market Street.

An Architectural Advisory Commission composed of Howard, Frederick W. Meyer and John Reid, Jr., was appointed by the Mayor to select a final Civic Center plan, to oversee a city hall competition and to oversee the implementation of the Civic Center plans. Howard, the Chairman, was an unusually capable man, skilled both as an architect and as an administrator, and it was his leadership which guided the initial stages. In a speech advocating passage of the March 1912 bond election for \$8.8 million, he eloquently explained, "the Civic Center signifies the unity of the community of which it is the practical need, the esthetic need and the spiritual expression." The bonds passed overwhelmingly and the City Hall competition was begun shortly thereafter. The winners were announced before the final design of the Civic Center was settled upon so that the City Hall was designed for the old City Hall site. In July 1912, a variation of the Cahill plan was chosen with the City Hall and the two buildings across the plaza from it reversed to achieve a longer approach to the City Hall from Market Street.

The final plan, then, consisted of a central plaza with the City Hall to the west, State Building to the north, Public Library and Opera House to the east and Exposition Auditorium to the south. In addition, the four-corner lots between the main buildings were to contain a Health Building, a Fire and Police Building a Power House and an undetermined public building. The site of the present Federal Building was reserved as city property but also undetermined. Narrow strips were to be acquired on all property fronting the Civic Center, which would be lined with arcades and peristyles.

Construction began quickly, but only the Auditorium, the Power House and the Plaza were ready for the opening of the Exposition. The City Hall was not completed until the end of 1915, after the fair had closed.

During the early stages of construction, large signs stood in the lots where buildings were proposed giving the public an idea of what a grand project was in the making. The Library was completed in 1916, and the planned Opera House was ruled out of Marshall Square before World War I ended. The war and subsequent building depression delayed further progress into the mid-1920's when the State Building was completed. The Federal Building and the Health Department were finished in the early 1930's. While the arcades and peristyles did not come to fruition, money was set aside by the builders of the Orpheum Theater (then called the Pantages) to face the blank rear walls more appropriately. A dispute over who should pay for the facing was never resolved with the result that the walls have never been faced.

As the Civic Center as it was originally approved gradually arrived at the present stage of near completion, a War memorial expanded the Center, much as the original planners had hoped. The new development west of the City Hall, which was completed in 1932, thoroughly harmonizes with the old scheme. Other efforts at expansion in the 1950's and 1960's have been less successful



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but either sufficiently inobtrusive or far enough away that they do not intrude on the older areas. The Civic Center Development Plan of 1958, by Wurster, Bernardi and Emmons; Skidmore, Owings and Merrill; DeLew, Cather and Company was the most important of these efforts. In the late 1950's, the old plaza was excavated and a parking garage and exhibition hall were put under ground beneath the new plaza.

As part of the current Market Street beautification project and undergrounding of rail transportation, the first blocks of **Fulton and Leavenworth** above Market are being transformed into United Nations Plaza, a pedestrian way, with brick paving between the Federal Building and the Orpheum Theater.

Today Marshall Square and the corner lot northwest of the plaza, as the only Civic Center sites without permanent developments, are still mentioned as possibilities for future expansion of the Civic Center.
Significance

The San Francisco Civic Center is regarded by many scholars as the finest and most complete manifestation of the City Beautiful Movement in the United States. The City Beautiful Movement intended to create beauty and order in cities which had grown too fast as a result of industrialization and accelerated immigration, and as such was an aspect of the general municipal reform movement that sprang up in the 1890's and continued after the turn of the century.

The real impetus to the movement was the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, called the White City by its admirers for the great white classical buildings that were arranged in an orderly manner around a lagoon in a Court of Honor. The order, the harmony, the cleanliness and the grandeur of the White City amidst the squalor of Chicago and the generally chaotic conditions of American cities captivated the American public and served as an inspiration to planning and design schemes of great magnitude and importance for almost 40 years.

The most immediate and direct effect of City Beautiful was the more or less successful imitation of the White City in world's fairs all over the country. Major expositions were held in Buffalo (1901), St. Louis (1904), and San Francisco (1915). Lesser celebrations occurred in San Francisco (1894), Omaha (1898), Memphis (1898) and Seattle (1909). All of these fairs served to spread the ideals of classical architecture, general Beaux Arts planning and the example of cooperation for the greater effect of an ensemble. But like the White City, these expositions lasted a season and were then demolished.

A more permanent result of the City Beautiful Movement was the revival of L'Enfant's plan of Washington, D.C. Daniel Burnham, who had supervised the Chicago World's Fair, was called in to extend the design and to plan a railroad station.

The most characteristic and widespread results of the national enthusiasm generated by the City Beautiful Movement were, however, the city and park plan and the Civic Center. Annapolis, Bakersfield, Baltimore, Boston, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Hartford, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Little Rock, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Philadelphia, Providence, Roanoke, St. Louis, San Francisco, Seattle, Stockton and Williamsburg are some of the many places that commissioned plans during this era. But of the great

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number of places that had plans made, only a few were implemented to any degree, and of those, only Cleveland's and San Francisco's achieved anywhere near the proportions dreamed of by planners and an enthusiastic public. Cleveland's Civic Center was only half finished and San Francisco's more ambitious project nearly reached completion.

As no city planning departments existed in the United States until Hartford established one in 1907, these plans were virtually all undertaken by outside consultants, Daniel Burnham and Charles Mulford Robinson being chief among them. Burnham was the greater planner and probably the single most significant proponent of the City Beautiful Movement, having had a hand in the White City, the revival of L'Enfant's plan, and the plans for Chicago, Cleveland and San Francisco.

The principal failure of the City Beautiful Movement was in its emphasizing physical beauty and abstract planning while ignoring economic and sociological factors. The few manifestations of the movement, which are permanent, can be largely attributed to economic and sociological oversights.

Nevertheless, City Beautiful was a significant episode in American architecture and planning with far-reaching influences. It marked the beginnings of modern city planning in the United States; it spawned the first city planning departments and city planning schools; it championed a style of architecture which asserted itself as a truly national style until the modern movements supplanted it in the late 1920's and 1930's; it was associated with the reform and professionalization of architecture; and it symbolized the widespread municipal reform movements of the day.

A most significant legacy of the movement has been a heightened awareness of the city as an important unit of design. Partly in response to the chaos of American cities, the City Beautiful Movement advocated a restraint on the part of the individual architect who, it taught, should be more concerned with the effect of his building on the overall quality of its environment than with the uniqueness of the particular building.

Each building in the Civic Center was faced with the problem of providing modern, functional facilities in a classical idiom. The classical was deemed suitable as the traditional style of American governmental buildings, but significantly in this case also as amenable to City Beautiful ideals of harmony among many buildings on a grand scale. The often-remarked representation of American imperialism in the style of governmental buildings of this period is also present. The classical style aptly expressed the mood of a nation eager to redefine its newly achieved international importance in architectural terms.

In San Francisco, it represented the city's emergence as a regional center of national importance, and within the city, it symbolized the united efforts of a population recently divided along many lines.

In terms of "democratic" architecture, or architecture for an ever larger segment of the population, monumental classical architecture uncompromisingly demonstrated the enhanced concern for the general public. Only a few years earlier, such splendor was exclusively reserved for the rich



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and the privileged few. To this day, no greater public interiors have been built in the United States than those influenced by and representative of the City Beautiful Movement, including among the very finest, the San Francisco City Hall.

Within the scope of turn of the century classical architecture in the United States, the San Francisco Civic Center contains several fine examples of the mode and one superlative example in the City Hall. The other buildings in the group, however, although less interesting in themselves, cannot properly be evaluated in the same way. In particular, the State Building, the Federal Building, the Health Building and the War Memorial group would probably appear rather dull in themselves, as if they were missing an essential ingredient. But seen in the context of the Civic Center as a whole, and in relation to City Hall, all the buildings together achieve distinction.

The criteria on which the buildings are judged, then, must be the degree to which each enhances the group without distracting from the City Hall. These qualities are achieved through a harmony of color, material, scale, size, texture, rhythm and style. Within these constrictions the buildings achieve individual interest through the imaginative manipulation of the elements. These are the criteria on which the architects of the buildings would have wanted them to be judged.

As the beauty and importance of the Civic Center is diffused among many elements, modestly designed and carefully orchestrated for the greater effect of the whole group, so no one man can be singled out as having presided over the development of the Civic Center. Mayor Phelan, B.J.S. Cahill, the Society for the Improvement and Adornment of San Francisco, Daniel Burnham and the supporters of the Exposition all played essential parts in the formulation of the idea locally. Mayor Rolph and John Galen Howard were probably most responsible for the crucial early stages of acceptance and inception. Arthur Brown, who designed most of the buildings, and the best ones, deserves far more recognition than he has received for his role as designer and planner. Many of the men and groups were involved at more than one stage, and some, like Willis Polk, never left any tangible marks of their influence, yet were significantly involved as critics and supporters.

Lastly, the San Francisco Civic Center has throughout its existence drawn important people and events to it from all over the United States. Its beauty, its monumental character and its excellent and varied facilities have been considered a suitable setting for political demonstrations and conferences including the San Francisco general strike of 1934, the House Un-American Activities Committee hearings of the 1950's, and more recent anti-Viet Nam war demonstrations in the 1960's.

The most significant events, however, have been of international importance. The United Nations was founded in the Civic Center at "The United Nations Conference on International Organization" which lasted from April 25-June 26, 1945. Heads of state and delegates from 49 countries, together with 5,000 others attended the conference. Organizational details and the actual drafting of the United Nations Charter took place in the Veterans Building, while ceremonial events and speeches were held in the Opera House, including the signing of the United Nations Charter. Entertainment and large public gatherings were in the Exposition Auditorium and facilities and services



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were provided by the Public Library. In addition to its direct historical significance, this meeting demonstrates how successfully the buildings in the complex support one another in function as well as design.

On September 8, 1951, delegates from 49 countries signed the Japanese Peace Treaty, returning sovereignty to Japan after World War II. The treaty was drawn in the Veterans Building and signed in the Opera House.

The Architects

The Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris was a major influence on the City Beautiful Movement as the most important school of architecture during that period and as the purveyor of idea which, in the United States, became associated with the City Beautiful Movement. In the United States certain schools and East Coast architectural firms provided much of the same training and promoted many of the same ideas. The office of McKim, Mead and White was one of the most important and most influential of these firms. Of nine architects of the major buildings in the Civic Center, six attended the Ecole des Beaux Arts and two others were apprenticed under McKim, Mead and White in New York City.

John Galen Howard was a nationally prominent figure in the City Beautiful Movement and one of the most important figures in the development of the San Francisco Civic Center. Howard studied at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. He worked for H.H. Richardson as well as for McKim, Mead and White. He served on the board of the Pan American Exposition in Buffalo in 1901, where he designed the prize-winning Electric Tower, and was chairman of the architectural board of the Alaska Yukon Exposition in Seattle in 1909. Howard was invited by Phoebe A. Hearst to design the Hearst Memorial Mining Building at the University of California in 1900 and remained to design the plan for the university and founded the Department of Architecture, over which he presided for 25 years. During his tenure, he designed most of the new buildings on the campus.

During the same years that Howard was so actively involved at the University of California as an architect, planner, teacher and administrator, he played an equally versatile role in the development of San Francisco. After the 1906 earthquake, Howard served on the committee charged with reconstructing the city, and in 1912, he was made chairman of the Advisory Board for the proposed Civic Center. The Advisory Board selected and refined a plan for the Civic Center from among those suggested and oversaw the early stages of the implementation of the plan, including the City Hall competition and the design of the Exposition Auditorium. Later he served on the architectural advisory committee for the War Memorial Complex.

Howard's role in the Civic Center went far beyond that of a designer and an advisor. He was a powerful public advocate and a trusted expert, upon whom reliance was placed for political, administrative and aesthetic guidance. The WPA's California Art Research said of Howard: "His was an influence such as has been exerted by few men in Western America, and particularly California culture."

Frederick H. Meyer was a German architect who became an influential leader in art education in the San Francisco Bay Area. He taught at many of

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the most prestigious schools, and in 1907, he founded the California School of Arts and Crafts in Berkeley with which he was associated until his death in 1961. In 1915, Meyer received a Medal of Honor from the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. His most notable architectural achievements outside of the Civic Center are the Humboldt Bank Building whose shell was one of the few that survived the 1906 earthquake and fire, and the Monadnock Building, also in San Francisco. Meyer also designed the Bakersfield (California) courthouse as the result of a competition. He served on the original advisory board of architects for the Civic Center and on the later War Memorial Advisory Board.

John Reid, Jr. served as the San Francisco City Architect from 1912 to 1928, and in that capacity, he remained an advisor on the Civic Center long after his term on the original advisory board of architects had expired. Aside from his part in the Civic Center plan and the Exposition Auditorium, Reid completed the design of the original Civic Center Plaza, advised the State Building competition, made interior alterations to the Health Building and served on the War Memorial Advisory Board. He also contributed to the city as the designer of a large number of school buildings, including the old High School of Commerce, adjacent to the Civic Center and now used as the Public Schools Administration Building. Reid graduated from the University of California in 1904 and received his diploma from the Ecole des Beaux Arts in 1909.

Bernard J.S. Cahill was an Englishman who came to San Francisco in 1891 to practice architecture. Cahill specialized in mausoleum design but he is best known and most influential as an early advocate of city planning. He attended the London Town Planning Conference in 1909 and the Conference on City Planning in 1910. As an editor and frequent contributor to the American Builder's Review and the Architect and Engineer, he was able to convey his planning ideas to professional audiences. His farsighted plan for a Civic Center in San Francisco in 1899 helped to create a public understanding and acceptance of the Civic Center idea. Although he has never received proper recognition, his plan of 1904, amended in 1909, was adopted in 1912 and served as the design for the present Civic Center. Cahill is also known as the inventor of the "Butterfly Map" or Octahedral System of Projection, by which a distortion in a flat map of the round earth is minimized.

1. Marshall Square-Marshall Square derives its name from the use of part of its southeast corner at Grove and Hyde Streets before the old street pattern was altered to make way for the present Civic Center. The Pioneer Memorial then sat in the middle of Marshall Square, which was a small park that stood between the old City Hall and Market Street. The Square was part of the impressive view up Eighth Street to the City Hall and the site of important public events and demonstrations for many years. It was named after James Marshall, whose discovery led to the California gold rush.

The present Marshall Square was designated as the future site for the Opera House in the Civic Center plan of 1912. Private interests set about raising \$1,000,000 for such a structure and engaged Willis Polk to design it. Preliminary sketches were published in November 1912, but in the middle of the next year the California Supreme Court ruled that a private building could

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not be erected on public land. Efforts to redraw the arrangement in an acceptable manner were unsuccessful and were finally given up in 1916.

In the early 1930's Marshall Square was suggested as a site for a new municipal courts building and was subsequently so designated in the city master plan. Preliminary designs were made by City Architect Dodge A. Reidy in 1933 and sketches were drawn by Stanford Stevenson in the mid-1950's. After bonds for a court house were rejected by the voters three times the project was dropped and the site recommended by the City Planning Department for a library in 1969. Proponents of a new Performing Arts Center vied for the site, but in 1975 they were allocated the old Commerce High school playground and Marshall Square was re-affirmed as a new library site.

The Department of City Planning was originally built as the Hospitality House for the USO in 1941 to accomodate soldiers quartered in barracks in the Civic Center Plaza. It was built largely with donated money and labor and although it was only intended to be a temporary structure, it remains in good condition. After the war, ownership reverted to the city which has used it for various offices, principally City Planning.

, The Pioneer Memorial is also called the James Lick Memorial for the man who left the largest part of his fortune to erect public statuary in San Francisco. This sprawling work was designed by Frank Happersberger as a memorial to the ordinary miners, traders, cowboys, sailors and other pioneer people who came to California seeking their fortunes and remaining to settle. The most notable aspect of this fine work is the modeling of the large figures, ordinary people depicted in heroic groupings.

Marshall Square is the only major site in the Civic Center never to have fulfilled its designated functions, but the temporary uses to which it has been put have held the block in reserve for future completion of the Center. The City Planning Building is a good example of moderne design. The Pioneer Memorial is one of the best pieces of public statuary in San Francisco evoking the spirit of frontier times in California.

This monument and the name given to the present block, recall the original Marshall Square and the old San Francisco City Hall and its neighborhood.

2. The Four Corners- In the 1912 plans for the Civic Center, in addition to the major buildings on blocks facing the plaza, four smaller structures were indicated at the corners of the square. It was expected that the four corner buildings would be a fire and police station, a public health building, a power plant for the whole complex and one **undetermined** structure. Only the power house and the public health building were constructed. The failure to complete all four corners is largely due to their inclusion for essentially aesthetic reasons. The proposed method of financing them by separate tax levies has also proved to be an obstacle. The aesthetic function of the four corner buildings was to complete the classical wall all the way around the plaza. This was not only to avert inharmonious elements from the Civic Center, but in the spirit of the City Beautiful Movement, to demonstrate a complete picture of what cities would look like when the day of City Beautiful arrived.

2A. Southeast Corner: Wells Fargo Bank- The southeast corner was a part of the original Civic Center plan, which, although never realized, forms



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a pleasant facade in the Wells Fargo Building which acts as a re-entrant corner to the plaza. The building recalls the earliest days of the present Civic Center before automobile traffic assumed control. Its siting, together with the one other structure at Leavenworth and McAllister, recalls the old City Hall Avenue and the pre-1906 Old City Hall neighborhood.

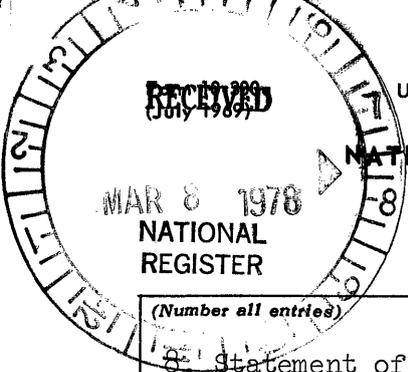
2B. Northeast Corner: Civic Center Power House-It is not certain when the Power House was completed but it was not later than 1915 when the Exposition Auditorium was the first major structure in the Civic Center to be finished. It was probably designed by Frederick Meyer. The Power House still provides steam heating to all the Civic Center buildings around the Plaza. Its gas conversion boilers are unchanged in 60 years yet are well-maintained and in good condition.

The building is the smallest and least effusive structure in the Civic Center, yet quite appropriate to its practical purpose and aesthetic function of gapping the space between the Library and the State Building. There are numerous models for the Power House in similarly designed power stations built throughout the Bay Area and California during the first years of the 20th century for the Pacific Gas and Electric Company by such important architects as Willis Polk and Frederick Meyer. The classical treatment of industrial structures such as this was relatively uncommon, but an important aspect of the City Beautiful Movement.

2D. Southwest Corner: Department of Public Health Building-The health building was first mentioned in the original specifications for a Civic Center in 1912. In 1919, John Reid, Jr., in his capacity as city architect, began preliminary drawings for an administrative and executive office building for the Department of Health on the present site. The buildings was to be four stories and projected to cost \$400,000, but the building depression and the funding problems delayed construction through the 1920's. In 1928, Reid resigned as city architect and a bond election authorized construction of a Health Building. In January 1930, Samuel Heiman in the City Architect's Office assumed responsibility for the job. Ground breaking was in September 1931 and the building was completed in 1932 at an approximate cost of \$800,000. Interior renovations occurred during the 1930's and in 1966 when facilities for Civil Service Examinations were installed in the former women's prison area.

The importance of the building is in the degree to which it fulfills its intended role in the Civic Center to space the gap between the Civic Auditorium and the City Hall and to do so in such a way that it is in harmony with the Civic Center as a whole. The Health Building is the same height as the Auditorium and City Hall, and its rusticated base and smooth upper floor areas are in the same proportions. The horizontal rustication of the base is like that of City Hall, and the balconied and pedimented windows are like those of the Auditorium. The re-entrant corner echoes corners in the War Memorial Buildings, the Federal Building, the Orpheum Theater and the City Hall.

The shape and orientation of the building not only fills the gap but suggests a continuation of monumental splendor throughout the city. The longer Grove Street facade, for example, is visually necessary because the City Hall does not fill out its whole block and leaves a long view down



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Grove Street from the Plaza. The re-entrant corner provides a setting for its elaborate doorway, but more importantly to the ensemble, it creates a sense of greater volume in the building which would be lost with a ninety degree corner. Mass and the illusion of mass in monumental buildings of this type is important to the intended effect. The enhancement of the sense of size suggests an importance for the Health Building more in line with that of the principal Civic Center buildings.

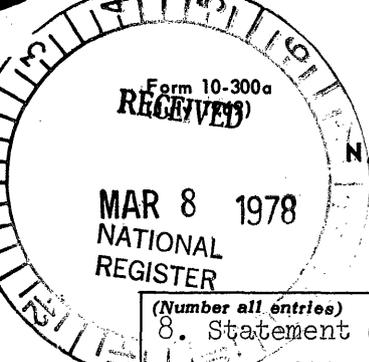
Taken by itself, the Health Building is a simple but pleasing exercise in the Italian Renaissance style. Like the Renaissance palazzo, it is intended to resemble its interior organization is simple and straight-forward, being efficiently arranged office and laboratory space.

3. Exposition Hall-Efforts to build a new Civic Auditorium began as the city rebuilt after the earthquake and fire of 1906. Most of the many proposals were for a structure in the present Civic Center area to replace the old Mechanic's Institute Pavilion which served as a public auditorium and stood on the present auditorium site. Such groups as the California Promotion Committee and the Merchant's Association were firmly behind these efforts and hoped to make San Francisco a major convention center.

By the mid-summer of 1911, the directors of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition had decided to build an Exposition Auditorium as a lasting reminder of the grandeur of the Exposition and as a permanent contribution to the city by the Exposition. Insofar as the Exposition was a promotional venture for local businessmen, the Auditorium was also designed to bring business to the city by providing a major convention center. To justify the Auditorium as an Exposition expense, conferences would meet without paying rent.

The Exposition first proposed an Auditorium at Van Ness and Market, but readily agreed to the present site when the Civic Center plans were adopted in 1912. When it appeared that the Civic Center Advisory Architects, Howard, Meyer and Reid, would design the Exposition Auditorium, a request by local architects was made for a competition. The directors of the Exposition feared that a competition would delay final completion of the building past the opening of the fair and vetoed the idea, naming Howard, Meyer and Reid as architects in the interests of expediency. The local chapter of the American Institute of Architects, of which Howard was then president, split on the issue and brought the three advisory architects to trial. The AIA claimed that a conspiracy of the three had kept the design of the Auditorium out of competition and had denied the full City Hall contract to the firm of Bakewell and Brown. Howard, Meyer and Reid claimed that the Auditorium was not a public building since it was financed by the Exposition and therefore not subject to mandatory competition. Ironically, Bakewell and Brown sided with the Advisory Architects and the result was that a number of local architects left the AIA and formed a new organization.

Ground breaking on the Auditorium occurred July 10, 1913, the cornerstone was laid April 23, 1914, and the building was dedicated January 5, 1915, in time for the Exposition. The final cost of the Auditorium above the value of the land donated by the city was \$1,112,710 paid by the



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8. Statement of Significance (continuation sheet 11)

Exposition. An additional \$210, 024 was paid by the city for granite facing as the Exposition had only agreed to pay for terra cotta.

Since the completion of the building, there have been several interior renovations. In 1921, G. Albert Lansburgh altered the main hall for opera, principally with the addition of a canopy which lowered the ceiling. Acoustical problems led to the further addition of giant fireproof curtains by Ward and Blohme in 1923. After the Opera House was completed in 1932, the Civic Auditorium was remodeled again with the principal intention of obscuring the open metal truss work which had been so highly praised in 1915.

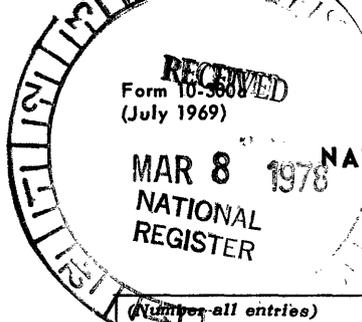
This was accomplished with huge canvas murals and a forest of chandeliers. The murals, by Gleb and Peter Ilyin, simulated a blue sky with white clouds and were locally acclaimed. A major renovation by Wurster, Bernardi and Emmons and Skidmore, Owings and Merrill modernized the interior from 1961-1964. Between 1923 and 1932, the San Francisco Opera was held in the main hall of the Auditorium. Until 1953, the Board of Education was housed in the upper floors and afterwards, until the renovation in the 1960's, other city departments utilized the space. The principal use of the Auditorium has been for conventions.

The Exposition Auditorium is designed in the most traditional Beaux Arts manner. With its multi-faceted facade, huge bays and paired columns, it recalls such landmarks of the style as the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and some of John Galen Howard's campus buildings at Berkeley.

As an aesthetic element of the Civic Center, the Auditorium plays a unique role. Where the other buildings defer to the City Hall and reflect its rhythmic and classical qualities, there is an exuberance in the Auditorium which speaks directly to the dome. The other buildings might almost be the base for the dome themselves in their classical restraint, but the picturesqueness of the Auditorium facade, and the extension of the columns through the cornice in particular, reflect the dome itself. At the same time, the expansive, uncluttered character of the facade, and the unassertiveness and small scale of such details as the spindly columns between massive arches combine to harmonize the design with the City Hall and other buildings.

Historically, the Civic Auditorium, as the Exposition Auditorium, serves as a reminder of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915 for which it was built. It is the only permanent structure which remains from that world's fair and as such recalls an important phase in American history when expositions all over the country celebrated the accomplishments and aspirations of prosperous cities and the newly powerful United States. The San Francisco Exposition was partly a response to the just completed Panama Canal and signified the growing economic importance of San Francisco and the west coast. The period of the Exposition was one of the most colorful in San Francisco's past. As a virtual gift of the Exposition Company, the Auditorium served as an important impetus to the public and political acceptance of the entire Civic Center.

In 1920, the Democratic Convention at which James M. Cox was nominated for President and Franklin D. Roosevelt for Vice-President was held in the Auditorium. In 1945, the Welcoming Ceremony for the delegates to the



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8. Statement of Significance (continuation sheet 12)
 United Nations Conference on International Organizations overflowed from the Auditorium into the Plaza. A series of concerts were held for the delegates, and many events displaced from the Opera House by the conference were performed in the Auditorium.
 The architects, John Galen Howard, Frederick Meyer and John Reid, Jr., are discussed at the end of the section on the Civic Center.

4. City Hall-When the old San Francisco City Hall crumbled in the first 60 seconds of the 1906 earthquake, it was as if to signal an end to the tradition of corruption in local government. The old City Hall had become a symbol of that corruption, having taken 27 years to build and costing \$5,750,000. Within two years after the earthquake, the most powerful men in the city would be in jail and the voters would have elected a new reform-minded mayor. In 1911, another reform candidate, "Sunny" Jim Rolph, would be elected in a landslide, campaigning to unify the diverse factions of the city and to build a new City Hall and Civic Center representative of the new era. The development of City Hall is therefore inextricably related to the development of the Civic Center.

A new City Hall had been a public and a political issue since 1906. There was a possibility that the superstructure, or the foundation, or the site of the old building might be reused, but by the end of 1908 demolition was underway and the talk of a new City Hall began in earnest. There were many proposals, including Louis Cowles' perennial, all-purpose radial solution to municipal problems, and a plan by Glenn Allen for a 55 story City Hall which would be the tallest building in the world. Some people thought a monumental structure was improper in light of previous municipal governments, and unnecessarily impractical in view of the recent disaster and continuing drain on city funds for reconstruction of vital services. But most people felt that the City Hall should be sufficiently pretentious to demonstrate to all the world visiting the PPIE in 1915 that San Francisco has a sense of civic pride and that the city had not merely recovered from the earthquake, but that it was moving forward aggressively.

A City Hall proposal accompanied each successive Civic Center plan, but was voted down twice in bond elections. In the meantime, in 1911, city offices were moved into a hotel then under construction near the old City Hall (now the San Franciscan, a P.S.A. hotel, at 1231 Market Street). Mayor Rolph's election in September 1911 signaled the willingness of the public to proceed with the City Hall and the Civic Center, and in March of 1912, bonds for the combined projects passed overwhelmingly.

In keeping with the open and democratic spirit of the new city government, it was agreed that a competition would be held for the design of the new City Hall. The program for the competition was completed and sent out in April 1912 to any architect who practised in San Francisco. Seventy-three designs were submitted and judged by a panel whose most influential members included Civic Center Advisory Architects Howard, Meyer and Reid. The winning design by Bakewell and Brown was announced on June 20, 1912.

The winning design was the overwhelming choice of the judges and was enthusiastically received by the public and critics. It was seen as a superior solution to the program that called for an efficient office building

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which would also express the important symbolic functions of the seat of government and the center of a large civic complex. The building was designed to occupy the old City Hall site across the plaza from its present location and was planned to take advantage of the view up Eighth Street to that site, with the axis of Eighth terminating in the corner of the building. The sites were reversed in a vote of the Board of Supervisors on the advice of the Advisory Architects and other parties.

Construction began in April 1913 with a ground breaking ceremony attended by the architects, the mayor and many prominent local citizens to mark the beginning of both the City Hall and the Civic Center. In December 1915 an informal dedication was held but the City Hall was not completely finished for a few more months. The only alterations in the City Hall have taken place behind office doors except for new elevators installed in 1966. The building has been well maintained and is in good condition.

The San Francisco City Hall is widely regarded as one of the finest examples of classical architecture in the United States. It was a very conservative building for its day and is firmly within the tradition of American capitol buildings dating back to the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C. Yet the influence of the Beaux Arts revival of Baroque ideal and Arthur Brown's masterful hand set it apart. The combination of a high and exuberant dome over a pair of rhythmic and restrained office wings represents the necessarily practical and symbolic aspects of a seat of government. At the same time the City Hall serves as a powerful centerpiece and focal point for a much larger civic complex, with the dome serving as the end point of important vistas from the east and the west and as a point of reference elsewhere. Although it was not the first constructed, the City Hall was the first Civic Center building to be designed, and every subsequent building has deferred to its grandeur. The spirit and the details of the City Hall are echoed in every major Civic Center building in such general matters as the character of the office wings and such particulars as the definition and line of the rusticated base.

The finest feature of the City Hall is its dome, whose exterior has been called an effective and coherent summation of the European dome from the 16th to the 18th century, and it demonstrates evidence of the thorough architectural scholarship of Arthur Brown. The interior domed area, with its fine and elaborate detail, its imaginative but correct use of the classical elements, its grand staircase, handsome blue and gold metalwork and dramatic lighting, is a magnificent Baroque space, comparable to any in the United States. Everywhere, the handling of materials and details is superb.

The more subdued office wings are given rhythm in the breaking forward of porticos and angle features in the Baroque manner. As inside, the coldness and monochrome of the gray granite is interrupted and enlivened with the brilliant use of blue and gold iron and bronze work balustrades and window embellishments.

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Aside from the architects, several contributors to the City Hall deserve special mention. Louis Bourgeois, who assisted with the design of the interior, had been a student with Bakewell and Brown at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Paul Deniville, who produced the decorative plaster and artificial stonework of the monumental interior spaces, also did the interiors of the San Francisco Public Library and the now demolished Pennsylvania Station in New York City. Newman and Evans produced the architectural details, and George Wagner, who supervised construction of the City Hall, formerly worked with Burnham and Post.

The development of the City Hall was almost inseparable from that of the Civic Center as a whole. As the first to be designed and one of the first erected, it served as a powerful impetus to the completion of the rest of the project. Politically, it was effectively promoted by Mayor Rolph, both in its planning stages and after its completion, as symbolic of the unity of the people of San Francisco as well as the accomplishments and future promise of the city.

The City Hall has served primarily as a municipal office building, but with its magnificent domed space, it has been utilized for ceremonial purposes on occasion. Visiting American Presidents and foreign heads of state, including Charles de Gaulle and the Queen of Belgium, have been welcomed there. President Harding's funeral was held in the City Hall after he died in San Francisco in 1923. James Rolph's body lay in state in 1934 after he died while serving as Governor of California. House Un-American Activities Committee hearings were held in City Hall in the 1950's.

Arthur Brown was one of the finest of all American classical architects. He had a thorough knowledge of historical architecture which he applied to an imaginative ability to integrate eclectic sources into new and functional relationships, and he was a master with materials and details. Brown graduated from the University of California in 1896 and from the Ecole des Beaux Arts in 1901, winning three major prizes under the tutorship of the great French architect, Victor Laloux. In 1906 he returned to San Francisco to open an architectural firm with John Bakewell, Jr. Throughout the partnership, which lasted until 1928, Brown was the design partner. In addition to the San Francisco City Hall, Bakewell and Brown designed the Berkeley and Pasadena City Halls, the Horticulture Building at the PPIE in 1915, the Santa Fe Depot in San Diego and many buildings at Stanford University. After 1928, Brown designed the Coit Tower in San Francisco, the Department of Labor and the Interstate Commerce Buildings in Washington, D.C. and the War Memorial and Federal Buildings in San Francisco. Brown served on the architectural commission of the PPIE in 1915 and the Chicago World's Fair in 1933, and was chairman of the Golden Gate Exposition in 1939.

Brown was always more favorably regarded in France than in America, receiving numerous honors from prestigious French institutions. He was one of the major figures in the Civic Center. He was involved with Burnham in 1905, with the selection of the Civic Center site in 1912, and with all stages of the development of the War Memorial. He designed more individual buildings than any other in the Civic Center, and they stand out as the finest. He was a national figure in the City Beautiful Movement,

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with his participation in world's fairs, the Civic Center and his monumental design of the Federal Triangle.

John Bakewell, Jr. was born in Topeka, Kansas in 1873. He came to the San Francisco Bay Area with his family in the 1880's and studied at the University of California under Bernard Maybeck. Phoebe Apperson Hearst loaned him money to go to the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris where he met Arthur Brown, Jr. He and Brown returned to San Francisco as partners in 1906, continuing together until 1928. From that time until his retirement in 1942, he worked in partnership with Ernest Weihe. Bakewell was acknowledged by Daniel Burnham for his help in the 1905 plan for San Francisco, and he served on the architectural commission of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Throughout his long career, Bakewell served primarily as a sophisticated and capable executive and supervising architect.

5. Civic Center Plaza - The Civic Center Plaza was a central feature in the Civic Center plans from 1904 on. It was originally designed by A.L. Warswick of the City Architects Office in plans dated June 15, 1914. Landscaping and planting was begun in August 1914 and completed in June 1915. Additional plans for an encircling balustrade, final work on the fountains, and numerous pieces of outdoor furniture were undertaken by Warswick in 1917. Paving was completed by John Reid, Jr. in 1925.

In 1954, a \$3,275,000 bond issue was passed for an exhibit hall under the south half of the plaza. Plans by Wurster, Bernardi and Emmons and Skidmore, Owings and Merrill were approved March 16, 1956, and Brooks Hall opened April 12, 1958. The current Plaza replaced the original landscaping after Brooks Hall and the Civic Center garage were built. The old plaza was similar in design, with a central east-west pedestrian mall and flanking park areas. Paths defined by box hedges wound through lawns grouped in a semicircle around a fountain on each side of the central concourse. In a separate project, the privately financed garage was completed in April 1960 at a cost of \$4,500,000.

The Civic Center Plaza, as the central feature of the main grouping of Civic Center buildings serves to give shape to the grouping and to provide the open space that enhances the views of the monumental buildings. As part of the approach that runs up Fulton St., through U.N. Plaza, from Market St. to the City Hall, the Plaza is an inappropriately scaled foreground for the most magnificent feature of the Civic Center. Unfortunately the larger featured landscape that replaced the original Plaza design is less intimate and fails to provide the contrast with the monumentality of the whole design that existed in the original Plaza. The Plaza is, nevertheless, a heavily used park and is not out of character with its surroundings.

Since the realignment of the streets eliminated the original Marshall Square from the Civic Center, the Plaza has assumed the role as a favored public place. During World War II, prefabricated barracks were erected in the Plaza for military men on leave.

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6. San Francisco Public Library - The first public library in San Francisco was established in 1878. It was not housed in its own building, however, until the present library was completed in 1917. Meanwhile, it moved around into successively larger temporary quarters as the library collections grew. It was in the north wing of the old City Hall at the time of the 1906 earthquake, coincidentally the site of the present library building. When the City Hall collapsed and burned in the earthquake, most of the library collection was lost.

For some years before the earthquake there had been public efforts to build a permanent home for the library but progress was slow. Andrew Carnegie pledged \$375,000 apiece for a main library and branches in 1901 but the gift was not finally accepted and received (primarily because of a public reticence about "tainted" money) until after it was approved in the election of 1912. In 1903, \$1,647,000 worth of bonds were voted to purchase the lot bounded by Van Ness, Polk, Fulton and Grove to build a permanent library structure there. The site was shortly moved to Hayes, Fell, Franklin and Van Ness, the conjunction of the long-proposed Golden Gate Panhandle Extension and Daniel Burnham's newly planned Civic Center. Plans for this structure progressed far enough that the Reid Brothers firm was able to publish preliminary sketches for a classical building for the site in 1910. When the present Civic Center plan was adopted in 1912, however, the library trustees traded the old "library block" to the city for the newly designated library site. Ground breaking took place in March 1915 and the building was dedicated February 15, 1917.

The design of the present library was the result of a limited competition run by the Board of Library Trustees and the Civic Center Advisory Board. In addition to George Kelham, the eventual winner, the Reid Brothers, Albert Pissis, Ward and Blohme, Edgar Mathews and G. Albert Lansburgh were invited to compete. Despite a lawsuit by Mathews, the winning design was enthusiastically received by all other parties as not simply the best of the entries but a far superior design. Mathews contended, correctly, that Kelham's design bore a strong resemblance to the Detroit Public Library of Cass Gilbert. Gilbert and Paul Cret, a member of the jury that chose Gilbert's design in Detroit, were two of the three jury members in the San Francisco Library competition, and one of Gilbert's draftsmen at the time he designed the Detroit Public Library was in Kelham's office at the time of the San Francisco competition.

The main issue in the competition was derived from the requirement that the building be less than full lot size because there was no need for a larger building at the time, nor was there money to build one. The entries were divided over two general solutions. Two preferred a squarish building, completely ornamented on all sides but less than a full block long on the Fulton Street frontage. The other four chose an irregular "P" shaped building with fully ornamented frontages on both Larkin and Fulton Streets, but plain walls on the other facades. A "P" shaped design was chosen because the judges felt that it was more sympathetic to the Civic Center as a whole. It was felt that a short Fulton Street facade would have broken the projected continuity of rhythm and design from Market Street into the Civic Center which was achieved with the later completion of the Federal Building.

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In recent years, severe overcrowding has crippled the library's ability to function efficiently. Several tentative remedies have been proposed, including a new structure in place of the temporary library annex at the corner of McAllister and Hyde Streets; filling in the existing light courts; and building an annex in Marshall Square.

The San Francisco Public Library is an excellent example of American Beaux Arts architecture and is in the best tradition of classical revival European and American libraries, following Henri Labrouste's Biblioteque Ste. Genevieve in Paris and McKim, Mead and White's Boston Public Library, as well as the Detroit Public Library on which it is most closely modeled. Its restrained system of exterior ornament serves to reveal the rational plan of the building and at the same time harmonizes appropriately with the rest of the Civic Center. The long arcade of the Fulton Street facade serves with the colonnade of the Federal Building to define the principal planning axis of the Civic Center and to direct the eye from Market Street to the City Hall dome. The Larkin Street facade, across the Plaza from the City Hall, reflects the design of the City Hall in its main features, yet displays a lively individuality in the freestanding statues in the superstructure. Following the necessary exterior restraint, the grand unfolding of the finely wrought interior ceremonial spaces is treated in an appropriately dramatic Baroque manner.

The principal issue in the library's design competition, the shape of the building and its relation to other buildings, provides a clearcut illustration of the importance of the City Beautiful Movement in the design of an individual building. The winning entry was one in which the architect relinquished the satisfaction of constructing a complete building in both its shape and decorative treatment, for the greater good of the whole Civic Center complex.

During the organizing meetings of the United Nations in 1945, the Public Library provided services for the delegates in the Veterans Building, as well as for the press and other observers in the library itself.

Designer George Kelham was one of the most prominent architects in San Francisco from the time of his arrival after the earthquake until his death in 1936. After training at Harvard and the Ecole des Beaux Arts, he went to work in New York City and was sent to San Francisco by the firm of Trowbridge and Livingston to supervise construction of the new Palace Hotel in 1909. Afterwards, he remained in San Francisco where he did most of his important works, except for the plan and four campus buildings at UCLA, as successor to John Galen Howard as Supervising Architect for the University of California. He was chairman of the architecture committee for the PPIE in 1915 and was a member of the architecture committee for the 1939 Exposition at the time of his death. His greatest impact on the city was as a designer of skyscrapers during the building boom of the late 1920's and early 1930's. As much as any person, his buildings gave definition to the famous skyline that lasted into the 1960's. Most prominent are the Standard Oil Building, the Russ Building, and the Shell Building. The Russ Building was the city's tallest from 1927 until 1964.

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7. The State Building - A state office building was first seriously proposed in B.J.S. Cahill's 1904 design for a Civic Center. The idea surfaced again in 1909 when the State Engineer announced that drawings for a \$400,000, seven or eight story building were being prepared. An offer by the state in 1912 to build a \$500,000 structure, if the land were donated by the city, served as an inducement to approve the Civic Center. In 1913, the State Legislature authorized a \$1,000,000 bond election to finance construction of the building, and in 1916, the voters approved the bonds. World War I delayed further progress until the mid-summer of 1919 when bids were taken and contracts let. The cornerstone was laid in 1920, but the building was not finally completed until 1926. The final cost was \$1,800,000 to the state on land donated by the city. The \$6,500,000 annex was begun in 1957.

A state building would normally be designed by the State Architect but a petition from California architects requested a competition for the design of the Civic Center State Office Building. The competition was held in two stages. The first was opened to any architect practicing in California, and the second consisted of eight finalists named by a jury composed of three architects and four public officials. At every step of the competition there was criticism and controversy, all of which came to a head when the winning design was announced. Most of the architects involved with the Civic Center were highly critical, including Meyer, Reid, B.J.S. Cahill, Bakewell and Brown. Cahill called it destructive to the proportions of the Civic Center, and Willis Polk wrote a disparaging letter to the Governor of California, who had served on the jury, saying the design was not in harmony with the existing buildings in the Civic Center either in its massing or its details. The controversy was covered in the national architectural press when it was suggested that the matter be referred to the National Commission of Fine Arts. This was done, and in April 1918, the Commission, whose distinguished membership included John Russell Pope, Herbert Adams, Charles A. Platt, William Kendall, C.S. Ridley, Charles Moore, F.L. Olmsted and J. Alden Weir, unanimously confirmed the original decision of the jury.

The main issue of the competition, as perceived by the architects, had been the massing of the front facade. The winning design called for one plane of uniform height fronting on McAllister Street, but every other finalist proposed at least two wings which could be less than the full six stories and would be set back from the plane of the principal facade. The more complicated massing arose from a desire to maintain the illusion of the natural proportions of the Civic Center as defined by the shape of the Plaza.

The development of the State Building served important practical and symbolic functions in the development of the whole Civic Center. The original announcement to build the State Building, timed just before the bond election of 1912, was a factor in the public approval of the project. The actual construction of the building during the building depression of the 1920's served to keep the idea of a complete Civic Center alive during a difficult and slow time when prospects for a Federal Building and an Opera House seemed far away at best. The fact of the

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state's participation in an essentially municipal project and the complete cooperation of state officials with local planners in the competition and construction demonstrated the acceptance of City Beautiful and the Civic Center ideals by a larger, and important, public body.

The building balances the Exposition Auditorium across the Plaza in occupying the full street frontage. Despite criticism at the time of the competition that the State Building reinforced the already ill-proportioned Plaza, the masterful handling of the War Memorial complex has given new credence to the design of the State Building and its relationship to the other Civic Center buildings. Equally importantly, it clearly indicates the interrelationships of all the buildings, functioning as a unit rather than as individual structures in isolation.

The architectural firm of Bliss and Faville was one of the most established and well respected firms in San Francisco when the State Building competition was held in 1915. Walter D. Bliss and William B. Faville were highly professional architects who kept abreast of contemporary developments on the East Coast. In the consistently high quality of their designs they were important contributors to the raising of design standards in the Bay Area, particularly in commercial architecture.

Both men were schooled in the Beaux Arts tradition, Faville attending MIT, and both men apprenticing under McKim, Mead and White in New York. They came to San Francisco in 1898 as partners and worked together until 1925 when each continued to practice alone. Faville was the more prominent figure, serving on the architectural committee of the 1915 Exposition which determined the site of the Civic Center, and from 1922-1924, he served as the national president of the American Institute of Architects.

In addition to designing the State Building, their important commissions included the St. Francis Hotel on Union Square, the Bank of California building on California Street and the Geary Theater. They also designed the Palace of Education and many lesser buildings at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. It is a tribute to their ability as designers and planners that virtually all of their major commissions are still in active use.

8. Orpheum Theater - The Orpheum was built in 1926 for the Pantages Theater chain, by the regular Pantages architect, B. Marcus Priteca. In 1929, the building was sold to the Orpheum Theater Company. The original plan for the theater called for adorned rear facades which would harmonize in design and scale with the rest of the Civic Center. They were unfortunately never executed because of a disagreement over who should pay for the work.

The Orpheum Theater represented a triumph for the City Beautiful theorists who built the Civic Center and who hoped that neighboring private developments would continue the Civic Center idea. The theater conforms in size and in scale to the Civic Center and its massing and re-entrant corner at Hyde and U.N. Plaza must have influenced the later Federal Building. Although original designs for sympathetic rear facades were never carried out, the plans exist and they are included in one

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proposal put forth for the restoration of the theater. The Orpheum and the Federal Building together create an effective entrance of the Civic Center from Market Street by focusing the view of the City Hall along the main planning axis to the Center. With the completion of the United Nations Plaza, the space created by these two buildings has become a pleasant pedestrian space which is simultaneously a monumentally scaled, yet human space.

Aside from its harmonious relationship to the Civic Center, the Orpheum is a significant structure by itself as an outstanding survival of the time when vaudeville and movie theaters were as fanciful as the entertainments they provided. The Orpheum Theater is one of the finest of many built by the design team of Priteca and Heinsbergen all over the United States, both in the quality of its decorative features and in its modern functionality. Today the building is being revived for a wide range of contemporary uses including symphonic concerts.

The architect Priteca was one of the highly regarded theater architects of the days of elaborate movie palaces. His best known work is the old Pantages Theater in Hollywood, of 1930, which was the first major Art Deco movie theater in the United States.

The interior decorator, Tony Heinsbergen, was a prolific designer, having worked on over 700 movie theaters and many public structures in California and elsewhere. His best known work is the Paramount Theater in Oakland, to which he originally contributed in the 1930's and which was restored in 1972-73.

9. City Hall Annex - The City Hall Annex was built by the State of California in 1931 and sold to the State Compensation Insurance Fund in 1937. After a new Insurance Fund Building was completed behind it, the building was sold to the City of San Francisco in 1960 for \$575,000. In 1962, the offices were renovated.

The City Hall Annex extends the idea of the Civic Center into the surrounding neighborhood just as the early proponents of the Center had hoped would happen. The architectural style, cornice height, color and texture of the building all conform to the other buildings and enhance the group.

10. War Memorial Complex - A war memorial honoring those who had died in World War I was first proposed in San Francisco even before the end of the war. There was great public debate over the nature of such a project, whether it should take the form of a monument, a "living memorial" such as an opera house, or some other manifestation. Among the prominent proposals, Mayor Rolph spoke of a triumphal arch west of the City Hall, Louis Christian Mullgardt proposed a Soldier's Memorial as an educational influence against future wars, and Glass and Butner prepared plans for a \$2,000,000 veterans building. Although the idea of a war memorial was popular enough to succeed on its own, it was through an alliance with supporters of an opera house that the form and the scale of the realized project was achieved. This alliance was always shaky, however, and controversy marked by incompetence, distrust and deceit lengthened the planning and construction of the Opera House to 14 years.

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Thus, the War Memorial had its beginnings in the development of the Opera in San Francisco. Almost from the first days of the American settlement, San Francisco was an enthusiastic opera town, but for many years it had little luck with opera houses, with many burning down. The Tivoli Opera House, always inadequate, served from its construction in 1879 until it was destroyed in 1906. A new Opera House appeared in Cahill's Civic Center plan of 1899, and reappeared in 1904, 1909 and 1912, but private efforts to see it built in 1912 in Marshall Square were unsuccessful.

A new citizen's group revived the idea in 1918, raised \$1,635,000 and purchased a block just outside the Civic Center, the old St. Ignatius lot, bounded by Van Ness, Grove, Franklin and Hayes Streets. The American Legion was invited to join in support of a War Memorial Opera House on that site, and together the two groups raised additional funds. With gathering public support and appointment of a highly prestigious and powerful Architectural Advisory Commission, the conception of the project grew to encompass two block-sized buildings planned as part of the Civic Center. An agreement was negotiated with the city in 1922 whereby the two blocks across Van Ness Avenue from the City Hall would be purchased jointly by the city and the backers of the War Memorial. The old St. Ignatius lot was sold and the new site acquired and cleared of buildings by 1926.

The Architectural Advisory Commission, which consisted of Bernard Maybeck, John Galen Howard, Willis Polk, Ernest Coxhead, G. Albert Lansburgh, John Reid, Jr., Frederick Meyer and Arthur Brown, Jr., determined the composition of the complex and drew up a site plan for the double lot. Polk, who had done preliminary plans for an opera house in 1912, was again designated to plan the opera but he withdrew and by 1925 it was settled that Brown would design the buildings with Lansburgh as collaborating architect on the Opera House.

The new two block complex required far more money than had been raised privately for a single opera house, and with the help of the newspapers, a \$4,000,000 bond election was held and approved on June 14, 1927, to meet increased costs of a larger project. It was four more years before construction began because of squabbles between the veterans and opera supporters, mediated by a stubborn mayor and a reluctant Board of Supervisors, over allocations of funds and space. A city charter amendment, submitted to the Registrar a half-hour before the deadline, approved narrowly by a misinformed electorate, gave the Mayor power to appoint a new consolidated War Memorial Board of Trustees, but reserved confirmation for the Supervisors. In the meantime, architects had designed an \$8,250,000 complex which had to be scaled down considerably in size and amenities to meet the budget. The entire conflict was resolved when a vacancy on the Board of Supervisors resulted in a realignment of necessary groups, shifting the balance of power to the Opera supporters.

Plans were finally completed in March 1931 and construction began during the following summer and was completed in the fall of 1932. The final cost of the complex was \$6,500,000: \$3,500,000 for the Opera House and \$3,000,000 for the Veterans Building.

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Although there were sound aesthetic reasons for designing the two buildings of the War Memorial as a matched pair, in the end, they were made identical because the Opera supporters and the veterans would not consent to the other group having a more complete, markedly more costly or more magnificent home. As the Opera House was the more complicated and more temperamental structure, it was designed first and the Veterans Building derived its shape and design from it. The Opera was designed according to Beaux Arts attitudes toward planning with effective performance of its function a paramount consideration. The function of the building gave rise to its shape, and its shape and exterior design reflected the interior function and arrangement of the building.

The War Memorial complex is one of the most important Civic Center features. The location, siting and design of the buildings was the result of efforts to extend the idea of the Civic Center to an area which had not been included in the original plans. To this end, it is a magnificent success and thoroughly fulfills the hope of the designers of the Civic Center--that the Center would prove flexible enough to expand without destroying the harmony of the group. Although it was designed 15 years later, the War Memorial is aesthetically inseparable from the City Hall. The War Memorial-City Hall group has been called "The greatest architectural ensemble in America," by Henry Hope Reed, the great scholar of classical architecture in America. The success of the complex is due principally to the main designer of each of the three buildings--the City Hall, the Opera House and the Veterans Building--Arthur Brown, Jr.

The scale of the buildings and the spaces between them are more effective in highlighting the City Hall and in creating human spaces than the much larger Civic Center Plaza grouping. Viewed from the west end of the corner, the War Memorial buildings serve to focus the view on the dome of City Hall. At the same time, the wings of the War Memorial buildings project like sentry posts at the gates of a majestic city, revealing only enough of the City Hall to tantalize and entice the pedestrian to see what lies beyond. From the City Hall side of Van Ness, the wings of the War Memorial buildings lengthen the facades thereby creating the illusion of more massive structures--necessary to balance the size and grandeur of City Hall. The design of the War Memorial buildings echoes the City Hall in specific detail and scale, rhythm and texture.

The Opera was more traditional in its details than in its plan. It shows the influence of Wagner's revolutionary attitudes towards the art, most pointedly in the absence of sweeping staircases to the Grand Foyer on which expensively attired patrons customarily paraded in the days when the opera was as much a place to be seen as a spectacle to see. The lone, open horseshoe of boxes is also in the spirit of this more democratic arrangement which together with the scale and severity of its decoration suggests that the events on the stage are more worthy of attention than other distractions.

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The planning of the War Memorial was masterful in terms of its relationship to the City Hall. At the same time, it took advantage of a weakness in the pre-existing Civic Center to relate to the rest of the group in a powerful way. The City Hall was criticized as being too small for its block and in need of two or three more bays at each end of the principal facades to maintain the natural proportions of the Civic Center as defined by the Plaza. By broadening the front facades of the War Memorial buildings, those buildings look past the short City Hall, permitting an imposing view of the War Memorial from the Plaza and tending to bring the War Memorial into the main group.

Today, both buildings continue to serve the same functions for which they were built. The Opera House, which was the first municipally owned opera house in the United States, is the permanent residence of the opera, symphony and ballet and provides facilities for a wide range of other cultural events. The San Francisco Opera is one of the leading opera companies in the United States.

The Veterans Building continues to house both veterans activities and the San Francisco Museum of Art, although the Veterans Auditorium is now used by a wider variety of groups. The San Francisco Museum of Art is one of the more important modern art museums on the West Coast.

The War Memorial was the principal site of the founding of the United Nations in the spring of 1945. The San Francisco Museum of Art was moved to temporary quarters on Pine Street to give more space to the organizational meetings in the Veterans Building. In the Opera House, events were either cancelled or moved to the Civic Auditorium, so that the Opera could accommodate important ceremonial functions and daily speeches. Tenth and 20th Anniversary commemorations of the founding of the United Nations were held in the Opera House in 1955 and 1965. In 1951, the Japanese Peace Treaty was drawn up in the Veterans Building and signed in the Opera House.

Arthur Brown, Jr., discussed in the section on the City Hall, served on the Architectural Advisory Commission for the War Memorial, was the architect for the Veterans Building and chief architect of the Opera House.

G. Albert Lansburgh was principally known as a competent theater designer. Most of his work was for the Orpheum chain for which he built vaudeville and movie houses all over the United States. His most prestigious commission was the San Francisco Opera House.

Lansburgh studied at the University of California and was sent by the head of the Orpheum chain to Ecole des Beaux Arts, from which he graduated in 1906, the winner of a major medal. He practiced architecture in San Francisco for over 60 years. In 1915 he served on the architectural commission of the PPIE. In the 1920's, he served on the Advisory Commission for the War Memorial.

The Memorial Court was originally designed by Arthur Brown but was built according to designs by Thomas Church in 1936. The court provides a formed promenade which serves as an appropriate setting for visitors to cultural events in the War Memorial. It is a pleasing foreground to the City Hall as seen from its most

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complimentary view between the Opera House and the Veterans Building. In its symmetry, scale, texture and color, the court enhances the sense of order and harmony created by the complex.

Thomas D. Church is a nationally prominent Bay Area landscape architect, whose work is associated in spirit and in significance with the "Bay Region Style," of architecture of such designers as William W. Wurster. Church studied landscape design at the University of California and Harvard and taught for a brief time at the University of California. The Memorial Court is one of the very few of his designs accessible to the public, most of them belonging to private residences.

11. Federal Office Building - Although a Federal Office Building was not proposed in the Civic Center plans of 1912, it was not long after the plans were approved that such a structure was designated for the present site. A federal building moratorium which lasted from before World War I until December 1925 prohibited any progress during those years. In March 1927, \$2,500,000 was appropriated for a federal building somewhere in San Francisco. A year later, the city offered to donate the Civic Center site, and in October 1930, the government accepted. Local architects requested a design competition, but there was little criticism when Arthur Brown, in his capacity as an architect for the Treasury Department, received the commission. Plans were finished by the end of 1932, but increased costs delayed the start of construction until November 1933. The building was completed in May 1936 at a cost of less than \$3,000,000.

The Federal Building is highly successful from several perspectives. Like the State Building and the Orpheum Theater, it represents an affirmation of the City Beautiful and the Civic Center idea by an essentially outside party. As a part of the Civic Center, it admirably serves to link Market Street and the Civic Center visually. The uninterrupted, rhythmic colonnade leads the eye up U.N. Plaza and Fulton Street to the City Hall dome. The re-entrant corners and the frontage on U.N. Plaza (relative to the set back of the Public Library) make the building appear more visible from the Civic Center Plaza and more a part of the group.

At the same time that the building expresses the necessary aloofness and monumentality required in a classical building and a Beaux Arts plan, it makes effective and significant gestures to the human beings who must use the building. Typical in Arthur Brown's work, this concern is evidenced in the exceptional care lavished on details of both decorative and functional significance. On the exterior, the emphasis on details is in the base where it may be appreciated by passers-by. The angle and cut of the rusticated granite blocks elicits the maximum interest from light and shadows, achieving a tactile quality not often present in classical buildings. The keystone masks are at just the proper height to interest the pedestrian. Inside, the quality of materials and workmanship evidenced in the red hall tiles, iron light fixtures, radiator grates and telephone booths, to name a few, is far above average. The simple and direct organization of the building is highly functional. The only alterations in the building have been behind office doors. The building has been well maintained and is in excellent condition.

Arthur Brown and his contributions have been discussed elsewhere.

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12. United Nations Plaza - The United Nations Plaza will commemorate the founding of the United Nations in the Civic Center in 1945. The plaza will provide a grand pedestrian approach to the Civic Center and an uncluttered vista to the City Hall from Market Street. It promises to be an excellent addition to the Civic Center, enhancing it aesthetically, and providing a lively pedestrian area where cars now park. It is a contemporary indication of the continuing pride San Francisco takes in its Civic Center.

13. 1 United Nations Plaza - 1 United Nations Plaza is a very good example of Zig Zag Moderne architecture. It was designed by C.A. Meussdorger in 1927. Although not of the same style or size as the major Civic Center buildings, it is designed as if it were much larger with its alternate bands of dark and light verticals, not unlike those created by the columns and shadows of the Federal Building across the Plaza. It is finely detailed both in the relief panels at the tops of the piers and in the configuration of the copper bays with their lively polygonal skyline and curvilinear zig zag mullions.

14. Buker's Pet Store - Buker's Pet Store is a small scaled building typical of those built all over San Francisco after the earthquake of 1906.

15. McCarthy's Cocktail Lounge - A small scaled building typical of those built all over San Francisco after the earthquake of 1906. It has a handsome interior and Market Street facade which is obscured by paint and a sign.

16. 7th and McAllister Building - Built in 1906 on City Hall Avenue, which accounts for its angled siting. The building forms a fine classical facade for its site on a prominent corner. Although the classical design of the building predates the Civic Center, it is appropriate to its later surroundings. The building was sensitively remodeled in 1975 by Hanns Kainz and Associates with a striking glass wall on 7th Street. The original corner storefront with its iron mullions is intact.

17. Methodist Book Concern - Built in 1908 on City Hall Avenue by Meyers and Ward. Meyers and Ward built over 100 commercial buildings in San Francisco following the earthquake and fire of 1906. Following the demolition of the Alaska Commercial Building in 1974, this is one of the best remaining examples of this important local firm's work. It is a very good example of Neo-classical Revival design applied to a commercial office building, and is very finely detailed. It is one of the best examples of this typical post fire building type in the city.

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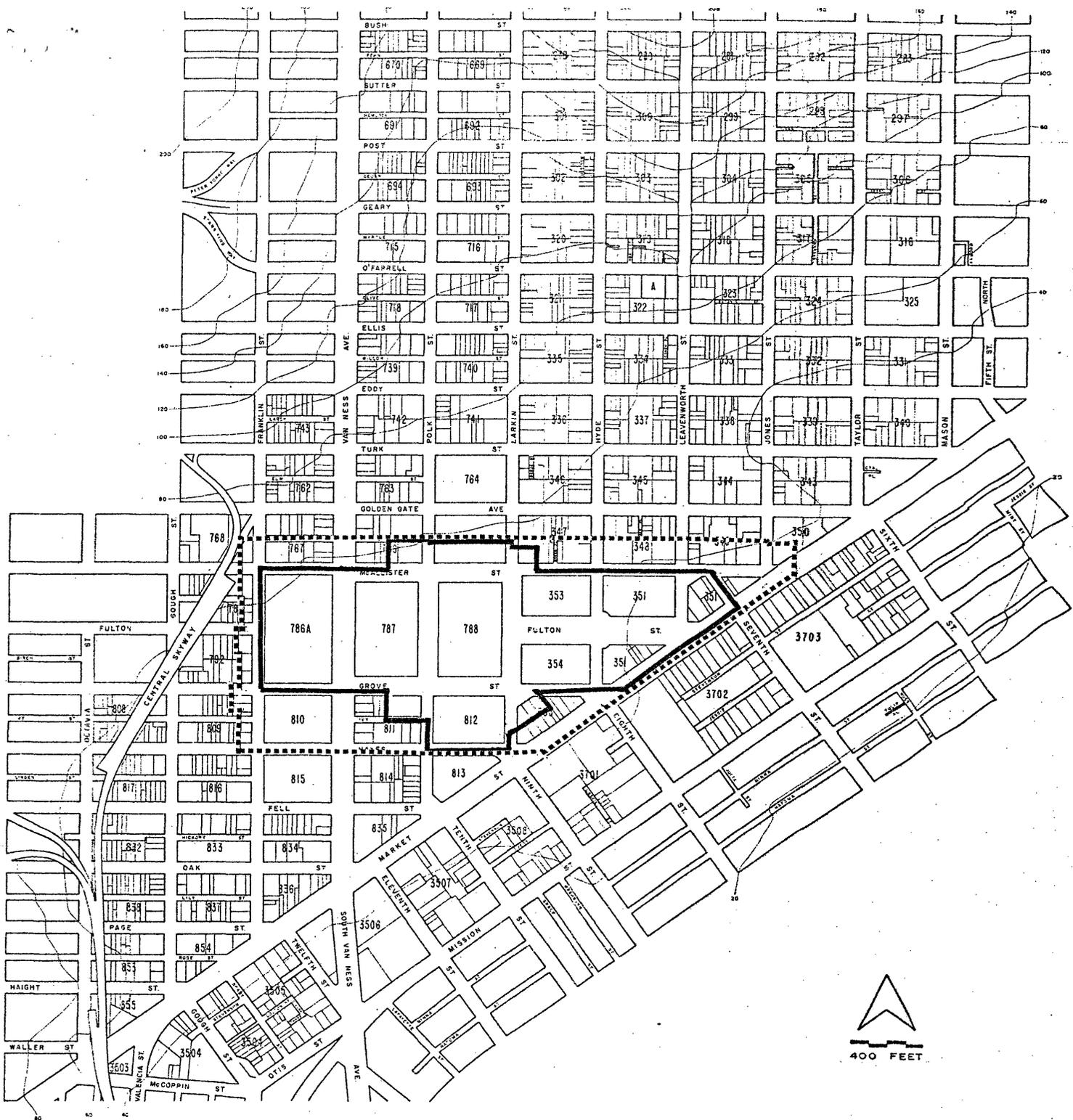
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its intersection with Block 355, Lot 11. The boundary then proceeds southwest on the southeastern boundary of Lot 11 to Larkin Street and south on Larkin to Hayes Street and west on Hayes to Polk Street. It proceeds north on Polk to Ivy Street and then west on Ivy to the western lot line of Block 811, Lot 1, north on the western line of Block 811, Lot 1 to Grove Street and west on Grove Street to Franklin Street. At Franklin Street, the boundary proceeds north to McAllister Street and east to Block 766, Lot 3, at which point it proceeds north on the western line of Lot 3 to its intersection with the northern boundary of the same lot. The boundary then proceeds east on the northern boundary of Block 766, Lots 3 and 2, across Polk Street and follows the northern boundary of Block 765, Lot 2 to Larkin Street, south on Larkin to the northern line of Block 347, Lot 8 and east on the northern boundary of Lot 8. It then proceeds south on the eastern boundary of Block 347, Lot 8 to McAllister Street, then east on McAllister to Seventh Street, and southeast on Seventh to the starting point at Market.



WORKING AREA LAND USE STUDY

CIVIC CENTER

WORKING AREA W · PLANNING AREA 3

- Boundary of area initiated as historic district on October 6, 1977
- Boundary of area which will also be studied for district status in addition to the above



Aerial view of San Francisco Civic Center from the northeast: Exposition Auditorium, left; Public Library, lower center; Civic Center Plaza, center; City Hall and War Memorial Complex, upper right. (Michael Corbett, San Francisco Heritage, 1978)

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746807

- 1. San Francisco Civic Center
- 2. San Francisco, California
- 3. San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau
- 4. ca. 1975

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- 5. San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau
- 6. Oblique aerial from northeast
- 7. Negative # 746807

10/14

OCT 10 1978

An advantage to organizations convening in San Francisco is the proximity of major convention facilities. Civic Auditorium, at left, facing landscaped plaza, connects with Brooks Hall, the mammoth exhibition arena beneath the plaza. San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau is located in Fox Plaza directly behind Civic Auditorium. Other buildings surrounding Civic Center include City Hall (domed structure), War Memorial Opera House and Veterans Building, Federal offices and Public Library.

VWF-14

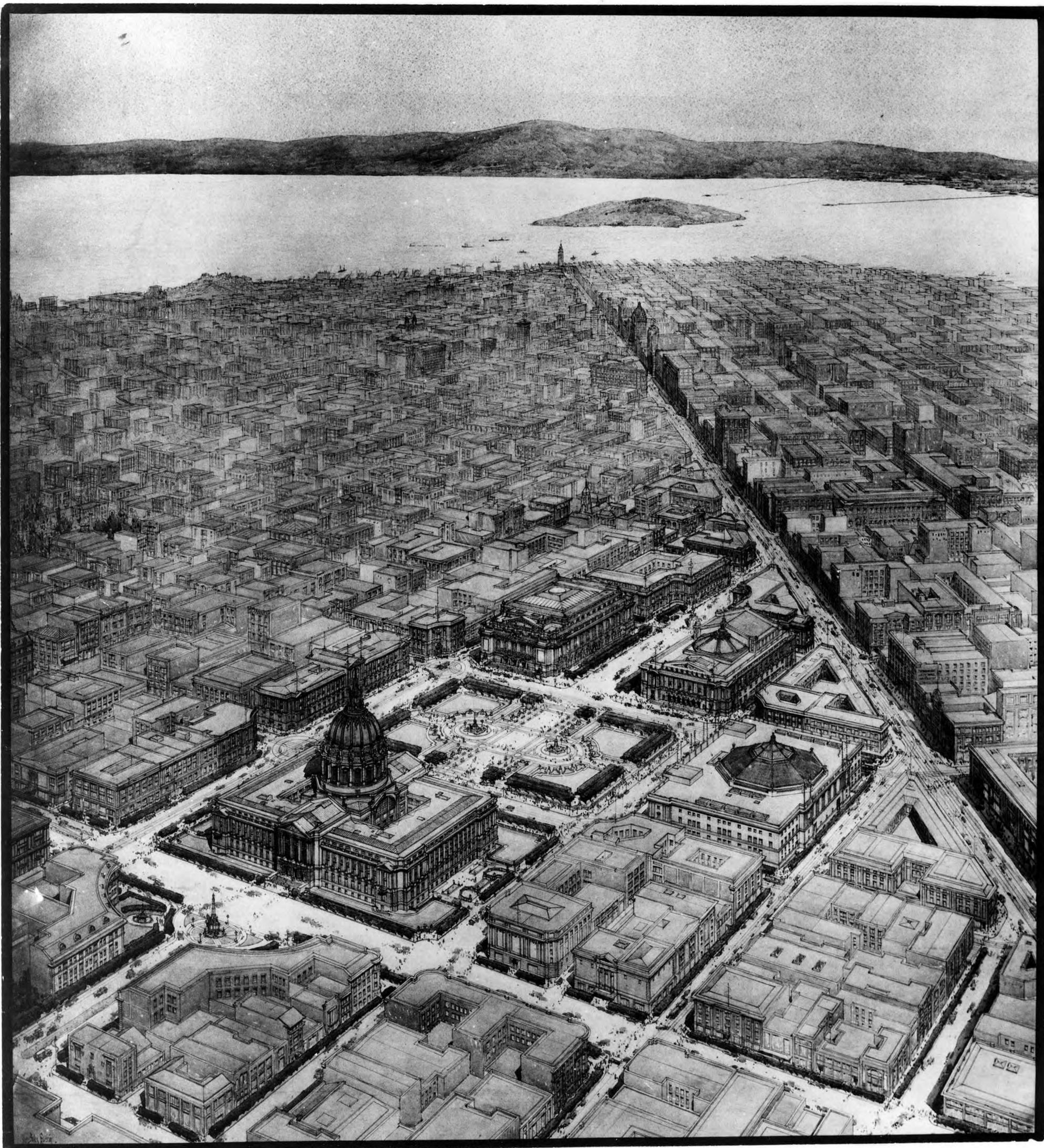
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DD



John Galen Howard's 1912 "birds-eye-view"
of proposed Civic Center from the south-
west. (Howard Papers, University of
California, Berkeley)

486

H.H.

80/8

1. San Francisco Civic Center
2. San Francisco, California
3. John Galen Howard, pen & ink
4. 1912

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5. Papers of John Galen Howard
Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley
6. Birds-eye-view from southwest

2014

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Civic Center



Federal Building, view from southwest.
(Michael Corbett, San Francisco Heritage,
1978)

497

HT. S/S

1. Federal Building, San Francisco
Civic Center

2. San Francisco, California

3. Michael Corbett

4. October 1976

OCT 10 1978

5. Architectural Photographers

364 Bush Street, San Francisco

6. Looking north across Market Street

~~7. 12096 #~~

3 + 14

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7/5



California State Building, south facade.
(Michael Corbett, San Francisco Heritage,
1978)

1. State Building, San Francisco Civic Center.
2. San Francisco, California
3. Michael Corbett
4. October 1976
5. Architectural Photographers,
364 Bush Street, San Francisco
6. McAllister Street facade
7. 12096 ~~#24~~

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MAR 8 1978



1. San Francisco Civic Center
2. San Francisco, California
3. Michael Corbett
4. October 1976
5. Architectural Photographers,
364 Bush Street, San Francisco
6. Looking northwest across U.N. Plaza to
the State Building and Public Library
7. ~~12096 #8~~

OCT #10 1978

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1. Orpheum Theater, San Francisco Civic Center

2. San Francisco, California

3. Michael Corbett OCT 10 1978 8

4. October 1976

5. Architectural Photographers,
364 Bush Street, San Francisco,

6. Market Street facade

7. ~~12096~~ #2

6714

MAR 8 1978



JAMES WICK FREMONT
VALLEJO MARSHALL & SLOAT

DEDICATED TO THE CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
JAMES WICK

1. Pioneer Memorial, San Francisco
Civic Center

2. San Francisco, California **OCT 10 1978**

3. Michael Corbett

4. October 1976

1-A

5. Architectural Photographers

364 Bush Street, San Francisco

6. Hyde Street side

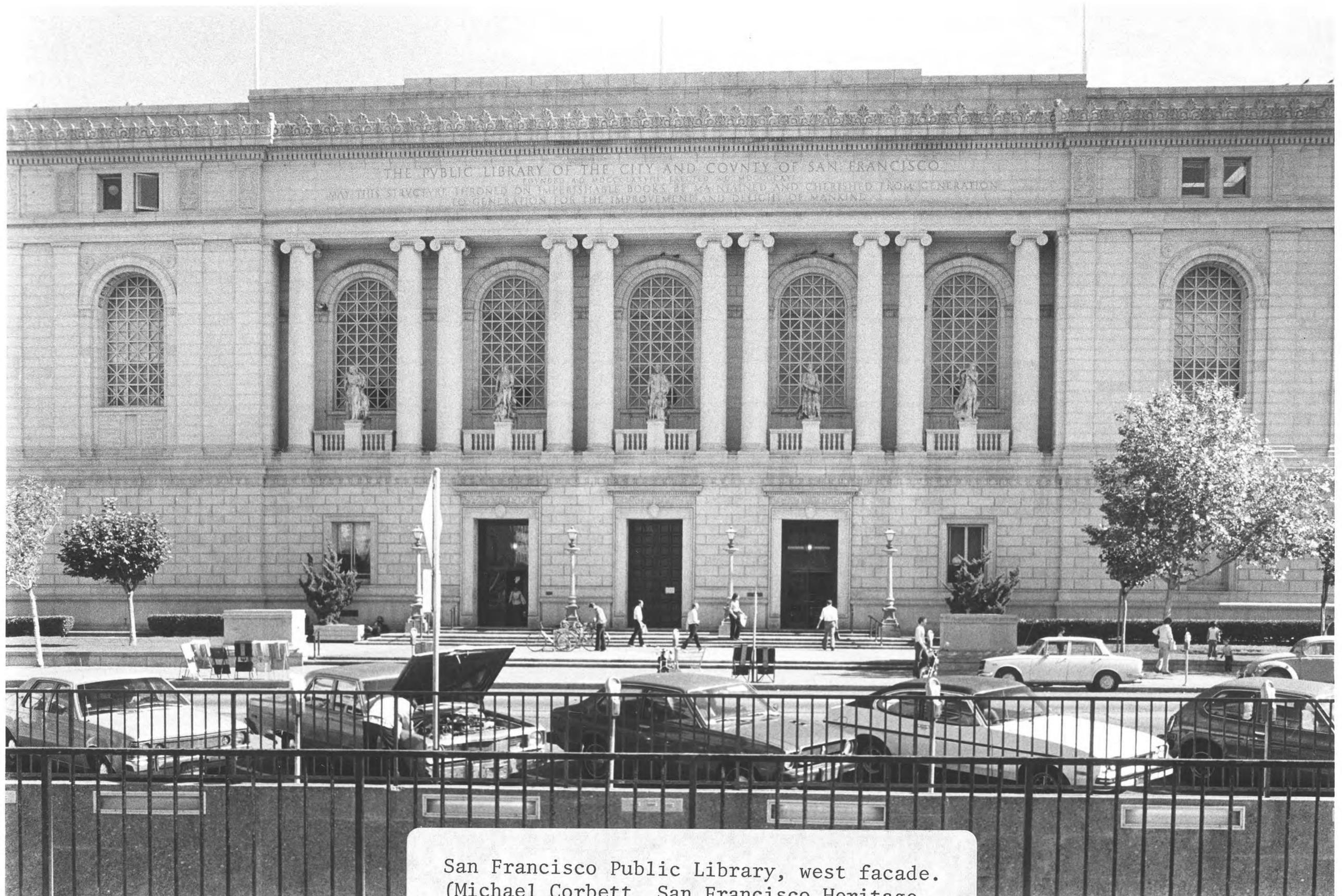
7. ~~12096 # 3~~

7 A 14

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#1



San Francisco Public Library, west facade.
(Michael Corbett, San Francisco Heritage,
1978)

1. Public Library, San Francisco
Civic Center

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2. San Francisco,^{CO} California

3. Michael Corbett

4. October 1976

~~AG~~

5. Architectural Photographers

364 Bush Street, San Francisco

6. Larkin Street facade

7. ~~12096 # 27~~

MAR 8 1978

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1. San Francisco Civic Center

6-23

2. San Francisco, California

3. Michael Corbett

OCT 10 1978

4. October 1976

#10

5. Architectural Photographers

364 Bush, San Francisco

6. Looking east through War Memorial
Court to City Hall

7. ~~12096 # 36~~

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The
MADONNA
270 M'ALLISTER ST.
RESIDENCE
FOR LADIES

1. Power House, San Francisco
Civic Center
2. San Francisco, California
3. Michael Corbett
4. October 1976

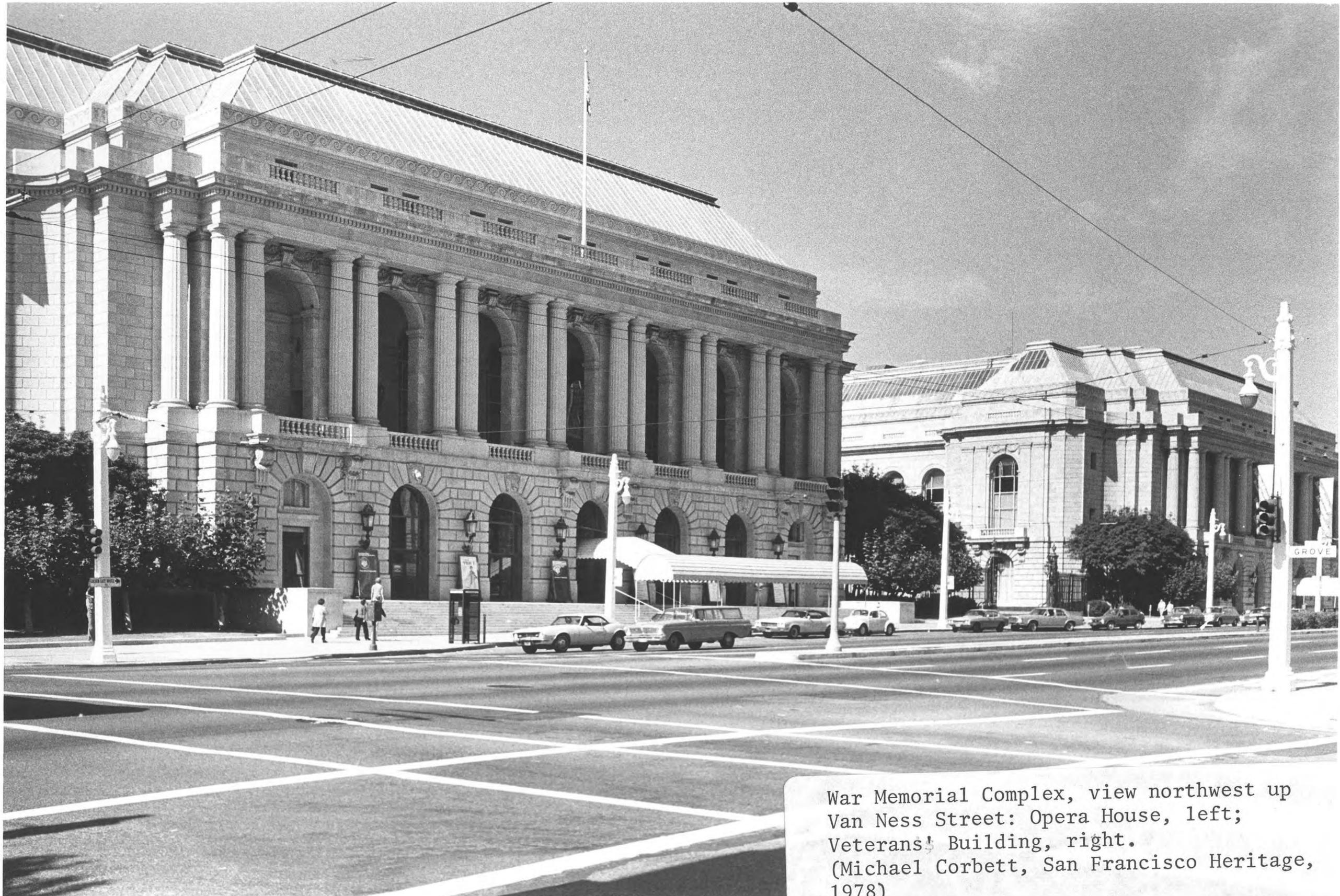
OCT 10 1978

2-B

5. Architectural Photographers
364 Bush Street, San Francisco
6. Larkin Street facade
7. ~~12096 # 16~~

10 & 14

MAR 8 1978



War Memorial Complex, view northwest up Van Ness Street: Opera House, left; Veterans' Building, right. (Michael Corbett, San Francisco Heritage, 1978)

S/S
266 (492)

#71

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

1. War Memorial Complex, San Francisco
Civic Center
2. San Francisco, California
3. Michael Corbett
4. October 1976
5. Architectural Photographers, OCT 10 1978
364 Bush Street, San Francisco
6. Looking north on Van Ness Avenue
7. 12096 ~~#33~~

11 @ 14

10
MAR 8 1978



1. City Hall, San Francisco
Civic Center

2. San Francisco, ^{Co.} California

3. Michael Corbett

4. October 1976

4 OCT 10 1978

5. Architectural Photographers

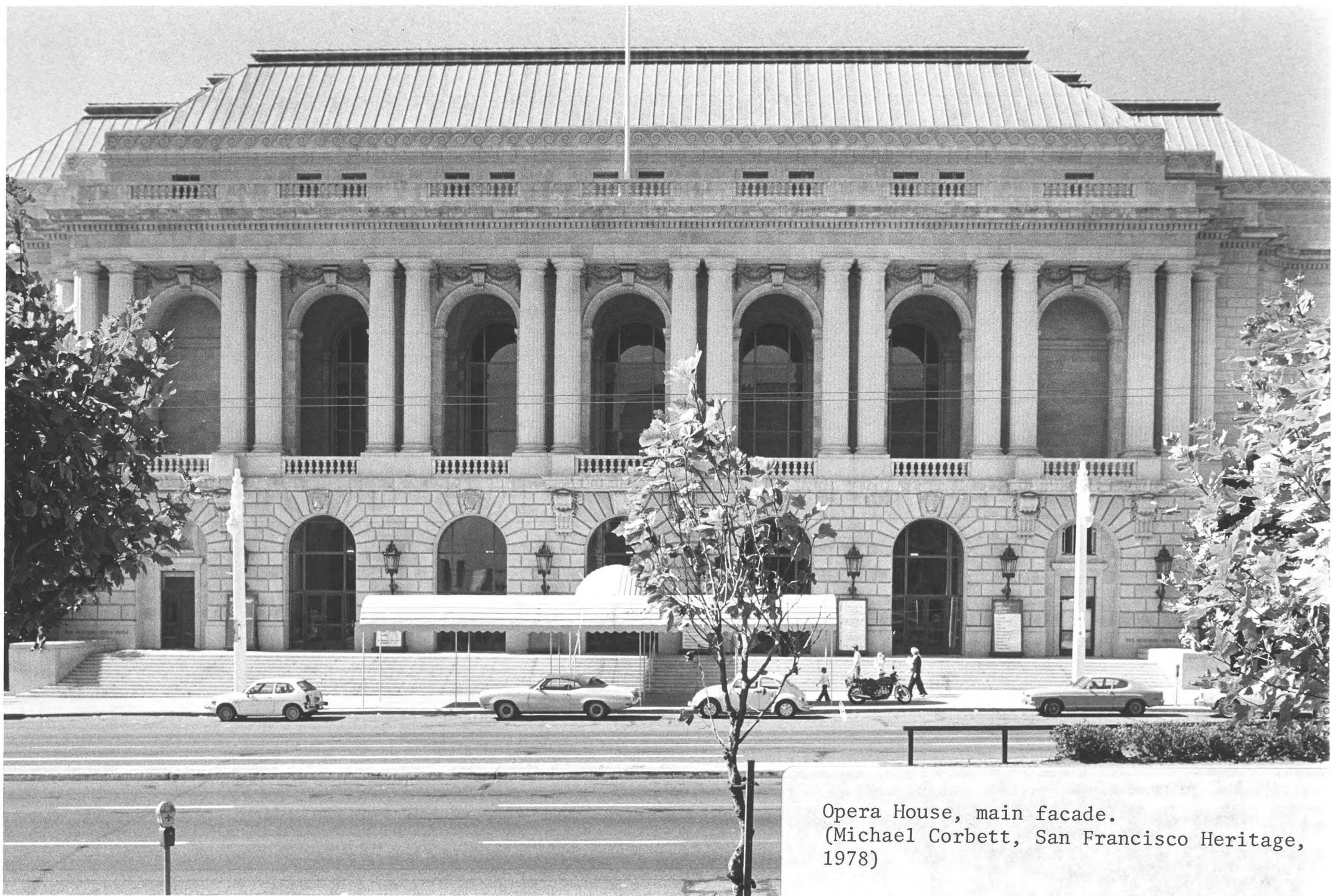
364 Bush Street, San Francisco

6. Looking west across Civic Center

Plaza to Polk Street facade

7. ~~12096 # 20~~ MAR 8 1978

12014



S/S

(493)

HT,

Opera House, main facade.
(Michael Corbett, San Francisco Heritage,
1978)

1. Opera House, San Francisco Civic Center
2. San Francisco, California
3. Michael Corbett
4. October 1976

10-A

5. Architectural Photographers

364 Bush, San Francisco OCT 10 1978

6. Van Ness facade

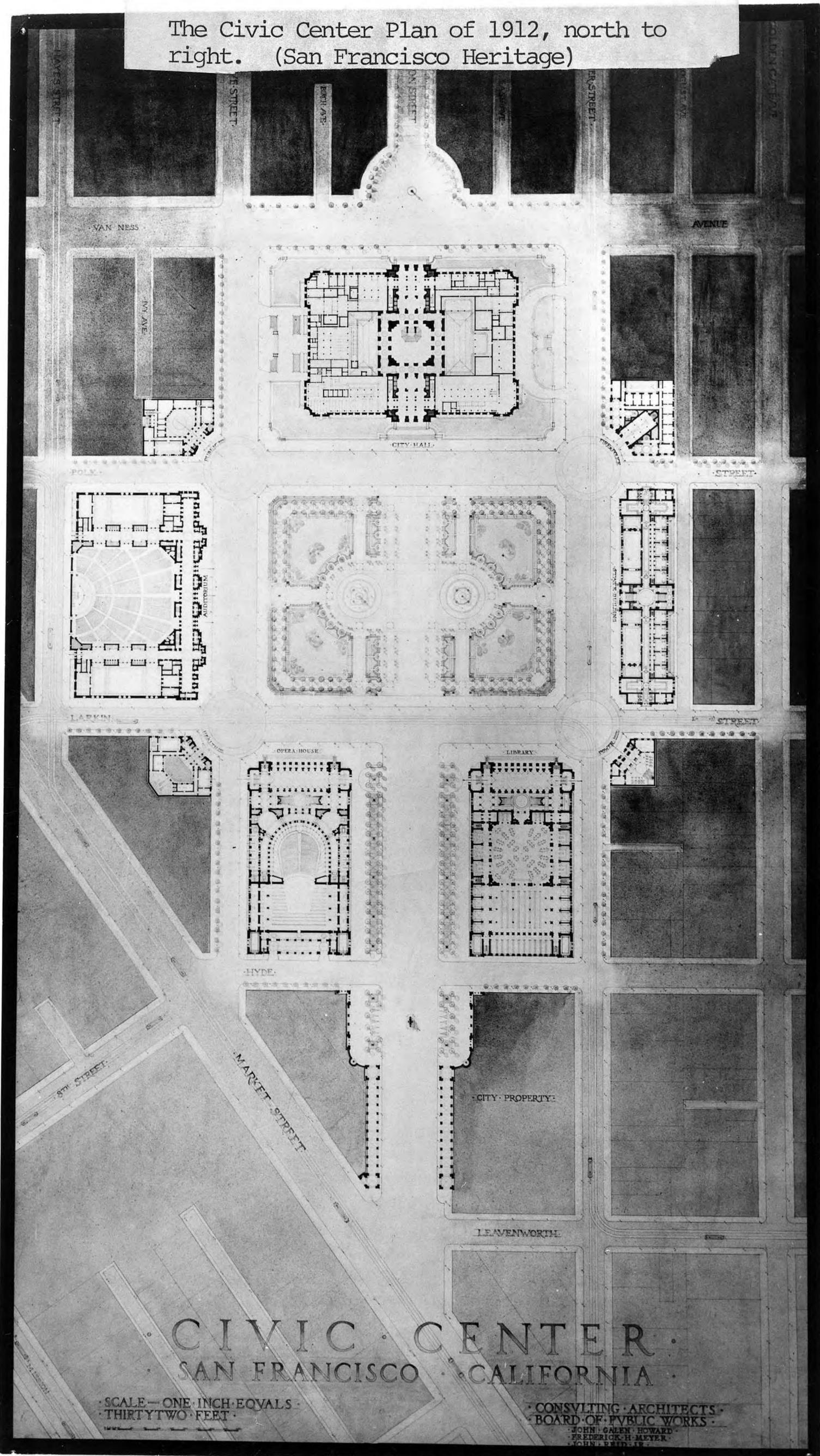
7. ~~12096 # 34~~

MAR 8 1978

13 & 14

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

The Civic Center Plan of 1912, north to right. (San Francisco Heritage)



CIVIC CENTER
SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA

SCALE - ONE INCH EQUALS
THIRTYTWO FEET

CONSULTING ARCHITECTS
BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
JOHN GALEN HOWARD
FREDERICK H. MEYER
JOHN REID JR.

1. San Francisco Civic Center
2. San Francisco, California
3. John Galen Howard, pen & ink
4. 1912

OCT 10 1978

5. Papers of John Galen Howard
Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley

6. Original Plan

MAR 8 1978

14 & 14

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Reproduced through the
courtesy of the Bancroft
Library, University of
California, Berkeley 4,
California

Attachment 2: National Historic Landmark Nomination Form for the San Francisco Civic Center National Historic Landmark District, entered February 27, 1987.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic San Francisco Civic Center

and or common

2. Location

street & number vicinity of Van Ness Avenue & Market Street not for publication

city, town San Francisco vicinity of

state California code county San Francisco code

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office

street & number Room 167, City Hall

city, town San Francisco state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title SEE CONTINUATION SHEET has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Summary¹

The San Francisco Civic Center is a group of monumental buildings around a central open space (Civic Center Plaza), and additional buildings that extend the principal axis to the east and west. It includes all or part of 12 city blocks, six of which are combined into three double blocks that accommodate larger features. There are eight major and three secondary aboveground structures, two notable landscape features, and one major unbuilt site. Some street rights-of-way have been turned into pedestrian areas.

Of the buildings in the Civic Center, nine (City Hall, Civic [or Exposition] Auditorium, the Public Library, the State Building, the Federal Building, the War Memorial Opera House, the Veterans Building, the Department of Public Health Building, and the Civic Center Powerhouse) contribute to the national importance of the district. Two temporary buildings (the Department of City Planning and the Library Annex) are non-conforming intrusions of limited significance.

City Hall (1913-16)

City Hall occupies the double block bounded by Polk, McAllister, Van Ness, and Grove Streets. Rectangular in its ground plan, it consists of two rectangular office wings linked by a high central dome. The building is in late French Renaissance, or Baroque, style with its principal design feature, the dome, derived from several great domes in Europe. The dome rests on a rectangular base, stressed on the east and west facades by large pedimented porticoes. The office wings feature long Doric colonnades over a rusticated base, and slight projecting pavilions at the corners.

The City Hall is erected on a steel frame clad in gray granite. Its dome rises more than 300' above the street, higher than the U.S. Capitol. The office wings contain 4 stories above ground and a partially exposed basement. The base consists of the first floor and exposed basement, the columned superstructure fronts on the second and third floors, and the fourth-story attic is slightly recessed behind a balustrade.

On the Polk Street, or eastern, facade, three arched entrances in the base are reached by a steep flight of steps. Intricate door frames and sconces, and a balustrade between the columns on the next level, are all burnished iron, painted brilliant blue and gold. These colors are carried over in the decorations of the balustrades and windows of the entire facade and the interior. Six Corinthian columns in the superstructure carry a Doric entablature. There are paired columns at the ends of the portico and two single columns more widely spaced between. Behind and between the columns three French windows open onto a balcony. There are large windows overhead on the third floor, and large flat cartouches over them at the top of the wall. The pediment encloses a sculpture group by Henri Crenier, with a female "San Francisco" beckoning commerce and navigation.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	X	community planning	landscape architecture	religion
1400-1499	archeology-historic		conservation	law	science
1500-1599	agriculture		economics	literature	sculpture
1600-1699	X architecture		education	military	social
1700-1799	art		engineering	music	humanitarian
1800-1899	commerce		exploration settlement	philosophy	theater
X 1900-	communications		industry	X politics government	transportation
			invention		X other (specify) Recreation
Specific dates	1913-51	Builder Architect	Multiple (see below)		(world's fair)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Summary

... when the shores of the Pacific are occupied as the shores of the Atlantic now are, when all around the vast arena formed by America, Asia, and Australia are great nations of wealth and culture, with hundreds of Bostons and Baltimores, of Londons and Liverpools, the great American republic would scarcely be satisfied with only a porter's lodge at her western gateway.

--Hubert Howe Bancroft (1907)¹

The San Francisco Civic Center, the scene of events of national and international importance, including the founding of the United Nations and the drafting and signing of the post-World War II peace treaties with Japan, outstandingly illustrates the era of turn-of-the-century municipal reform movements in the United States and early public and city planning. By general consensus, its architecture and plan are regarded as one of the finest and most complete manifestations of the "City Beautiful" movement in the United States. Henry Hope Reed, a well-known scholar of Classical architecture, has called it "the greatest architectural ensemble in America."²

The Civic Center also embodies the city's phoenix-like resurgence after the disastrous 1906 earthquake and fires. The Civic Center remains the permanent manifestation of this phenomenon; it shared its origins, however, with its Siamese twin, the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915. Exposition Auditorium, in the Civic Center, remains as the only link between these two great projects and the only intact survivor of the Exposition, one of the most notable of America's World's Fairs.³

The "City Beautiful" Movement

The "City Beautiful" movement, an aspect of the general drive for municipal reform that sprang up in the 1890s and continued after the turn of the century, intended to bring order and beauty to American cities. The national impetus to the movement was the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, called the "White City" by its admirers for its large white Classical buildings that were arranged in an orderly manner around a lagoon in a "Court of Honor." The apparent harmony, cleanliness, and grandeur of the White City captivated the American public and directly influenced urban planners and architects for almost 40 years. A western echo of this idealistic spirit was expressed in Joaquin Miller's novel, The Building of the City Beautiful, published the same year as the Chicago fair, in which the hero pursues a visionary scheme to erect an ideal city athwart the Golden Gate.⁴

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property about 39

Quadrangle name San Francisco North

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>1</u> <u>4</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D	<u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>1</u> <u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name title James H. Charleton, Historian

organization History Division, National Park Service

date November 9, 1984

street & number 1100 L Street, NW

telephone (202) 343-8165

city or town Washington

state DC 20013-7127

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title _____ date _____

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet

Item number

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Page

1

Property Owners

City and County of San Francisco
Real Estate Department
450 McAllister Street
San Francisco, California 94102

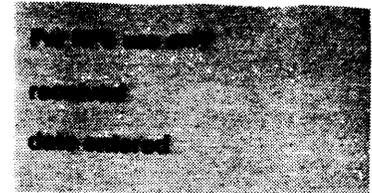
Chairman, Board of Supervisors
County of San Francisco
City Hall
San Francisco, California 94102

Bay Area Rapid Transit District
800 Madison Street
Oakland, California 94612

U.S. General Services Administration
Regional Historic Preservation Liaison
Public Buildings Service
525 Market Street
San Francisco, California 94103

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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Continuation sheet

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Page 2

Representation in Existing Surveys (#6 Continued)

California History Plan: Inventory of Historical Features
1967 State
Department of Parks and Recreation, Historic Preservation Section
Sacramento, California

Junior League of San Francisco, Inc.
1968 Local
San Francisco, California

1975-1976 Architectural Inventory
1976 Local
San Francisco Department of City Planning
San Francisco, California

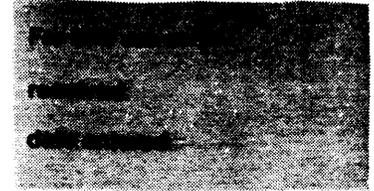
San Francisco City Landmarks
on-going Local
San Francisco Department of City Planning
San Francisco, California

National Register of Historic Places
1976 State
National Register of Historic Places
Washington, DC

Historic American Buildings Survey
1973 Federal
California Historical Society, San Francisco, California
also Library of Congress, Washington, DC

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The Van Ness (western) facade is identical to Polk Street except for details in the central portico, base, and superstructure.

The Grove Street and McAllister Street facades, virtually identical, are simplified versions of the principal facades. Slightly protruding pavilions at the angles are linked by simply fenestrated walls, with pilasters in the superstructure.

The dome is constructed on a steel frame, sheeted with copper and coated with lead. It was originally highlighted with gold. The vertical lines of the columns around the drum rise to an encircling skullcap of surface decoration. A circling iron balustrade at the top encloses a tall spired lantern on a base of four low arches looking to the cardinal directions. Four taller arches rise over the base with pairs of free-standing fluted Doric columns flanking the arches and carrying a broken cornice. An urn carries through the cornice over each column. A tall slender tapering steeple with a crowning torch rises from the center.

The interior of City Hall is arranged with a central ceremonial hall or rotunda tying the office wings together. In the rotunda, a monumental staircase leads directly to the board of supervisors chamber in the Van Ness portico. Opposite this across the domed space is the mayor's office.

The entire basement and ground floor are utilized, but the higher floors are grouped around central light courts. Continuous hallways that encircle the light courts open into offices and other chambers.

A wealth of sculpture and decorative and highly symbolic detail, too extensive to catalog here, graces City Hall's interiors. Apart from the domed space, the ornamental treatments in the board of supervisors chamber and the mayor's office are especially elaborate.

The War Memorial Complex (1932)

The San Francisco War Memorial consists of a pair of very similar monumental Classical structures, the Opera House (309 Van Ness Avenue) and the Veterans Building (459 Van Ness Avenue), to either side of the formal Memorial Court. The complex is set in a double block bounded by Van Ness, McAllister, Franklin, and Grove Streets, and faces City Hall across Van Ness Avenue.

The Opera House is erected on a steel frame with reinforced concrete floors and walls. It is clad in terra cotta that simulates the granite used in its base, steps, and columns. The building is generally rectangular in shape, except for a high scenery loft at the rear and two staircase wings that project from the sides so near the front that they appear to be part of the main facade. There are four principal stories above ground and a leaded copper mansard roof.

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The building is a rather severe example of the Beaux Arts style with decoration encircling the building at all levels. The ground-floor base is deeply rusticated and cut with ranges of arches. The 2-story superstructure has a rusticated wall of lower definition and the same ranges of arches everywhere except the front facade, which is more elaborate. The attic is set back behind a balustrade.

The principal forward facade on Van Ness is reached by a series of long granite steps. It contains seven arches in the base, glazed and fitted with handsome bronze and iron frames. In the superstructure, eight pairs of large free-standing fluted Doric columns rise above the piers between the arches below and flank seven arches recessed just behind them.

The Court and Grove Street sides of the Opera House consist of rusticated walls with ten arches ranged across each tier from the staircase wings to the rear of the building. The Grove Street side has a marquee that runs the length of the building.

The rear of the Opera House is dominated by a large arch that cuts through the base and superstructure and two smaller arches on both sides in each tier.

The main Van Ness Avenue entrances open into a simple vaulted vestibule which leads into a grand foyer across the front of the building. Corridors run off along the sides of the building. This plan is roughly repeated on the higher levels.

Other than the concert hall, the ground-level foyer is the most highly decorated room. The blue and gold bronzed-iron light fixtures resemble those in City Hall.

The main hall is given a sense of splendor by its Classical detailing. The side walls reflect the exterior, with a rusticated base carrying a superstructure of high arches. The arches are latticed and hung with drapes, which originally camouflaged organ pipes but now house stage lights. A magnificent aluminum sunburst chandelier hangs from the center of the large smooth oval surface of the ceiling. A massive proscenium arch at the stage features statuary groups by Edgar Walter in the spandrels.

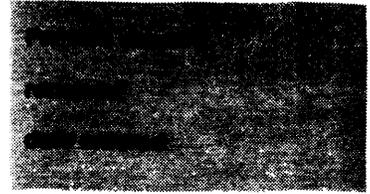
The seats (3302 with 300 standing) are arranged more like a movie theater than a traditional opera house, with two large balconies suspended directly from wall to wall. There is only one horseshoe section of box seating.

The west end of the Opera House contains dressing rooms and offices on all levels.

The exterior of the Veterans Building is virtually identical to the Opera House. The building sits on higher ground, however, and, in order to be at the same level as the Opera, is approached by a shorter flight of steps. The superstructure recedes to a longer open vestibule than in the Opera House. Instead of a scenery loft and high central arch on the rear, there are seven arches across both the base and superstructure.

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The interior of the Veterans Building is like a small opera house with a museum (the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art) atop it. The Herbst (formerly Veterans) Auditorium occupies the center of the building on the lower three stories. A corridor encircles the auditorium on each floor and opens into offices and meeting rooms on its outer sides. The museum is organized in the same way, around a central 2-story skylit sculpture court (now closed off and used as a movie theater), likewise surrounded by a corridor, which opens into exhibit rooms on the outside.

The principal entrance opens onto Van Ness Avenue. Behind the end arches in the base of the facade are veterans' groups offices to the south and the museum bookstore to the north. In the projecting southern wing, a Trophy Gallery leads to a Souvenirs Gallery; and in the similar northern wing are elevators to the museum.

The Herbst Auditorium is similar to the main hall of the Opera House, but is smaller and has more subdued detailing. It holds 1,100 people and had only one balcony until box seats were added in 1978. The arches of its side walls contain eight giant murals by British artist Frank Brangwyn depicting earth, air, fire, and water and their benefits to humanity. The murals originally hung in one of the demolished Panama-Pacific International Exposition structures. They were installed in the Herbst at the time of the building's construction. The ceiling of the Herbst is irregularly coffered; a traditional bronze chandelier hangs from its center. The chamber retains its essential appearance as of the time the United Nations Charter was signed in it.

In 1971, the third-floor offices were turned over to the museum by the veterans for use as offices and classrooms. Minor renovations were then carried out in various parts of the building.

Today, both the Veterans Building and the Opera House continue to serve the functions for which they were built. The Opera House is the permanent residence of the San Francisco Opera, Ballet, and Symphony and hosts other cultural events. The Veterans Building houses both veterans groups and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. A recent proposal by the museum to expand by removing the Herbst Auditorium has sparked discussion. The resolution of this issue is uncertain.

Memorial Court (1936)

The War Memorial Court occupies the area between the Opera House and the Veterans Building. It is enclosed on its open sides by blue and gold ornamental iron fencing that runs between the two buildings. The court is a central lawn encircled by a sidewalk lined with box hedges and sycamore trees and lighted by ornamental iron lamps.

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Exposition (Civic) Auditorium (1915)

Exposition Auditorium (99 Grove Street) fills the block bounded by Grove, Larkin, Hayes, and Polk Streets and faces the Civic Center Plaza from the south across Grove. Its four stories are erected on a steel frame clad in gray granite on the main facade and brick on the sides and rear. The Auditorium is designed in the Beaux Arts style with elements of both the French and Italian Renaissance.

The main facade is symmetrically arranged with a dominant central feature flanked by advancing pavilions and receding wings. The 2-story base is rusticated. The superstructure above contains pedimented windows, except in the central feature where three large arches reach through both tiers. A cornice caps the superstructure and a false attic rises above it over the three central planes.

The three high arches in the central feature rise between four piers in the base level, and four pairs of engaged Doric columns which stand on the piers in the superstructure. The rusticated base is divided by a long wooden marquee covered with copper sheeting.

The rusticated bases of the projecting pavilions on either side of the central feature contain large showcase windows in the ground floor with pairs of small windows above them. The cornice of the base sits on two pairs of brackets which frame the windows of the second floor beneath it, and, at the same time, serves as a base for two pairs of free-standing Doric columns in the superstructure. Each pair of columns extends through the heavy cornice of the fourth floor with festooned urns on granite bases.

The receding wings on the ground level contain plainly framed doors that match the showcase windows in the adjacent piers. Windows in the third floor have rounded pediments and balustraded balconies on brackets.

The sides and rear of the Auditorium are brick except for granite angle features on Polk and Larkin, around the corner from the main facade. The rear facade contains five planes reflecting those of the front. The central feature contains two high service doors.

A remodeling of the building in 1964 resulted in minor exterior alterations, including a slight extension of the westernmost pier in the central feature of the main facade to accommodate the principal escalator to Brooks Hall, the underground exhibition hall under the Civic Center Plaza; and extension of the projecting pavilions on the rear toward the sides.

The principal auditorium is reached through entrances at the base of the high arches, and two secondary halls through doorways in the receding wings. Seating capacity is 7,800 in the large auditorium and 900 in the side halls. Nineteen smaller conference rooms each hold 30 to 125 people.

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There have been several interior renovations. In 1921, G. Albert Lansburgh altered the main hall for use by the San Francisco Opera, adding a canopy which lowered the ceiling. After the Opera House was completed in 1932, the Auditorium was again remodeled, obscuring the open metal trusswork of the main hall with huge canvas murals and a forest of chandeliers. A further renovation by Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons, and Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill modernized the interior in 1961-64.

The principal use of the Auditorium is for conventions. Until the 1960s renovation, however, departments of the city government used the upper floors.

Public Library (1916)

The San Francisco Public Library (200 Larkin Street) occupies all but the northeast corner of the block bounded by Larkin, Hyde, Fulton, and McAllister Streets. The library is erected on a steel frame clad in gray granite; it is shaped somewhat like a giant "P" with a square main building and an ell continuing the south facade the full length of the Fulton Street frontage. The Larkin and Fulton Street sides are the principal facades, and together with the end of the ell on Hyde and a flat pavilion around the corner from Larkin on McAllister Street, are treated in Italian Renaissance style. The remainder of the McAllister Street facade is more simply expressed. The other exterior walls, on the north and east, largely behind the annex (a temporary building that occupies the northeast corner of the library block), and the two interior light courts, are ordinary brick.

The ornamental facades consist of a rusticated basement crowned by a belt course and surmounted by a high story consisting of projecting corner pavilions joined by ranges of graceful arches. Over all is a high entablature which forms the well of the top story.

The main facade faces the City Hall over the Plaza across Larkin Street. Three large central doorways on the ground floor are flanked by two large rectangular windows cut into the rusticated wall on either side. There are seven plainly molded arches in the superstructure, those at either end belonging to flat pavilions framed by pairs of Doric pilasters. Under the end sills are pairs of tablets on which are inscribed the names of famous authors. Between the pavilions are five more arches, recessed together behind a row of free-standing Ionic columns, the bases of which are linked by a low balustrade. Each arch features a giant cement figure on a pedestal. On the third floor, cut in a great panel, is a legend identifying and dedicating the library.

The side facade on Fulton Street is a simplified variation of the Larkin facade. The ground floor has a single central ornamental doorway flanked by six windows on each side.

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The end of the ell on Hyde Street and the west end of the McAllister Street facade are exact restatements of the pavilion ends of the main facade. The remainder of the McAllister Street (north) facade consists of seventeen high narrow rectangular bays separated by simple piers and reflects the library stacks on the interior.

The principal ornamental public spaces are those which constitute a ceremonial progression and the two main reading rooms. The public spaces are grouped along the Larkin and Fulton Street sides and in the center of the building. The ceremonial spaces are especially noteworthy and form the distinctive architectural feature of the library. From an elaborately ornamented entrance vestibule, the view is clear through a succession of magnificent ceremonial spaces up a formal staircase to an enclosed landing, skylighted dramatically from the sides, and to the main room on the second floor. From the staircase area and from the main room there is ready access to two other principal reading rooms of the library, which connect to smaller and less imposing public rooms on the first and third floors. The stacks are on the McAllister Street side. Large interior courts for light and air are to either side of the central main room.

The main reading room is monumental. It is 65 feet square and 42 feet high and contains large scaled features similar to those on the building's exterior. The entrance and three other huge arches, one on each wall, are framed in a plain molding carried on giant free-standing Ionic columns. The room was originally called the "delivery room," but now houses card catalogs and information services.

The two other large reading rooms also have special decorative treatment. The Literature and Philosophy reading room, originally a general reading room, off the main room, runs almost the entire length of the Fulton Street facade. The History and Social Science reading room, off the staircase area opposite the main room, was originally the Reference Room; it runs the length of the Larkin Street side. Both rooms are modeled after early Renaissance halls. Two giant murals, one in each reading room, depict American migration from New England to California. They were painted by Frank V. DuMond for the Panama-Pacific Exposition.

The rest of the library is relatively plain. Most of the original functions of the rooms are at least generally the same as originally intended. Only two rooms, of lesser importance, have been thoroughly remodeled. The Fulton Street entrance has also been closed off and is used as an office area. The original "old Italian" accessories, which still predominate, have a high degree of unity.

Although the Library is in excellent condition, in recent years it has suffered from overcrowding.

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Library Annex (1945)

The Library Annex (45 Hyde Street), a "temporary" structure, occupies the northeast corner of the Library block. It is a 3-story rectangular wood building. Its flat white walls are completely plain except for rows of rectangular windows on each floor. Built for the U.S. Navy, it has served the library and city departments since 1948.

California State Building (1926)

The State Office Building (350 McAllister Street) is basically rectangular, occupying the south half of the block bounded by McAllister, Larkin, Golden Gate, and Polk Streets. The north half of the block contains the State Building Annex (1957), which is about the same size. The latter structure is attached to the State Building in the center of the block allowing the buildings to function as one. Visually, however, they appear separate. (The Annex is not included in this nomination.)

The State Building is 6 stories high, constructed on a skeleton of steel and sheathed in gray granite and terra cotta simulating granite. The Italian Renaissance style of the building is fully realized on the long main facade, which faces across McAllister Street to the Civic Center Plaza, and on the ends of the main forward section of the building. A rear section, set back from Polk and Larkin Streets, is treated more simply.

The entire main facade is lightly rusticated. It is broken up into a high 3-story base surmounted by a 2-story superstructure of glazed arches and pedimented windows with a simple top-floor entablature. The most interesting feature of the facade is the entrance motif with three high arches, in the center of the base, which open onto an air-vaulted vestibule. To either side of the arches are nine simple rectangular windows evenly spaced across the facade on each floor. Three elaborate framed doorways enter the building from the vestibule.

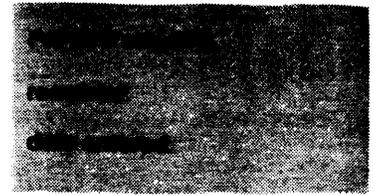
The second level is dominated by thirteen glazed arches marked with voussoirs. Between the arches are twelve vertical pairs of rectangular windows with simple pediments over larger lower windows and vertical panels over the upper ones. Above each arch and pair of windows, in the entablature, is a small rectangular window.

The sides are treated like the main facade with three windows on each floor in the base; a central glazed arch and two flanking vertical pairs of windows with adjacent pilasters in the second level; and three plain windows with panels in the entablature.

The other public wall surfaces are simplified versions of the main facade. There are three rectangular windows in each floor of the rear sections which face on Larkin and Polk Streets. The treatment of the base is identical to other base areas, but the superstructure is only ornamented with pediments over the two outside windows on the third floor.

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The back of the building was originally adorned like the rear sides with four windows across from either end and brick in between. Now only two windows at each level are exposed; everything else between has been cut out for the connection between the old building and the Annex.

The interior of the State Building contains a functional organization of offices, which are not elaborately decorated. The only exception is the 2-story Supreme Court room, which was extensively remodeled in 1956.

Federal Building (1936)

The Federal Office Building (50 U.N. Plaza) occupies the entire block bounded by U.N. Plaza, Leavenworth, McAllister, and Hyde Streets. It is a generally rectangular building with a large central court. There are 5 principal stories and a mansard roof above. The building is erected on a steel frame clad in gray granite.

Its Classical styling, in a generally French Renaissance manner, is fully realized on the U.N. Plaza, Hyde, and Leavenworth Street sides. The McAllister side is treated more simply but still has a Classical quality. The U.N. Plaza side, with a long colonnade, is the principal facade and contains the main entrance. Reentrant corners, at U.N. Plaza and Hyde, and at U.N. Plaza and Leavenworth, contain secondary entrances.

On all sides there is a 2-story base of rusticated blocks surmounted by a higher 2-story tier, with an essentially smooth background wall surface. The second tier is surmounted by a simple cornice, above which is an interrupted balustrade. On all but the central section of the McAllister facade there is another story set back behind the balustrade and capped by a mansard roof.

The U.N. Plaza facade contains three high arched entrances in the center of the rusticated base. Each arch is glazed and set in an iron frame painted silver and gold. To either side of the arches there are eight windows on each of two floors. Alternate windows on the ground floor bear massive masks of Classical faces on their keystones. The windows are paired vertically, with the second-story windows being smaller. The vertical pair of windows at either end of the facade is set back in a slightly receding plane which carries to the roof.

The Hyde and Leavenworth Street facades are identical simplified variations of the U.N. Plaza facade. There are fourteen windows in each floor of the base with the last vertical pair at both ends set in receding planes which carry to the roof. Giant keystone masks are set over every third ground-floor window. The second tier contains a single vertical pair of windows flanked by free-standing fluted Doric columns with Doric pilasters behind.

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Flanking pavilions on the McAllister Street facade are identical to the Hyde and Leavenworth facades with three windows at each level. The receding central section of this wall contains a rusticated base with a single glazed arch in the center. There are eight windows on either side in the ground floor and nine windows on the second floor. The second tier simply contains 19 vertical pairs of windows with horizontal panels between them. There is the same regular entablature and balustrade found elsewhere at the top of this section of the wall, but there is no fifth floor or mansard roof. The shape of the central court reflects that of the exterior of the building, but it is faced with gray industrial brick.

The interior contains identical hallways that encircle the building on all four principal floors. These halls open to offices on both sides. The only alterations in the building have been behind office doors. It has been well maintained and is in excellent condition.

Department of Public Health Building (1932)

This building (101 Grove Street) sits on a rectangular lot at the northeast corner of the block bounded by Polk, Grove, Van Ness, and Ivy Streets. It covers the full rectangular lot at ground level, but has a light court above the ground level at the rear of the building, and is thus a "U" shape above the first floor. The structure is of reinforced concrete clad in gray granite, executed in the Italian Renaissance style on its public faces. The facade on Ivy Street and the west wall are gray industrial brick. The principal entrance is in the reentrant corner at Grove and Polk Streets, angled to face the Civic Center Plaza.

The ornamental facades are decorated in two principal horizontal bands above a smooth granite base. A 2-story lower level consists of a rusticated wall cut by plain rectangular windows. This is capped by a plain flat belt course, above which is another 2-story section with a smooth wall cut by a similar configuration of windows. Alternate windows on the third floor are framed by simple pediments of voluted brackets and slightly projecting balconies.

The Polk Street facade contains seven windows evenly spaced across the wall at each level; there is a door in the third window space from the Ivy Street corner on the ground floor. The Grove Street facade contains fifteen windows at each level with a door in the fourteenth window space on the ground floor and alternate pedimented and balconied windows on the third floor. The reentrant corner at Polk and Grove consists of a high arched doorway in the first two floors and one window in each of the third and fourth floors. The third-floor window is framed just like those on the other facades but with a longer balcony.

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The main entrance opens into a small lobby with gray marble walls and floors. The Grove Street entrance is a smaller version of the main entrance. The parts of the building reached by these two entrances serve the Department of Public Health as offices, laboratories, and clinics. The Polk Street entrance opens on a small plain lobby from which a stairway rises, leading to a rear section of the building not connected to the main office areas in front. This smaller rear area was originally a women's prison, and is still marked by barred windows at the rear; it now is a clinic. The rear entrances are to a section of the building used as the Central Emergency Hospital. Interior renovations occurred during the late 1930s and in 1966.

Civic Center Plaza (1915)

The Plaza is bounded by Polk, McAllister, Larkin, and Grove Streets. A paved pedestrian area lined with flagpoles runs where Fulton Street once cut through the block from east to west. A long rectangular pool sits in the center of the paved area with rows of sycamore trees at its sides. Park areas to either side are circumscribed by concrete walks; a central square lawn is flanked to the east and west by rows of olive trees. The present landscaping scheme dates from the early 1960s; it was put in place after Brooks Hall and a parking garage were constructed under the Plaza. The Plaza formerly was similar in design. During World War II, prefabricated barracks were erected in the Plaza for military men on leave.

Brooks Hall (99 Grove Street), a 90,000-square-foot exhibition area, is under the south half of Civic Center Plaza. The hall was planned by Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons; and Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill and constructed in 1956-58. It is connected to the Civic Auditorium by ramps. A parking garage (355 McAllister Street), completed in 1960, is under the north half of the Plaza.

Civic Center Powerhouse (1915)

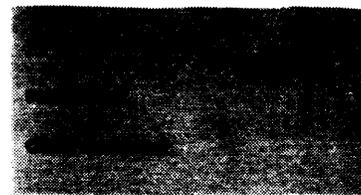
The powerhouse, built about 1915, is a small squarish building in the northeast corner of the small lot at the northeast corner of Larkin and McAllister Streets. It is constructed of reinforced concrete and has exterior walls decorated with a few simple Classical details. A high steel stack, supported by two prominent girders, rises from its back corner. The Powerhouse still supplies steam heat to the entire Civic Center.

Marshall Square (1870)

Marshall Square, named after James Marshall, whose discovery led to the California gold rush, is the block bounded by Larkin, Fulton, Hyde, and Grove Streets. It is the only major site in the Civic Center plan never to have acquired a sizable structure. At present, the Department of City Planning (100 Larkin Street), on the west side of the block, faces the Civic Center Plaza. A long sloping driveway to

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Brooks Hall (under the Plaza) runs the length of the Fulton Street side of the block. The Pioneer Memorial is at the corner of Hyde and Grove Streets. The remainder of the block is used for parking. A variety of suggestions have been made for the future use of the square.

Department of City Planning Building (USO Hospitality House) (1941)

This structure was built as a "Hospitality House" for the United Service Organization (USO) in 1941. It served to entertain military personnel quartered in temporary barracks in the Civic Center Plaza. An irregularly shaped, flat-roofed, 1-story building constructed on a wood frame, it is an example of late Moderne architecture, with strips of white walls, blue windows, and rounded corners. Although it was only intended to be a temporary structure, it remains in good condition. After World War II, ownership was transferred to the city, which has used it for offices.

The Pioneer Memorial (James Lick Memorial) (1894)

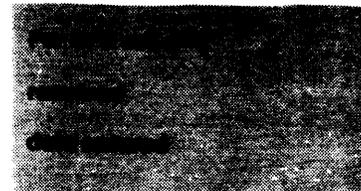
Lick left the largest part of his fortune to erect public statuary in San Francisco. This sprawling work was sculpted by Frank Happersberger to honor the miners, traders, cowboys, sailors, and other pioneers who came to California seeking their fortunes and remained to settle. It consists of groupings of bronze statuary on a central stone base and four projecting piers. A female "California" with a bear at her feet and a shield and a spear in her arms occupies the central pedestal. Two allegories and two tableaux on the piers are entitled "Early Days," "Plenty," "In '49," and "Commerce." In addition there are four bronze relief scenes, five relief portraits, and numerous medallions, plaques, and inscriptions. The most notable aspect of this work is the modeling of the large figures, ordinary people depicted in heroic groupings.

United Nations Plaza (1975)

The 1-acre United Nations Plaza commemorates the founding of the United Nations in the Civic Center in 1945. It consists of former Fulton Street, between Market and Hyde, and Leavenworth, between Market and McAllister, which have been converted into a pedestrian plaza. The entire area is paved in brick, with granite borders that echo the principal materials of the Civic Center buildings. The architects were Mario Ciampi and Associates, John Carl Warnecke and Associates, and Lawrence Halprin and Associates. U.N. Plaza provides a pedestrian approach to the Civic Center and a clear view from Market Street to City Hall.

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Footnotes

¹This description condenses Michael Corbett's description of the Civic Center that appears in the National Register of Historic Places nomination form (1976). He drew extensively on municipal sources cited in his bibliography.

²A portfolio of newspaper items on this question is available for review and will be permanently filed with this nomination.

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The most immediate effect of the City Beautiful movement was the imitation of the White City in world's fairs that were held around the country in the next two decades. The fairs spread the ideals of Classical architecture, Beaux Arts planning, and the example of cooperation among architects for greater effect in an ensemble. But, like the White City, these expositions, which involved multiple structures and elaborate landscape plans, lasted for a season or two and were then largely demolished.

A spectacular and well-known longer-term application of City Beautiful principles was in the revival of L'Enfant's plan for Washington, D.C. More characteristic and widespread results of the movement were city, park, and civic center plans. Many cities, large and small, commissioned such plans. Of the number prepared for major cities, however, only San Francisco's civic center came near to completion. It originated in tandem with a great exposition to be held in the city. Both were intended to fulfill the visions of San Francisco's elite, who saw their city as a modern-day Florence.

History

San Francisco's Old City Hall crumbled in the first 60 seconds of the 1906 earthquake, and its replacement became a lively public and political issue. That structure, on the site now occupied by Exposition Auditorium, had been begun in 1872, but, principally because of corruption in city government, was not completed until 1897, at the then-phenomenal cost of \$5.75 million.

There were suggestions that the superstructure or foundation of the old building be reused, but, by the end of 1908, demolition was under way. Those who supported a new City Hall would eventually join with other efforts to promote San Francisco, including a drive to erect a new public auditorium to attract conventions.

Already, in 1899, Bernard J.S. Cahill, with the encouragement of reform-minded Mayor James D. Phelan, had put forth a Civic Center plan that came to naught. Out of office, in 1904, Phelan had also been instrumental in the establishment of the Society for the Improvement and Adornment of San Francisco. The Society invited Daniel Burnham to provide the city with a grand plan and also suggested to Cahill that he revise his 1899 plan. (The latter plan was similar to the tightly grouped one later adopted.) Burnham's grandiose master plan for the city, including a Civic Center, was ready in 1905 and was delivered from the printer the day before the earthquake on April 18, 1906; it, like Cahill's plan, languished.

In 1909, although San Francisco had been reconstructed essentially on pre-earthquake lines, Burnham was asked to revive and revise his Civic Center plan. Willis Polk, his deputy, handled the design, placing a semicircular group at the corner of Van Ness and Market. Stirred by what he conceived to be the impracticality of the

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plan, Cahill revised his 1904 scheme slightly and argued that the Burnham/Polk proposal was too expensive, disruptive, and likely to be delayed by litigation. The Burnham/Polk plan was put before the public and easily defeated.

These conflicting views of the form the Civic Center should take became linked to plans for a major international exposition to be held in San Francisco. In 1910, the Panama-Pacific International Exposition Company was formed to hold a fair in 1915. By the mid-summer of 1911, the directors of the company had decided to build an Exposition Auditorium as a lasting reminder of the grandeur of the Exposition and as a permanent contribution to the city. To justify the Auditorium as an Exposition expense, its conferences would meet there without paying rent.

A vice-president of the Exposition Company, James ("Sunny Jim") Rolph, ran for mayor in September 1911. A municipal street railway, the Hetch-Hetchy water project, and other civic improvements were parts of his program, but the Exposition and the Civic Center ideas were its cornerstones. The Civic Center would permanently exhibit the grandeur which the Exposition would only briefly evoke. They would together demonstrate convincingly to the world that San Francisco had not simply recovered from the earthquake but had become a thriving and civilized metropolis of international importance. Rolph won a landslide victory, and the city moved forward on both projects.

The Final Civic Center Plan

After Rolph's election, steps toward planning of the Civic Center and the construction of the Exposition moved quickly, in hopes of completing at least the City Hall and Auditorium in time for the Exposition. In January 1912, the board of supervisors endorsed a revival of Cahill's Civic Center plan of 1909. The issue of its location was turned over to an architectural commission under the auspices of the Exposition, including Willis Polk, William B. Faville, and John Galen Howard, among others; a clear majority chose the present site.

The mayor appointed another commission (John Galen Howard, Frederick W. Meyer, and John Reid, Jr.) to select a final plan, oversee a City Hall design competition, and implement the plan. Howard, the chairman, guided the initial stages and campaigned for a March 1912 bond issue to finance the Civic Center and City Hall. Spurring public approval was the announcement by the State, just before the election, of its intention to erect a State building in the Civic Center. The bond issue passed overwhelmingly and the City Hall competition began quickly.

The approved Civic Center plan, then, consisted of a central plaza with the City Hall to the west, a State Building to the north, the Public Library and an Opera House to the east, and Exposition Auditorium to the south. Four corner lots between the main buildings were reserved for a Health Building, a Fire and Police Building, a Powerhouse, and an undetermined public building. The use of the site of the

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present Federal Building was also unspecified. Narrow strips, to be lined with arcades and peristyles, were also to be acquired on all properties fronting the Civic Center.

The Panama-Pacific International Exposition

The Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915, held in a 635-acre site in the Marina area of San Francisco, was, from the viewpoint of scholars who have studied the history of world's fairs, a notable event.⁵ As a recreational spectacle, it presented the same variety of amusements, exhibits, technological innovations, and spectacular architecture as others in the tradition. The "car trains" used in zoos, for example, originated there,⁶ and the world's first indoor airplane flight took place in the giant Palace of Machinery.⁷

World's fairs, though they have their lighter side, which tends to capture popular fancy, can also be appreciated from serious perspectives. Architectural historians, for example, have stressed the attention to the color schemes of the buildings and plantings and the use of soft indirect light as notable innovations at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. They have also noted the Exposition's emphasis on the arts, rather than technical sciences, that would have been expected in light of the primary event the Exposition was celebrating, the opening of the Panama Canal.⁸

While it would be possible to elaborate on the legacy of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in terms of both its architecture and recreational aspects, which are both highly significant, such a discussion would conclude with regrets that, aside from Exposition Auditorium, no structures from it have survived intact.

The Palace of Fine Arts, by Bernard Maybeck, a structure of great architectural interest, survived until the 1960s. Then, however, it fell prone to the temporary character of the materials of which it and most other Exposition structures had been built, and had to be demolished. It had won such a place in the hearts of San Franciscans, however, that it was shortly thereafter reconstructed.⁹ (It is not recommended for National Historic Landmark designation because, while important, it does not meet the extraordinary tests required for the National Historic Landmark designation of reconstructions.)

Certain tangential legacies of the Exposition have also survived, including much of the artwork in the early Civic Center structures and the great municipal pipe organ, from the Exposition's Festival Hall, which was installed in Exposition Auditorium in 1917.

Exposition Auditorium, however, intended as a permanent contribution to the city by the Exposition, does remain, though it is in a detached location from the Exposition's main site. Exposition Auditorium is the link between the two great events of 1915 in San Francisco, the Exposition and the Civic Center. The Civic Center would grow and endure and transcend even the significance its planners had envisioned.

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Implementation of the Civic Center Plan

John Bakewell, Jr., and Arthur Brown, Jr., designed the City Hall, while Howard, Meyer, and Reid received the Exposition Auditorium commission. Construction of City Hall began quickly, in April 1913, and of Exposition Auditorium in July of the same year. The Auditorium was dedicated on January 5, 1915, in time for the Exposition. The Powerhouse and Plaza were also finished when the Exposition opened. The new City Hall, on the other hand, was not ready until early 1916, after the Exposition had closed.

With the City Hall and Exposition Auditorium as anchors and the approved Civic Center plan as a guide, other buildings were added. A home for the San Francisco Public Library, which had been moving around in various temporary quarters since its establishment in 1878, was constructed in 1915-17, by George Kelham. World War I and the subsequent depression delayed further progress into the 1920s. The State Building, begun in 1920, was thus not completed until 1926.

On the other hand, the proposed arcades and peristyles were never built. And, although the builders of the Orpheum (then Pantages) Theater planned to face the theater's blank rear walls to match the Civic Center's buildings, a never-resolved dispute arose over who would pay for the facing. The walls have never been faced.

Construction of the War Memorial Complex

The Civic Center, then, as it was originally approved, gradually reached virtual completion. A new development west of the City Hall, the War Memorial Complex, expanded the Center. Completed in 1932, these buildings thoroughly harmonize with the original plan.

Even before the end of World War I, a memorial to honor those who had died in the struggle was proposed in San Francisco. There was great public debate over the nature of the project, and whether it should take the form of a monument; a "living memorial," such as an opera house; or some other character.

San Francisco had been an enthusiastic opera town almost since the "Gold Rush," but it had had little luck with opera houses, with several burning down. The last of these, the Tivoli, perished in 1906. Every version of the Civic Center plan had called for an opera house.

In 1918, a citizens' group revived the idea and invited the American Legion to join in support of a War Memorial Opera House. Together the two groups raised substantial funds and gained public support. A prestigious architectural advisory commission (Bernard Maybeck, John Galen Howard, Willis Polk, Ernest Coxhead, G. Albert Lansburgh, John Reid, Jr., Frederick Meyer, and Arthur Brown, Jr.) drew up the site plan. By 1925, it had been decided that Brown would design the buildings with Lansburgh collaborating on the Opera House.

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The scope of the project required far more money than had been raised privately and, with the help of the local newspapers, a bond election was approved in 1927. It was 4 more years before construction began, because of disagreements between the veterans, opera supporters, the mayor, and the board of supervisors over allocations of funds and space. Construction finally began in the summer of 1931 and was complete in the fall of 1932.

Although there were sound aesthetic reasons for designing the two buildings of the War Memorial as a matched pair, in the end they were made identical because neither the opera supporters nor the veterans would consent to the other having a more complete, costly, or magnificent home. As the Opera House was the more complicated structure, it was designed first and the Veterans Building derived its shape and design from it.

Other and Later Features

Contemporary with the War Memorial Complex, the Department of Public Health Building was constructed in 1931-32, under the direction of Samuel Heiman of the City Architect's Office. A landscaped Memorial Court, between the Opera House and the Veterans Building, was planned by Arthur Brown along with the two structures, but was not built until 1936, from designs by Thomas Church.

Construction of the long-promised Federal Building, also designed by Brown (in his capacity as an architect for the Treasury Department), was begun in late 1933 and completed in 1936. Its addition essentially brought the Civic Center to completion.

Events in the Civic Center

The beauty, monumental character, and excellent and varied facilities of the San Francisco Civic Center have drawn important people, meetings, and events to it. Two of these events are of international importance: the organization of the United Nations (1945) and the Peace Treaties with Japan (1951).

The United Nations Conference on International Organization met in the Civic Center between April 25 and June 26, 1945. Heads of state and delegates from 50 countries attended the conference. Organizational details and the drafting of the United Nations Charter occurred in the Veterans Building; the Charter was signed in an 8-hour ceremony in the Veterans Auditorium (now the Herbst Theater) on June 26.

Ceremonial events and speeches took place in the Opera House. Concerts and public gatherings for the delegates, including the welcoming ceremony, were in the Exposition Auditorium. The Public Library provided its facilities and services. The United Nations Conference demonstrated how successfully the buildings in the complex support one another in function as well as design.¹⁰

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A little more than 6 years later, on September 8, 1951, representatives of 49 nations signed a general peace treaty with Japan, returning full sovereignty to her after World War II. Japan, in the treaty, relinquished her claims to territories outside the home islands. In a separate treaty between the United States and Japan, concluded the same day, Japan granted the United States permission to continue stationing armed forces there. Both treaties, drawn in the Veterans Building, were signed in the Opera House.

Nationally important events associated with the Civic Center have been varied in character. The Democratic National Convention of 1920, in Exposition Auditorium, at which James M. Cox and Franklin D. Roosevelt were nominated for President and Vice-President, respectively, helped to fulfill a key role foreseen for that structure. City Hall's magnificent domed space has been utilized on state occasions, including the reception of distinguished visitors, such as the Presidents of the United States and French President Charles de Gaulle. President Warren G. Harding lay in state there in August 1923, after his sudden death in San Francisco, as did former Mayor James Rolph, the leading political figure behind the success of the Civic Center, in 1934. He died while Governor of California. That same year, events associated with the violent San Francisco general strike swirled around the Civic Center. Later events have included House Un-American Activities Committee hearings in the 1950s, in City Hall, and anti-Viet Nam War demonstrations in the 1960s.

Architectural and Aesthetic Evaluation of the Civic Center Plan and Buildings

Within the scope of turn-of-the-century Classical architecture in the United States, the San Francisco Civic Center contains a superlative example, in the City Hall, and several fine examples of the mode. They cannot, however, properly be evaluated solely in isolation. Seen in the context of the Civic Center as a whole, and in relation to City Hall, they together achieve distinction, if they are judged on the degree to which each enhances the group without distracting from the City Hall. These qualities are achieved through a harmony of color, materials, scale, size, texture, rhythm, and style. The ensemble is a monument of architecture and a triumph of early 20th-century American city planning.

The Civic Center carries out City Beautiful planning concepts in its Classical style of architecture, in its association with municipal reform, in the restraint shown by the individual architects in the integration of their structures into the Civic Center plan, and in the manner in which the Civic Center defined its importance in architectural terms. In San Francisco, moreover, the Civic Center represented the city's emergence as a regional center of national importance.

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The San Francisco City Hall is widely regarded as one of the finest examples of Beaux Arts Classical architecture in the United States. A very conservative building for its day, it is within the tradition of American capitol buildings such as the U.S. Capitol. Yet the influence of the Beaux Arts revival of the Baroque ideal and Arthur Brown's masterful and scholarly hand set it apart.

City Hall also serves as a powerful centerpiece and focal point for the civic complex, with the dome serving as the end point of major vistas from the east and west and as a dominant point of reference. Although not the first building constructed in the complex, the City Hall was the first to be designed and all subsequent buildings have deferred to its grandeur. Every other major Civic Center building echoes the spirit and details of the City Hall, in such general matters as the character of the office wings and in such details as the rusticated bases.

The finest feature of the City Hall is its dome, whose exterior has been described as an effective and coherent synthesis of the European dome from the 16th to the 18th centuries. The interior domed area, with its elaborate detail, its imaginative but correct use of Classical elements, its grand staircase, handsome blue and gold metalwork, and dramatic lighting, is a magnificent Baroque space, comparable to the finest in the United States.

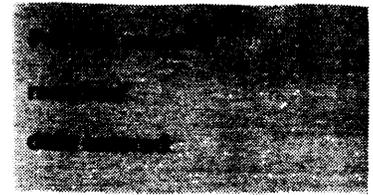
The siting and design of the War Memorial Complex extended the Civic Center to an area not included in the original plan. And, although designed 15 years later than the City Hall, the War Memorial is, nevertheless, aesthetically inseparable from it. The success of the complex is due principally to the designer of its buildings -- also Arthur Brown.

The planning of the War Memorial was masterful in terms of its relationship to the City Hall, which had been criticized as being too short for its block and in need of two or three more bays at each end. By lengthening the front facades of the War Memorial buildings, they protrude beyond the wings of the City Hall and permit an imposing view of the War Memorial from the Plaza. The lower scale of the two War Memorial buildings and the court between them are also effective in highlighting the City Hall. Viewed from the west end of the complex, the War Memorial buildings focus the view on the dome of City Hall.

The Public Library is an excellent example of American Beaux Arts architecture in the tradition of Classical Revival European and American libraries, such as Cass Gilbert's Detroit Public Library, on which it is closely modeled. The long arcade of the Fulton Street facade, with the colonnade of the Federal Building, defines the principal planning axis of the Civic Center and directs the eye from Market Street to the City Hall dome. The Larkin Street facade, across the Plaza from City Hall, reflects the design of the City Hall in its main features.

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The principal issue in the Library's design competition, the shape of the building and its relation to the others in the Center, clearly illustrates the impact of the City Beautiful movement on an individual building. The winning architect conformed his building in shape and exterior decoration to integrate his structure with the plan of the Civic Center.

The Exposition Auditorium is designed in a very traditional Beaux Arts manner with a multi-faceted facade, huge bays, and paired columns. As an aesthetic element of the Civic Center, it plays a unique role. The other buildings defer to the City Hall and reflect its rhythmic and Classical qualities. They might almost serve as the base for the dome themselves in their style, but the form of the Auditorium facade echoes the features of the dome itself. The small scale of the Auditorium's details, on the other hand, serves to harmonize it with the City Hall and other buildings.

The Federal Building links Market Street and the Civic Center visually. The uninterrupted rhythmic colonnade leads the eye up U.N. Plaza and Fulton Street to the City Hall dome. The reentrant corners and the frontage on U.N. Plaza (relative to the setback Public Library) make the building more visible from the Civic Center Plaza and thus appear to be more a part of the group.

The State Building, occupying the full-block street frontage, balances Exposition Auditorium across the Plaza. The masterful handling of the War Memorial complex brings the State Building into relationship with the other Civic Center buildings.

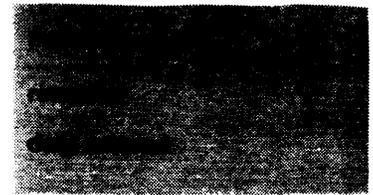
The Civic Center Plaza, as the central feature of the principal grouping of Civic Center buildings, provides views that emphasize the unity of all the monumental buildings.

In the 1912 plans for the Civic Center, in addition to the major buildings on blocks facing the Plaza, four sites, opposite the corners of the square that would complete the Classical wall all the way around the Plaza, were reserved. On the four sites, only two structures, the Powerhouse and the Public Health Building, have been constructed. The failure to build on all four corners is due to their inclusion in the plan for aesthetic rather than practical considerations.

Of itself, the Department of Public Health Building is a simple but pleasing exercise in the Italian Renaissance style. In its shape and orientation, however, it helps to fill the gap between the Exposition Auditorium and City Hall; it is the same height as those two buildings and mixes their decorative features.

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The Architects and Advocates of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition and the Civic Center

Just as the beauty and importance of the Civic Center is diffused among many elements, so no one person can be singled out as having presided over its development and that of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. The same individuals were, with a few exceptions, involved in both projects. Mayor Phelan, Bernard J.S. Cahill, the Society for the Improvement and Adornment of San Francisco, Daniel Burnham, and the supporters of the Exposition all helped mold the Civic Center idea. Mayor Rolph and architect John Galen Howard were probably most responsible for winning its acceptance. Arthur Brown, Jr., designed most of the buildings. Many of the men and groups were involved at more than one stage, and some, like Willis Polk, never left any tangible marks of their influence, yet were significantly involved through their support and service on the various commissions and design review boards that participated in the Center's growth and the building of the Exposition. A number of other individuals deserve credit, because the architects involved in the conception and execution of the Civic Center were an exceptional group, and some discussion of their background and accomplishments will make clearer the character of the individuals involved in these achievements.

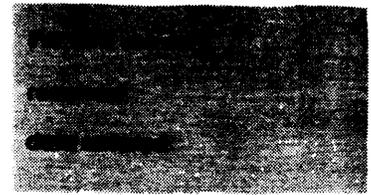
The architects of the Civic Center were well grounded in the formal training required for their tasks. Six (John Galen Howard, John Reid, Jr., George Kelham, Arthur Brown, Jr., John Bakewell, Jr., and G. Albert Lansburgh) had attended the École de Beaux Arts, and three (Howard, Walter D. Bliss, and William B. Faville) had apprenticed under McKim, Mead, and White.

The École de Beaux Arts in Paris, the most important school of architecture late in the 19th century, purveyed the ideas, which, in the United States, became incarnated as the City Beautiful movement. Certain American schools and East Coast architectural firms provided similar training and promoted many of the same ideas. The New York City firm of McKim, Mead, and White was one of the most influential.

Arthur Brown, Jr., was the architect of more buildings in the Civic Center than any other individual, and they stand out as the finest. With John Bakewell, Jr., his partner (1906-28), he planned the San Francisco, Berkeley, and Pasadena City Halls; the Horticulture Building at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, which was a domed structure larger than the Pantheon; the Santa Fe Depot in San Diego; and many buildings at Stanford University. Later, he designed the War Memorial Complex, Federal Building, and Coit Tower in San Francisco, and the Department of Labor and Interstate Commerce Commission Buildings in Washington, D.C.'s Federal Triangle. He served on the architectural boards of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition and the 1933 Chicago World's Fair, and chaired the Golden Gate Exposition held on Treasure Island in San Francisco in 1939-40.

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G. Albert Lansburgh, who assisted Arthur Brown with the Opera House, also served on the Panama-Pacific International Exposition board. He was principally known as a theater designer for the Orpheum chain, and built vaudeville and movie house for the company throughout the United States.

George Kelham, the architect of the Public Library, chaired the architecture committee of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition and designed its Court of Flowers and Court of Palms. He had arrived in San Francisco in 1909 to supervise construction of the Palace Hotel, for the firm of Trowbridge and Livingston. Kelham's greatest impact on the city was as a skyscraper designer in the late 1920s and early 1930s. As much as any person, he gave definition to the famous skyline that lasted into the 1960s. His most prominent buildings are the Standard Oil Building, the Russ Building (the city's tallest from 1927 to 1964), and the Shell Building. As supervising architect for the University of California, he also did the plan and four buildings at UCLA.

John Galen Howard chaired the advisory board that selected the plan for the Civic Center (1912) and oversaw the early stages of its implementation. Although Howard collaborated with Frederick H. Meyer and John Reid, Jr., on the Exposition Auditorium, his major role in the Civic Center was that of advisor and persuasive advocate. Howard had served on the board of the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo (1901), where he designed the prize-winning Electric Tower, and chaired the board of the Alaska-Yukon Exposition in Seattle (1909). He was also the architect of the Hearst Memorial Mining Building at the University of California in Berkeley (1900), remained to plan the university campus, and founded its department of architecture, over which he presided for 25 years. During his tenure, he designed most of the university's new buildings. Later in his career, he sat on the committee that advised the city on the War Memorial Complex.

Frederick H. Meyer, the German-born architect who shared in the design of the Exposition Auditorium, was influential in art education in the Bay Area. He was most closely associated (1907-61) with the California School of Arts and Crafts in Berkeley, which he founded. He served on the original advisory board of architects for the Civic Center and on the later War Memorial board. His most notable architectural achievements, both in San Francisco, are the Humboldt Bank Building and the Monadnock Building.

John Reid, Jr., was the San Francisco City Architect (1912-28). In that capacity, he played a long-term role in executing the Civic Center plan. Aside from his part in the Exposition Auditorium, he laid out the original Civic Center Plaza, made interior alterations to the Health Building, and designed a large number of the city's public schools.

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Walter D. Bliss and William B. Faville had one of the most prominent and well-respected firms in San Francisco when they won the State Building competition in 1915. They had just designed the key buildings at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Their other San Francisco commissions included the St. Francis Hotel, the Bank of California, and the Geary Theater. Virtually all of their commissions are extant, except the Exposition structures.

Bernard J.S. Cahill, an Englishman who came to San Francisco in 1891 to practice architecture, prepared the first Civic Center plan in 1899. His 1904 plan, as revised, served as basis for the final design of the Civic Center. He specialized in mausoleums but was most influential as an early advocate of city planning. He also invented the "butterfly," or octahedral, map projection.

Several contributors to the Civic Center's "decorations" also deserve mention. Jean-Louis Bourgeois assisted with the interiors of City Hall. Paul Deniville, who executed the decorative plaster and artificial stone of City Hall's interior, also did the travertine interiors of the San Francisco Public Library and the huge Palace of Machinery at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, as well as the Pennsylvania Station in New York City. (Both of the latter are demolished.) Thomas D. Church, a nationally prominent landscape architect associated with the "Bay Region Style," planned the Memorial Court.

FOOTNOTES

¹Cited in Kevin Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 1850-1915 (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Peregrine Smith, 1981), p. 294.

²Henry Hope Reed, Jr., The Golden City (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1959), p. .

³The bulk of the text of this significance statement has been edited and condensed from the exhaustive presentation of the Civic Center's significance in Michael Corbett's National Register of Historic Places nomination form, which will not be cited further.

⁴Starr, op. cit., pp. 288-293.

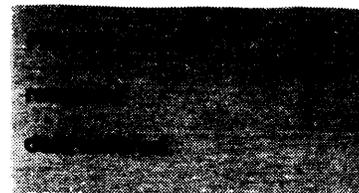
⁵John Allwood, The Great Exhibitions (London: Studio Vista, 1977), pp. 119-120.

⁶Folke T. Kihlstedt, "Formal and Structural Innovations in American Exposition Architecture" (Ph. D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1973), p. 1, 148.

⁷Frank Morton Todd, The Story of the Exposition (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1921), II, 19.

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⁸For example, Kihlstedt, op. cit., pp. 117 et seq.

⁹See William H. Jordy, American Buildings and Their Architects, vol. 3 (Progressive and Academic Ideals at the Turn of the Century) (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972), pp. 275-291.

¹⁰"Truman Talk Finale to Charter Adoption," San Francisco Call, June 26, 1945, p. 1; "Truman in S.F. Today for Conference Close," San Francisco Chronicle, June 27, 1945, pp. 1 and 4; and "Program in Honor of the Delegates to the Conference of the United Nations" (San Francisco: Pisani Printing Company, 1945).

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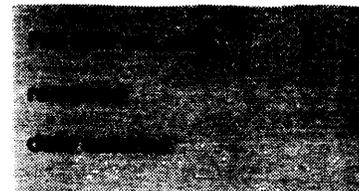
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Michael Corbett's National Register of Historic Places nomination contains additional bibliography that will be useful to any student of the Civic Center, the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, and their architects.

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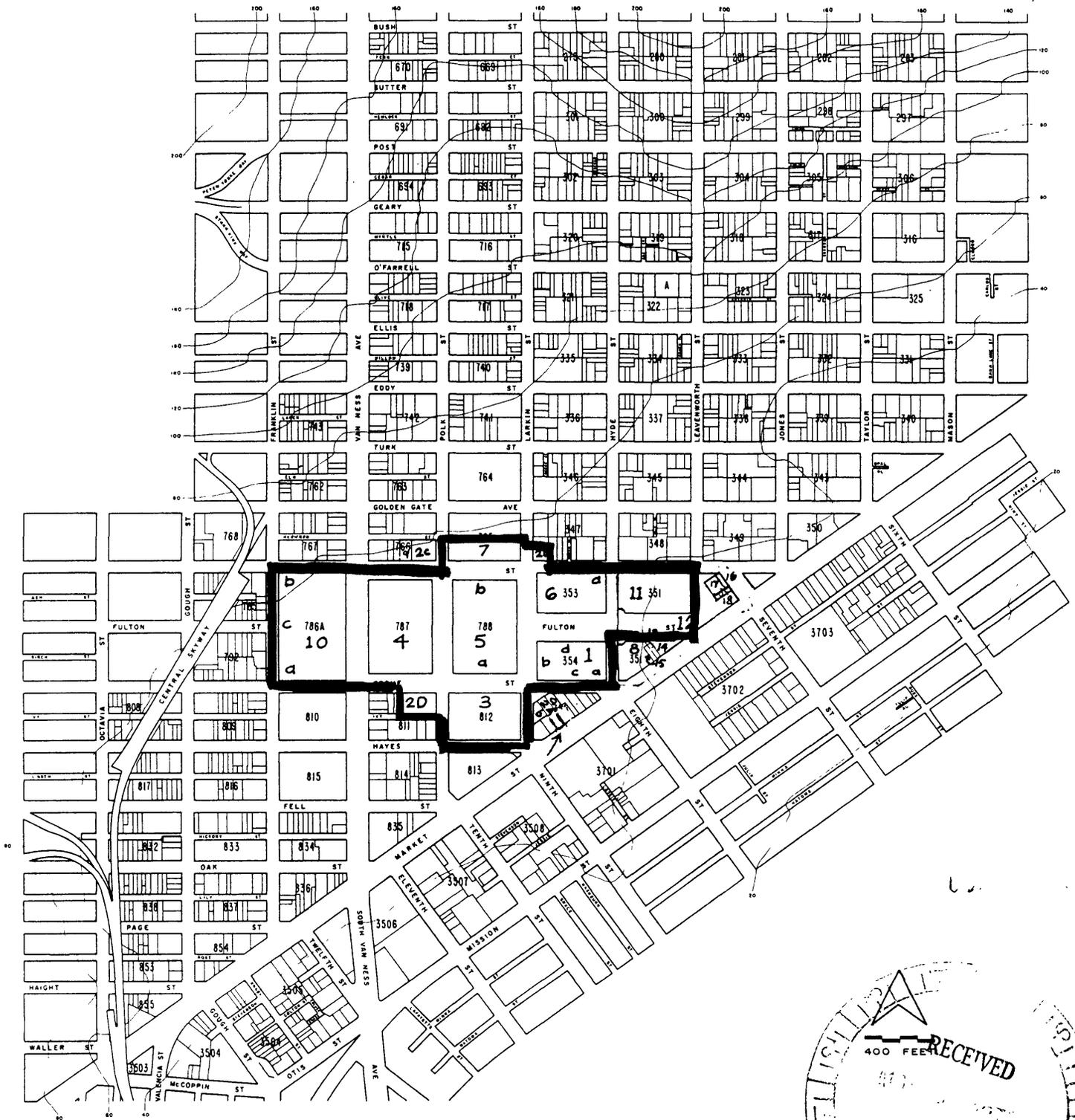
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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The area generally encompasses the portions of the Civic Center plan of 1912 that have been built up with structures in the Classical mode substantially as envisioned in the plan; together with Marshall Square, which antedates the plan; and the War Memorial Complex just west of City Hall, built in 1931-32 as an extension of the Civic Center. A precise boundary follows:

Beginning at the south edge of the intersection of former Fulton and Leavenworth Streets, the boundary proceeds west to the center of the intersection of Fulton and Hyde, then south on Hyde to Grove, west on Grove to Larkin, south on Larkin to Hayes, and west on Hayes to Polk Street. It proceeds north on Polk to Ivy Street and then west on Ivy to the western lot line of Block 811, Lot 1. Then north on the western line of the lot to Grove Street, and west on Grove Street to Franklin Street. On Franklin Street, the boundary proceeds north to McAllister Street, east on McAllister to Polk Street, then north on Polk Street to the northern boundary of Block 765, Lot 2, to Larkin Street, south on Larkin to the northern line of Block 347, Lot 8, and east on the northern boundary of Lot 8. It then proceeds south on the eastern boundary of Block 347, Lot 8, to McAllister Street, then east on McAllister to Leavenworth, and south on Leavenworth extended to the beginning point.



WORKING AREA LAND USE STUDY

CIVIC CENTER

WORKING AREA W · PLANNING AREA 3

San Francisco Civic Center (Map I)
 Numbers and letters are keyed to the specific buildings and sites of the San Francisco Civic Center. The above numbers relate to the order in which buildings and sites are presented under item 7 (description) and item 8 (statement of significance) in the text. For example, 10 is the War Memorial Complex, "a" represents the Opera House, "b" the Veterans Building and "c" the Memorial Court.

San Francisco Civic Center

<u>Property</u>	<u>Map Reference</u>
Marshall Square	1
Pioneer Memorial	1a
Department of City Planning Building	1b
Parking	1c
Brooks Hall Ramp	1d
Civic Center Powerhouse	2B
Department of Public Health Building	2D
Exposition Auditorium	3
City Hall	4
Civic Center Plaza	5
Brooks Hall	5a
Civic Center Garage	5b
Public Library	6
Library Annex	6a
California State Building	7
War Memorial	10
Opera House	10a
Veterans Building	10b
Memorial Court	10c
Federal Building	11
United Nations Plaza	12

**Attachment 3: HRER for the Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project,
September 2007.**

Attachment VI

**Historic Resources Evaluation Report
for the Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project**
Federal ID # DEM05L-5934 (134)
City and County of San Francisco

Prepared for

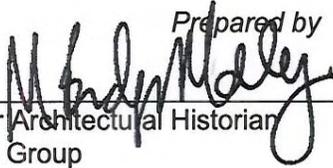
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PQS: Principal Architectural Historian
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Caltrans D4

Date: Oct. 2, 2007

Approved by

Jennifer Darcangelo 
Chief
Office of Cultural Resource Studies
Caltrans D4

Date: 10/2/07

September 2007

Summary of Findings

The Van Ness Avenue Streetscape Improvements project, designed by the San Francisco Department of Public Works (DPW), proposes minor landscape and streetscape improvements to five blocks on Van Ness Avenue between Market and Golden Gate Streets. Van Ness Avenue is a Caltrans right-of-way that cuts a wide north-south swath through the northwest quadrant of San Francisco. Van Ness Avenue first appeared on the San Francisco grid when it was platted in 1847.

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the project was established in consultation with Elizabeth Kruse, Caltrans Senior Environmental Planner, PQS in Architectural History, and Alicia L. Otani, Caltrans Principal Architectural Historian, PQS in Architectural History, Kris Opbroek, Project Manager, City and County of San Francisco Department of Public Works, and Michael Lim, P.E., Caltrans Local Assistance Engineer on April 11, 2006. The APE maps are located in the Attachments section at the end of this Historic Property Survey Report.

The General APE includes the entire project footprint (Block One: Market Street to Fell Street, Block Two: Fell Street to Hayes Street, Block Three: Hayes Street to Grove Street, Block Four: Grove Street to McAllister Street, Block Five: McAllister Street to Golden Gate Street) as well as the entire San Francisco Civic Center National Historic Landmark (NHL). The Focused APE includes only the project footprint and those Civic Center NHL District buildings immediately adjacent to the project area (War Memorial Opera House located at 301 Van Ness Avenue, War Memorial Veterans Building located at 401 Van Ness Avenue, and San Francisco City Hall located at 1 Dr. Carlton G. Goodlett Place). The Focused APE will allow a more detailed analysis of the potential project effects to those Civic Center NHL buildings that could be affected by the project. There is no potential for effect outside of the Focused APE.

Three buildings located within the Focused APE are included in the boundaries of the San Francisco Civic Center NHL, the San Francisco Civic Center National Register Historic District (CA-SFr-83H), and a City of San Francisco Historic District: the War Memorial Opera House located at 301 Van Ness Avenue (1932), War Memorial Veterans Building located at 401 Van Ness Avenue (1932), and San Francisco City Hall located at 1 Dr. Carlton G. Goodlett Place (1912-16).

Proposed construction activities will occur in the existing public pedestrian right-of-ways. All work presented in the proposed project will occur above grade. As such, the project will not include any ground-disturbing activities and there is no Archaeological APE, nor is an Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) required for this project.

The proposed improvements to the area of Van Ness Avenue located within the NHL are limited to aesthetic landscape additions and pedestrian circulation improvements that will not significantly alter the Civic Center's historic material, character-defining features, or appearance. The proposed improvements are compatible with the historic buildings and their setting and will not affect the San Francisco Civic Center National Historic Landmark's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. The Van Ness Avenue improvements conform to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

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**Attachment VIa.) National Register of Historic Places, San Francisco Civic Center
National Historic Landmark District, Continuation Sheets 18**

**Attachment VIb.) National Register of Historic Places, San Francisco Civic Center
National Historic Landmark District, Nomination Form 19**

Project Description

The City and County of San Francisco, Department of Public Works proposes to make minor improvements to the landscape and streetscape of Van Ness Avenue between Market Street and Golden Gate Avenue. The proposed improvements include the following: tree planting; raised planters with metal railings; sidewalk and curb reconstruction; historic streetlight refurbishment; and new medians. The project consists of improvements on and to the existing sidewalk along Van Ness Avenue. The median between Market Street and Fell Street will be increased in width at the northern end, where a former left-turn pocket is currently striped, tapering to conform to the southern end of the median. This left-turn pocket is no longer necessary, as Fell Street is now a one-way street heading east in this location. Shrubs will be planted and associated irrigation system will be inserted in the new median. Pre-cast concrete planters with a decorative railing will be installed on the sidewalk between the vehicular travel lanes and sidewalk travel area. Trees and shrubs will be planted in the planters, and an automatic irrigation will be installed. Pollarded *Platanus acerifolia* "Yarwood" street trees will be planted along Van Ness. The historic light poles will be patched and painted. No private right-of-way is needed for this project; the project is entirely in the public-right-of-way. The project is funded by a Federal Earmark matched by local funds.

One of the busiest thoroughfares in the city, Van Ness Avenue is a Caltrans right-of-way that cuts a wide north-south swath through the northwest quadrant of San Francisco, connecting Market Street to the San Francisco Bay. Van Ness Avenue runs through the San Francisco Civic Center National Historic Landmark District between Grove and McAllister Streets. Van Ness Avenue has served as the western boundary of downtown San Francisco since the boulevard's realization in the 1850s. Van Ness Avenue, an integral piece of California State Highway 101, diverts automobile and truck traffic through the city between the Golden Gate Bridge to the north and the Peninsula to the south. For over 150 years, Van Ness Avenue has been lined with a diverse combination of commercial and residential buildings. Wide pedestrian-friendly sidewalks were, and still are, common. Trees and planters lining Van Ness can be seen in historical photographs dating to the 1870s. The City Beautiful movement, which resulted in aesthetic improvements across San Francisco in the early 1900s, introduced tall, slender streetlights to Van Ness sidewalks in ca. 1914, and most of these historic streetlights remain along the avenue today.

Proposed construction activities will occur in the existing public, pedestrian right-of-ways. All work presented in the proposed project will occur above grade and has no potential to impact any buried archaeological resources. There is no Archaeological APE, nor is an Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) required for this project.

Please refer to the Attachments section at the end of this report for project plans, maps, and existing conditions photographs.

Block-by-block improvements are listed below:

Block One – Market Street to Fell Street:

Improvements will consist of the following: new tree planting; installation of new raised planters with metal railings at sidewalks; planting and irrigation at raised planters; sidewalk reconstruction; and historic streetlight refurbishment. All work will be performed on the sidewalk areas with the exception of an expanded center median. The existing, approximately 2 to 5 foot, tapering median will be widened into an existing striped area. The new median will be approximately 6 to 14.5 feet wide (tapering from Fell to Market Streets) and will be planted with low shrubs and irrigated. The proposed median will not affect existing traffic lanes.

Block Two – Fell Street to Hayes Street:

Improvements will consist of the following: tree removal and replacement; new tree planting; new raised planters with metal railings at sidewalks; planting and irrigation at raised planters; sidewalk reconstruction; and historic streetlight refurbishment. All work will be performed on the sidewalk areas.

Block Three – Hayes Street to Grove Street:

Improvements will consist of the following: new tree planting; installation of new raised planters with metal railings at sidewalks; planting and irrigation at raised planters; sidewalk reconstruction; and historic streetlight refurbishment. All work will be performed on the sidewalk areas.

Block Four- Grove Street to McAllister Street:

Improvements will consist of the following: new tree planting; installation of new raised planters with metal railings at sidewalks (west sides); planting and irrigation at raised planters; historic streetlight refurbishment; and sidewalk reconstruction. All work will be performed on the sidewalk areas.

Architectural Area of Potential Effects (APE)

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the project was established in consultation with Elizabeth Kruse, Caltrans Senior Environmental Planner, PQS in Architectural History, and Alicia L. Otani, Caltrans Principal Architectural Historian, PQS in Architectural History, Kris Opbroek, Project Manager, City and County of San Francisco Department of Public Works, and Michael Lim, P.E., Caltrans Local Assistance Engineer on April 11, 2006. The APE maps are located in the Attachments section at the end of this Historic Property Survey Report. The APE maps were signed by Michael Lim and Alicia Otani on August 9, 2007 and by Kris Opbroek on October 4, 2007.

The general APE includes the entire project footprint (Block One: Market Street to Fell Street, Block Two: Fell Street to Hayes Street, Block Three: Hayes Street to Grove Street, Block Four: Grove Street to McAllister Street, Block Five: McAllister Street to Golden Gate Street) as well as the entire San Francisco Civic Center National Historic Landmark (NHL). The Focused APE includes only the project footprint and those Civic Center NHL District buildings immediately adjacent to the project area (War Memorial Opera House located at 301 Van Ness Avenue, War Memorial Veterans Building located at 401 Van Ness Avenue, and San Francisco City Hall located at 1 Dr. Carlton G. Goodlett Place). The Focused APE will allow a more detailed analysis of the potential

project effects to those Civic Center NHL buildings that could be affected by the project. There is no potential for effect outside of the Focused APE.

Three buildings located within the APE are included in the boundaries of the San Francisco Civic Center NHL, the San Francisco Civic Center National Register Historic District (CA-SFr-83H), and a City of San Francisco Historic District: the War Memorial Opera House located at 301 Van Ness Avenue (1932), War Memorial Veterans Building located at 401 Van Ness Avenue (1932), and San Francisco City Hall located at 1 Dr. Carlton G. Goodlett Place (1912-16).

Proposed construction activities will occur in the existing public pedestrian right-of-ways. All work presented in the proposed project will occur above grade. As such, the project will not include any ground-disturbing activities and there is no Archaeological APE, nor is an Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) required for this project. (See Attachments I.)

Research Methods

At the request of the City and County of San Francisco DPW, Architectural Resources Group (ARG) staff, M. Bridget Maley and Shayne Watson, undertook this study in order to evaluate the potential affects on the Civic Center NHL by future landscape and streetscape improvements on Van Ness Avenue within the City of San Francisco in San Francisco County. ARG conducted research in the following collections: the California Historical Society, San Francisco Architectural Heritage, the San Francisco History Room at San Francisco Public Library, Online Archive of California, and Jeff Tilman's private photograph collection. ARG used Sanborn Fire Insurance maps to follow development patterns on Van Ness Avenue between 1893 and 1950. A chronology of development on Van Ness Avenue is provided as a basis for an assessment of potential affects to historic resources located within the project APE. Report conclusions are presented in the Historic Property Survey Report, Section 8. Project plans are provided in the Attachment II.

Primary and secondary research was conducted at the following organizations:

- California Historical Society Photography Collection
678 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
- San Francisco Architectural Heritage
2007 Franklin Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
- San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library, Main Branch
100 Larkin Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
- Internet
http://www.sfgov.org/site/planning_index.asp. San Francisco Planning Department.
<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/>. Online Archive of California.

- ARG in-house library
Pier 9, The Embarcadero
San Francisco, CA 94111

Historical Overview

Van Ness Avenue Chronology

A grid of San Francisco streets was platted by surveyors Jean Vioget and Jasper O'Farrell in the 1840s.¹ Originally known as Marlette Street and only 68'9" wide, Van Ness Avenue first appeared on a City-chartered survey in 1847. Soon thereafter, Van Ness was widened to 125', becoming one of the widest boulevards in San Francisco.² By the 1860s Van Ness Avenue extended from the bustling commercial district on Market Street to the military installation at Black Point (now Fort Mason).³ In 1869 the United States Coast Survey mapped a sparsely developed Van Ness, but by the 1870s the boulevard was lined with a growing number of Italianate homes and eucalyptus trees.⁴ In the mid-1880s the Coast and Geodetic Survey depicted the majority of buildings on Van Ness concentrated near cross-streets laid with cable car lines, such as Fulton, McAllister, Ellis, and Geary Streets.⁵ Historical photographs taken in 1883 show wood plank sidewalks, gaslights on street corners, and trees planted in front of residential buildings. By the 1890s Van Ness Avenue was a stately boulevard flanked by Queen Anne mansions. Street trees, brick gutters, and a cable car line can be seen in historical photographs. Mayor James D. Phelan, a dedicated proponent of municipal reform, advocated bond measures in the early 1900s to finance municipal works projects. In 1903 San Francisco voters approved \$16,000,000 in bonds to finance desperately needed improvements such as street paving and the first municipal railway (Geary Street).

By 1905 Van Ness was a largely residential street. A sampling of large buildings located on Van Ness Avenue at that time included: the Mechanics Library, Concordia Club, St. Lukes Episcopal Church, First Presbyterian Church, and St. Dunston's Hotel.⁶ Historical photographs taken in 1905 show trees planted in front of residences, cable car tracks set into brick pavers, wide concrete sidewalks, gaslights on street corners, and brick gutters. The earthquake and fire of 1906 wreaked great destruction on Van Ness Avenue. The buildings on the east side of Van Ness were dynamited in an attempt to contain the fire at this broad boulevard, and as a result, most of the buildings on the west side of Van Ness were saved. After the earthquake, many of the remaining mansions on Van Ness Avenue were converted to commercial uses. Large department stores, such as City of Paris and Emporium, relocated from the Market Street commercial district to Van Ness.⁷

¹ "National Register of Historical Places Inventory – Nomination Form: San Francisco Civic Center." United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1978: 8:1.

² <http://www.sfgenealogy.com/sf/history/hbbegb.htm>

³ San Francisco Department of City Planning. "Van Ness Avenue: An Area Plan of the Master Plan of the City and County of San Francisco." Unpublished Department of Planning Report. n.d.

⁴ "Van Ness Avenue: An Area Plan of the Master Plan of the City and County of San Francisco."

⁵ "Van Ness Avenue: An Area Plan of the Master Plan of the City and County of San Francisco."

⁶ "Van Ness Avenue: An Area Plan of the Master Plan of the City and County of San Francisco."

⁷ "Van Ness Avenue: An Area Plan of the Master Plan of the City and County of San Francisco."

A historical photograph taken in 1907 shows manicured planting strips set into the sidewalks directly in front of City of Paris.

On the central blocks of the boulevard, between Grove and McAllister Streets, the City of San Francisco reserved ground for the future site of San Francisco City Hall, for which the design was awarded to the prominent architectural firm of Bakewell and Brown in 1912. Historical photographs taken at that time show planting strips located in the wide sidewalks paralleling Van Ness Avenue and trees planted equidistantly apart in sidewalk planters near the future site of City Hall. In 1913 the City of San Francisco donated the block bounded by Fell and Hayes Street (the west side of Block Two of the project area) to the Board of Education. That same year the High School of Commerce building (now the San Francisco Unified School District building at 135 Van Ness) was moved from its location on Grove Street to Van Ness Avenue.⁸

The upscale shopping district on Van Ness Avenue, which included the City of Paris and Emporium, was short lived. The revitalization of the Market Street commercial corridor drew businesses away from Van Ness. The sudden vacuum allowed the growing automobile industry to move to Van Ness, and by 1915 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps illustrated a large number of automobile and motorcycle showrooms and repair shops constructed between small commercial shops and hotels. In preparation for the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, and as part of the City Beautiful movement that resulted in aesthetic improvements across the City, new electric light fixtures appeared on Van Ness Streets in c. 1914, most of which still exist today. Historical photographs show that these poles also held the wires for the municipal transit system. San Francisco City Hall was completed in 1916; the west façade of City Hall faced Van Ness Avenue between Grove and McAllister Streets.

In the 1920s large, elaborate automobile showrooms dominated Van Ness Avenue. Historical photographs show empty lots between Grove and McAllister Streets on the west side of Van Ness Avenue (future home of the War Memorial complex, purchased and cleared by the City in 1922), wide sidewalks, and, for the first time, automobiles parked along the sides of the street. In 1926 the west side of Van Ness between Fell and Hayes Street was cleared and developed into the High School of Commerce Athletic Field (which remained on this lot through 1952). In the late 1920s the west side of Van Ness, between Fell and Grove Streets, was lined with trees in sidewalk planters.

Construction of the War Memorial Opera House and Veterans Building was completed in 1932. Historical photographs show loading areas cut into the sidewalks in front of each building and awnings extending from the buildings' facades to the sidewalk cuts. The 25' wide sidewalks in front of the War Memorial complex have never been landscaped. In 1936 the War Memorial Court, a landscaped area between the War Memorial buildings on what was once Fulton Street, was constructed according to landscape architect Thomas Church's design.

By the 1960s historical photographs show a concrete median on Van Ness Avenue at Market Street and a planter median on the block between Grove and McAllister Streets. In the 1980s Davies Symphony Hall was constructed on the west side of Van Ness between Hayes and Grove Streets, which was home to the High School of Commerce

⁸ Draper, Joan Elaine. "The San Francisco Civic Center: Architecture, Planning, and Politics." Diss. University of California, Berkeley, 1979.

Athletic Field.

Block-by-Block Chronology of Development

(from Sanborn Fire Insurance maps and historical photographs)

Block One: Market Street to Fell Street

1900

The east side of Van Ness was dominated by a large “feed and sale” yard that spanned two-thirds of the block.

1915

This block was divided by Oak Street and Hickory Avenue (now Hickory Street). A large Masonic temple (constructed in 1911) was located at 11-35 Van Ness on the east side of Van Ness at the southern end of the block near Market Street. A small undertaking building was located across Hickory Avenue at 41 Van Ness and was the only other building on a largely undeveloped lot. Sidewalks were not drawn on Sanborn maps. The east side of the block was filled with the White Garage Building, a two-story building that housed an automobile-sales room, motorcycle showroom, a motorcycle-repair shop, a print shop, and a restaurant. Sidewalks were not drawn on Sanborn maps.

1950

The configuration of both sides of Van Ness remained the same on this block, except for an automobile-sales building located at 69 Van Ness to the north and east of the undertaking building. Sidewalks were not drawn on Sanborn maps.

2006

The west side of this block is divided by Oak Street to the south and Hickory Street to the north. The median is constructed of concrete and is not planted. The west side of the street is dominated by the Masonic Temple located in the middle of the block, a three-story commercial building at the corner Van Ness Avenue at Market Street, and a parking lot at the corner of Van Ness Avenue and Fell Street. Three historic streetlights (c. 1914) are located on the west side of the block. The sidewalks are wide and scored in a decorative diamond pattern between Hickory and Fell Streets. Street trees are set into square planters. The east side of this block is filled with a five-story, commercial building. Three historic streetlights and three historic fire hydrants (one dating from the 1880s and two dating from 1909) are located on this side of the block. The wide sidewalk is concrete and scored with 3' x 3' squares. Street trees are set into square planters.

Block Two: Fell Street to Hayes Street

1900

This block was bisected wholly by Linden Avenue on the west side of Van Ness and bisected partially by Linden Avenue on the east side of Van Ness. The west side of the block was developed sparsely with a commercial building on the corner and three residential buildings sited haphazardly on the parcels to the north. Sidewalks were not drawn on Sanborn maps. The east side of the block was also developed only sparsely. The southern half was an open lot with a small shed used for “old lumber storage.” The northern side of the lot did not contain any buildings that fronted Van Ness.

1915

The west side of this block was vacant except for a new public library that faced Franklin Avenue located on the northwest corner of the lot. Linden Avenue no longer appeared on Sanborn maps at this block. On the east side of Van Ness, automobile repair shops and showrooms dominated the block. Linden Avenue still partially bisected the block. Sidewalks were not drawn on Sanborn maps.

1950

The west side of the block was dominated by the High School of Commerce Academic building (constructed in 1927). A ten-foot wide sidewalk, decorated with patterned brick inlay at the main (central) entrance, separated the school from Van Ness Avenue. The east side of the block, bisected by Linden Avenue, contained a used car dealership, a carburetor service shop, and the California State Automobile Association Office building.

2006

The median on this block of Van Ness Avenue is constructed of concrete and is not planted. The San Francisco School District building fills the entire block on the west side of the street. Wide planter boxes filled with mature bushes and trees line the façade of the building at both sides of the main (central) entrance. Two historic streetlights and an early fire alarm box are located on the west side of the block. The wide sidewalk is concrete and scored with 3' x 3' squares; a decorative, patterned brick inlay distinguishes the sidewalk at the main entrance to the building. Street trees are set into square planters with metal grates. The east side of the block contains two large, commercial buildings. Two historic streetlights and one fire hydrant (1909) are located on the east side of the block. The wide sidewalk is concrete and scored with 3' x 3' squares. Street trees are set into square planters.

Block Three: Hayes Street to Grove Street

1893

St. Ignatius College was located on the west side of this block; the main entrance faced Hayes Street. The four-story Priests' House and Theatre buildings faced Van Ness Avenue. A twenty-foot wide sidewalk separated the St. Ignatius buildings from Van Ness. Sanborn maps are not available for the east side of the block.

1900

Two St. Ignatius College buildings were located on the west side of the block and faced Van Ness Avenue: a dormitory on the south side of the lot and a classroom building to the north (the former Theatre building). The east side of the block contained two-story, single-family, residential buildings, flats, and a few commercial buildings, including a bicycle shop on the corner of Van Ness and Grove. Ten-foot wide sidewalks fronted half of the buildings on the east side of the block. Ivy Avenue divided the block.

1915

The Van Ness Theater was located on the west of the block from 1907 to 1910. By 1915 the west side of the block was empty. The east side of the block was filled by a large automobile showroom at the corner of Van Ness and Hayes Street, a motorcycle showroom at Van Ness and Ivy Avenue, and two large commercial buildings at Van Ness and Grove Street. Sidewalks were not drawn on Sanborn maps.

1950

From 1924 to 1952 the High School of Commerce Athletic Field and Grand Stand filled the west side of the block. The east side of the block, still bisected by Ivy Avenue, contained a large apartment building and commercial buildings, including an automobile showroom and repair shops. Sidewalks were not drawn on Sanborn maps.

2006

The median on this block is constructed of concrete pavers laid in a brick pattern; the southern half of the median is planted with mature street trees and low bushes. The west side of the street is dominated by Davies Symphony Hall. The Hall's façade that faces Van Ness is accented by circular, granite planters filled with mature trees and bushes. Three historic streetlights are located on the west side of this block; the bases of the streetlights are painted gold. The wide sidewalk is concrete and scored with 3' x 3' squares. Street trees are set into circular planters. The east side of Van Ness is bisected by Lech Walesa Street (formerly Ivy Avenue). Two small commercial buildings are located to the south of Lech Walesa and three small commercial buildings fill the block to the north. Four historic streetlights and one fire hydrant (1909) are located on the east side of the block. The wide sidewalk is concrete and scored with 3' x 3' squares. Street trees are set into square planters.

Block Four: Grove Street to McAllister Street

1893

This block was originally two blocks separated by Fulton Street. The block was bisected partially by Birch Avenue between Grove and Fulton Streets, and bisected wholly by Ash Avenue between Fulton and McAllister Streets. The west side of the block contained two and three-story, residential buildings with shared walls and bay windows. The lot was developed densely with the exception of a single residence centered on the parcel located between Birch Street and Fulton Street. Residences were separated from Van

Ness Avenue by a sidewalk approximately fifteen-feet wide. The east side of the street contained two, three, and four-story, residential buildings of similar proportion to those located on the west side of the street. Sidewalks on the east side of Van Ness ranged from ten to fifteen feet in width.

1900

The west side of the block contained the Maybelle Family Hotel at Van Ness and Grove Street, two and three-story, single-family, residential buildings, an empty parcel, a drugstore at Fulton Street, a large, commercial building between Fulton Street and Ash Avenue, and a row of two-story, residential buildings between Ash Avenue and McAllister Street. Wide sidewalks fronted the residential buildings while commercial buildings' storefronts generally abutted Van Ness. The east side of the block contained two-story, residential buildings with the exception of a three-story, commercial building on the corner of Van Ness and McAllister Street. Sidewalks between residential buildings and Van Ness were ten-feet wide.

1915

The southern parcel on the west side of the block contained large, commercial buildings, including a paint shop, an automobile showroom, and a machine shop. The parcels between Fulton and McAllister Streets contained the Hotel St. James, an automobile showroom, a restaurant, and other commercial buildings. Sidewalks did not appear on the west side of this block on Sanborn maps. The east side of the street shows a large swath of land that incorporated both blocks. The map reads: "Buildings of the Civic Center to be located on these blocks."

1950

The War Memorial Complex was complete and filled the entire west side of the block. A twenty-five foot wide sidewalk separated the buildings from Van Ness. Memorial Court, a garden located between the War Memorial buildings, filled the width of Fulton Street. City Hall filled the east side of the block. The building was separated from Van Ness Avenue by a wide sidewalk.

2006

The median on this block of Van Ness Avenue is constructed of concrete brick pavers; a planter area filled with mature street trees and low bushes fills the northern portion of the median. A metal fence, painted blue and gold, extends south to north through the middle of the median planter. Located on the west side of Van Ness Avenue, the War Memorial Opera House and Veterans Memorial Building flank a central landscaped court, the War Memorial Court designed by landscape architect Thomas Church, in the location of what was originally Fulton Street. Wide, raised planters demarcated by low, granite walls buffer the facades of both buildings from the sidewalk. The planters are filled with grass and mature trees. A wide, granite staircase and granite ADA ramps front the War Memorial Opera House. The Veterans Building's entrance is highlighted by strips of red and white granite that run parallel to the building's facade. Eight historic streetlights line the west side of the block; the bases of the streetlights are painted gold and hanging flower baskets are attached to the tops of the streetlights. A historic (pre-1930s) fire alarm box stands in the middle of the block where Fulton Street once

intersected Van Ness Avenue. A historic fire hydrant (1909) is located on the northwest corner of the block. The concrete sidewalk is scored with diamond and square patterns. Wide curb cutouts are located in the sidewalk directly in front of the Opera House and Veterans Building; elements of the War Memorial Complex's original design, the cutouts were used for passenger loading and unloading and accented by awnings that extended from the buildings' entrances to the curb at Van Ness Avenue.

The east side of the block is dominated by San Francisco City Hall. City Hall is set back from Van Ness Avenue approximately twenty-five feet. The building's main entrance is set behind a wide, granite staircase. Wide, raised planters demarcated by low, granite walls buffer the façade of City Hall from the sidewalk. The planters are filled with grass and two rows of pollarded sycamores that run parallel to Civic Center on either side of the entrance staircase. A granite ADA ramp extends north from the City Hall staircase for approximately fifty feet and then turns west and extends approximately ten feet to the sidewalk. Eight historic streetlights are located on the east side of the block and hanging flower baskets are attached to the tops of the streetlights. A historic fire hydrant (1909) stands in the middle of the block where Fulton Street once intersected Van Ness Avenue. The concrete sidewalk is scored with 3' x 3' square patterns.

Block Five: McAllister Street to Golden Gate Street

1893

Locust Avenue bisected this block. The west side of the block was developed with wide, two-story dwellings with shared walls and bay windows. Sidewalks approximately twenty-feet wide spanned the distance between residences and Van Ness Avenue. The east side of the block contained a single two-story dwelling on the south side of the block and a row of one-story dwellings on the north side. The sidewalk on the east side of Van Ness Avenue was slightly narrower than the sidewalk to the west.

1900

This block maintained its 1893 configuration with the exception of a stable that filled in the rest of the southern portion of the block on the east side of Van Ness Avenue.

1915

Locust Avenue was renamed Redwood Avenue by this time. Both sides of the block were destroyed by the earthquake and fire of 1906. The new development reflected the growing automobile industry. The west side of the block contained a large, three-story automobile repair shop and several smaller automobile supply shops. The east side of the block contained a large, two-story automobile showroom with a repair shop on the second story. On the south side of the block was an empty lot. Sidewalks were not drawn on Sanborn maps.

1950

The west side of the block contained a one-story automobile sales shop, the six-story California Building, which contained a law school, a single-story electric supply shop, and a two-story automobile sales shop at the north end. The east side of the block was

filled with narrow storefronts, a three-story building dedicated to "State Offices," and an automobile sales room at the north end. Sidewalks were not drawn on Sanborn maps.

2006

The median on this block is constructed of scored concrete and concrete pavers laid into a brick pattern; the median is planted with mature street trees and low bushes. The west side of the street is dominated by a State of California building. The building's main entrance is set behind a wide, granite staircase. Granite planters filled with mature trees and bushes line the building's façade. Four historic streetlights are located on the west side of this block. The wide sidewalk is concrete and scored with 3' x 3' squares. Street trees are set into circular planters with metal grates. The east side of the street is bisected by Redwood Avenue. A large, commercial and residential building is located to the south of Redwood Avenue and a large commercial building fills the parcel to the north of Redwood. Four historic streetlights and one fire hydrant (1909) are located on the east side of the block. The wide sidewalk is concrete and scored with 3' x 3' squares. Street trees are set into square planters.

Field Methods

M. Bridget Maley and Shayne Watson (ARG survey team) made a site visit to the project area on May 9, 2006 and July 27, 2006. The ARG survey team conducted a pedestrian survey, photographed all property facades and features within the General APE, and took field notes.

Preparers' Qualifications

M. Bridget Maley has a Master of Arts degree in Architectural History from the University of Virginia. Ms. Maley is the Director of Planning at ARG, serving as a Project Manager for historic resource surveys, Section 106 review, CEQA review, historic structure reports, preservation plans, historic preservation ordinances, and documentation projects. She has managed projects throughout the West, including work in Hawaii and Alaska. San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom appointed Ms. Maley to the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board in 2004 and she is a member of the Board of Directors of the Society of Architectural Historians. Ms. Maley meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Professional Qualifications Standards* in Architectural History and History.

Shayne E. Watson has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art History from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and completed the University of Southern California, Fundamentals of Historic Preservation professional training seminar in July 2006. Ms. Watson has over four years of professional experience in historical resources survey and inventory work, historic structure reports, single-site historic property research and documentation, Historic American Building Surveys, National Register Nominations, and project support on seismic-strengthening projects in California. Ms. Watson meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Professional Qualifications Standards* in Architectural History.

Conclusion

Three buildings located within the Focused APE are included in the boundaries of the San Francisco Civic Center NHL, the San Francisco Civic Center National Register Historic District (CA-SFr-83H), and a City of San Francisco Historic District: the War Memorial Opera House located at 301 Van Ness Avenue (1932), War Memorial Veterans Building located at 401 Van Ness Avenue (1932), and San Francisco City Hall located at 1 Dr. Carlton G. Goodlett Place (1912-16). No properties were exempt from review.

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**Attachment VIa.) National Register of Historic Places, San Francisco Civic Center
National Historic Landmark District, Continuation Sheets**

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER**Page 17-1**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

History of Van Ness Avenue (within the San Francisco Civic Center National Historic Landmark district)

This National Historic Landmark (NHL) amendment focuses on the historic streetscape and landscape characteristics along Van Ness Avenue as it intersects the NHL boundary. Two blocks of Van Ness Avenue, between Grove and McAllister Streets, are located within the boundaries of the San Francisco Civic Center NHL district. Originally known as Marlette Street and only 68'9" wide, Van Ness Avenue first appeared on a San Francisco City-chartered survey in 1847. Van Ness was eventually widened to 125', becoming one of the broadest and stateliest boulevards in San Francisco, stretching from the bustling commercial district on Market Street to the San Francisco Bay.¹ Historical photographs dating to as early as 1883 indicate that, for over a century, Van Ness Avenue has been lined with wide sidewalks, elaborate streetlights, landscape planters, and street trees.

The two-block strip of Van Ness that falls within the boundaries of the NHL was home to mostly residential buildings and a few small commercial buildings through the early 1900s. Sidewalks between buildings and Van Ness Avenue spanned average widths of ten to twenty feet. The earthquake and fire of 1906 wreaked great destruction on Van Ness Avenue. Many of the buildings on the east side of Van Ness were dynamited in an attempt to contain the fire at this broad boulevard, and as a result most of the buildings on the west side of Van Ness were saved. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps show that most buildings on Van Ness between Grove and McAllister Streets were rebuilt by 1915. The revitalization of the Market Street commercial corridor in c. 1910 drew businesses away from Van Ness. The sudden vacuum allowed the growing automobile industry to move onto Van Ness Avenue, and by 1915 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps illustrated a large number of automobile and motorcycle showrooms and repair shops constructed between small commercial shops and hotels along Van Ness Avenue.

As early as 1906, the City began to prepare the east side of Van Ness between Grove and McAllister Streets for the future site of San Francisco City Hall, constructed in 1912-16. The perimeter of City Hall is softened by an expanse of wide, landscaped planters that have buffered the building from the Van Ness thoroughfare for nearly a century. Construction of the War Memorial Opera House and Veterans Building was completed in 1932. Historical photographs show loading areas cut into the sidewalks in front of each building and awnings extending from the buildings' facades to the sidewalk cuts. The twenty-five-foot-wide sidewalks in front of the War Memorial Complex have never been landscaped. In 1936 the War Memorial Court, a landscaped area between the War Memorial buildings on what was once Fulton Street, was constructed according to landscape architect Thomas Church's design. A planted median in the middle of Van Ness Avenue appeared in historical photographs c. 1960.

Period of Significance

The National Historic Landmark nomination, authored in 1978, does not define a specific period of significance, yet lists a specific significant date as, "Civic Center Plan – 1912."² For the purposes of this report, and in order to determine streetscape and landscape character-defining features along Van Ness Avenue, the San Francisco Civic Center NHL period of significance is 1912, when Civic Center designs were first realized, through 1936, the year the War Memorial Court, designed by landscape architect Thomas Church, was completed.

¹ "The Beginnings of San Francisco, Appendix B: The Streets of San Francisco." *San Francisco History*. <http://www.sfgenealogy.com/sf/history/hbbegb.htm> (July 2006).

² "National Register of Historical Places Inventory – Nomination Form: San Francisco Civic Center." United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1978: 8:1.

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER**Page 17-2**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Landscape and Streetscape Character-Defining Features along Van Ness Avenue within the boundaries of the National Historic Landmark District.*City Hall Landscape Planters*

First appearing in Bakewell & Brown's competition drawings in 1912, the landscape planters ring the perimeter of City Hall. The four corners of the planters are chamfered, a landscape design feature that echoes the chamfered corners of City Hall and the surrounding sidewalks. Part of the original City Hall design, the chamfered sidewalk corners have since been modified to comply with ADA codes. The planters are demarcated with low, white, granite walls, approximately one-foot tall by one-foot wide. Historical photographs dating from the 1920s through the 1960s show the planters landscaped with grass, a low hedge at the base of City Hall, one tree at each outside corner of the planters, and two trees flanking the main entrance staircase. The pollarded sycamores, which line the planters today, were added after 1960.

City Hall Entrance Staircase

The City Hall entrance staircase at the Van Ness Avenue facade is comprised of twelve white, granite steps, the widest of which is at sidewalk level while the rest narrow progressively up to the entrance doors. Two tall, blocky, rectangular elements, constructed of white granite, flank the stairs to the north and south; these elements project perpendicularly from the Civic Center facade. Two tall, highly ornamental lanterns are set on top of these granite elements.

War Memorial Opera House Entrance Staircase

The Opera House entrance staircase is comprised of thirteen white, granite steps. Two tall, blocky, rectangular elements, constructed of white granite, flank the stairs to the north and south; these elements project perpendicularly from the Civic Center facade.

War Memorial Veterans Building Entrance

The Veterans Building lobby is located at street level and does not have a staircase. An entrance walk constructed of strips of red and white granite, which run parallel to the building's façade, highlights the entrance. The Veterans Building entrance is flanked by two low, blocky, rectangular elements, constructed of white granite, which project perpendicularly from the building's facade. The colored granite entrance walk is approximately thirty-five-feet wide by fifteen-feet deep.

War Memorial Opera House Landscape Planters

The landscape planters are located at the corners of the building's main (Van Ness-facing) facade. The planters are irregular in plan and approximately fifteen-feet wide and twelve-feet deep. The corners of the planters are chamfered, a landscape design feature that echoes a vocabulary used in the corners of the War Memorial Complex buildings and City Hall. The planters are demarcated with low, white, granite walls, approximately one-foot tall by one-foot wide. Historical photographs dating from 1932 through the 1960s show the planters landscaped with grass, a low hedge at the base of the Opera House, and a few trees. The pollarded sycamores, which line the planters today, were added after 1960.

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER**Page 17-3**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

War Memorial Veterans Building Landscape Planters

The landscape planters are located at the corners of the building's main (Van Ness-facing) facade. The planters are irregular in plan and approximately fifteen-feet wide by twelve-feet deep. The corners of the planters are chamfered, a landscape design feature that echoes a vocabulary used in the corners of the War Memorial Complex buildings and City Hall. The planters are demarcated with low, white, granite walls, approximately one-foot tall by one-foot wide. Historical photographs dating from 1932 through the 1960s show the planters landscaped with grass, a low hedge at the base of the Veterans Building, and a few trees. The pollarded sycamores, which line the planters today, were added after 1960.

War Memorial Complex Curb Cuts

Historical photographs dating to the early 1930s show cuts in the sidewalks directly in front of the entrances to the War Memorial Opera House and Veterans Building. Historically, these sidewalk cuts allowed vehicles traveling southbound on Van Ness Avenue to pull over and drop off or pick up passengers going to and coming from the War Memorial Complex buildings. Historical photographs show awnings extending from the buildings' facades to the sidewalk cuts.

Streetlights with Baskets

There are sixteen historic streetlights on Van Ness Avenue within the NHL boundary between Grove and McAllister Streets. The streetlights date to approximately 1914 and are connected to the development of the Civic Center and the City Beautiful Movement. The streetlights are approximately twenty-feet tall and constructed of a faceted iron base and a slender, tapered, concrete shaft. A tear-drop lantern is hung from an iron, curly-cue bracket. Within the last ten years, hanging flower baskets were attached to the streetlights halfway up the shaft. The bases of the streetlights are stamped with the manufacturer's name: "JOSHUA HENDY IRON WKS SF CAL."

Fire Hydrants

Two historic 1909 fire hydrants exist within the NHL boundary. One hydrant (1909) is located on the northwest corner of the street, and the other hydrant (also 1909) is located in front of City Hall near the middle of the block. Both hydrants are denoted on Sanborn maps. The hydrants are short and painted white with a blue cap. The hydrants are stamped with the following letters: "1900, S.F., A.W.S."

Fire Alarm and Police Telephone Box

A historic fire alarm and police telephone box stands on the west side of the block where Fulton Street once intersected Van Ness Avenue within the NHL Boundary. The alarm is constructed of metal and consists of a round shaft and two metal boxes, one halfway up the shaft and one at the top of the shaft. The box midway up the shaft is stamped with the following letters: "DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRICITY, SAN FRANCISCO." The box at the top contains two compartments with two doors that face north and south. The door that faces north is stamped with the following letters: "POLICE TELEPHONE, DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRICITY." The door that faces south is stamped with the following letters: "FIRE ALARM, PULL HOOK DOWN ONCE." The fire alarm box is painted red, blue, and gold. A fire alarm box appears in this fire alarm box's location in a historic

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER**Page 17-4**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

photograph dating to 1936, however it was not the same alarm box. A fire alarm box is denoted in this location on the 1950 Sanborn map. It is unclear when the existing fire alarm box was moved from another location to its current location. San Francisco's fire alarm and police telegraph system was designed in 1863 and by 1864 the City had contracted with a Boston company that laid thirty-seven miles of wire and installed fire alarm boxes on sidewalks.³ The San Francisco Department of Electricity maintained control of the City's fire alarm system in 1900. By the turn of the century, San Francisco was outfitted with 303 fire boxes and 200 police call boxes.⁴

³ O'Brien, John Joseph. "Electric Circuits – The Guardians of Life and Property: A History and Discussion of the Fire Alarm System in San Francisco." *The Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco*. <http://www.sfmuseum.org/hist10/cfaspaper.html> (July 2006).

⁴ O'Brien, John Joseph.

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Existing Conditions Photographs

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Existing Conditions Photographs -- Blocks 1-5



Block 1: Market Street to Fell Street
Sidewalk view, west side of Van Ness Avenue, facing south.



Block 1: Market Street to Fell Street
Sidewalk view, east side of Van Ness Avenue, facing south.

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Existing Conditions Photographs -- Blocks 1-5



Block 2: Fell Street to Hayes Street
Sidewalk view, west side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.



Block 2: Fell Street to Hayes Street
Sidewalk view, east side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Existing Conditions Photographs -- Blocks 1-5



Block 3: Hayes Street to Grove Street
Sidewalk view, west side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.



Block 3: Hayes Street to Grove Street
Sidewalk view, east side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Existing Conditions Photographs -- Blocks 1-5



Block 4: Grove Street to McAllister Street
Sidewalk view, west side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.



Block 4: Grove Street to McAllister Street
Sidewalk view, east side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Existing Conditions Photographs -- Blocks 1-5



Block 5: McAllister Street to Golden Gate Street
Sidewalk view, west side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.



Block 5: McAllister Street to Golden Gate Street
Median view, middle of Van Ness Avenue, facing south.

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Existing Conditions Photographs -- Character-Defining Features



City Hall Landscape Planters, east side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.



City Hall Entrance Staircase, east side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER

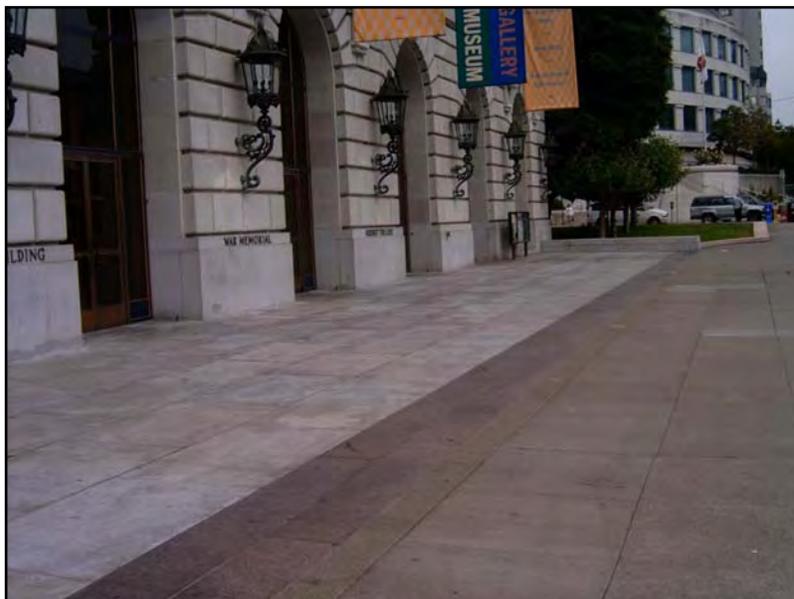
United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Existing Conditions Photographs -- Character-Defining Features



War Memorial Opera House Entrance Staircase, west side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.



War Memorial Veterans Building Entrance, west side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Existing Conditions Photographs -- Character-Defining Features



War Memorial Opera House Landscape Planters, west side of Van Ness Avenue, facing northwest.



War Memorial Veterans Building Landscape Planters, west side of Van Ness Avenue, facing northwest.

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Existing Conditions Photographs -- Character-Defining Features



War Memorial Complex Curb Cuts, west side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.



Streetlights and Fire Alarm and Police Telephone Box, west side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north.

SAN FRANCISCO CIVIC CENTER

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Existing Conditions Photographs -- Character-Defining Features



Fire Hydrants, east side of Van Ness Avenue, facing north-west.

**Attachment VIb.) National Register of Historic Places, San Francisco Civic Center
National Historic Landmark District, Nomination Form**

CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 1 of 2

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #4

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

P1. Other Identifier: 11-35 Van Ness Avenue (Masonic Temple)

***P3a. Description:**

11-35 Van Ness Avenue stands between Oak and Hickory Street in the southern portion of the Architectural APE. The building was completed in 1913 and designed by Bliss and Faville. Clad in granite, marble, and terra cotta, the building is rectangular in form and solid in its massing. With an Italian Gothic design interspersed with Romanesque arches and a prominent machicolated cornice, the building is a design amalgamation of various historic periods, a design intent that is a common feature of the Masonic Temple. The building is no longer houses the Masons, and much of the Masonic ornamentation was removed in an early 1980s rehabilitation. Additionally, the street level portions of the building have been altered by successive commercial insertions.

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***B10. Significance:**

The building owners applied for a federal tax credit when they remodeled the building for office use in the early 1980s; however, the application was denied because the project included the addition of another floor and did not meet Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Nevertheless, the State Historic Preservation Officer concluded that the building still retained enough integrity to convey its significance under Criterion C, as the work of master architects Bliss and Faville. The building does not appear to have direct associations with people who have made significant contributions to local, state, or national history (Criterion B). In rare instances, building themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies (Criterion D); however, this property is otherwise documented and does not appear to be a principal source of important information in this regard.

This building has been previously inventoried, evaluated and determined eligible for listing in the National Register; however, the evaluation forms are not on file at the Northwest Information Center, nor the Office of Historic Preservation. This update form was prepared to present the current information on the building as we continue to search for copies of the previous documentation. The building has also been recorded as part of various previous surveys, including a 1984 San Francisco Downtown Inventory undertaken by San Francisco Architectural Heritage and found to merit a level "A," the highest importance in their rating system. The building is also referenced in the City of San Francisco's Van Ness Avenue Area Plan as a significant building. It has been recorded as part of several downtown surveys, most recently on a Primary Record prepared by Anne Bloomfield in 1997. Currently, the building is a Category I (Significant) Building, part of San Francisco's local inventory of historic resources. The building was been field checked as part of the current project and its exterior does not changed since the previous recordation in 1997.

***B14. Evaluator:** Meta Bunse and Polly Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue, Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 2 of 2

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #4

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs:



Photograph 1. 11-35 Van Ness Avenue,
facing northwest at Van Ness Avenue and Market Street, 3/10/2009.

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 7

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #5

P1. Other Identifier: 30 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

***a. County:** San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

***b. USGS 7.5' Quad:** San Francisco North, Calif. **Date:** 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 30 Van Ness Avenue

City: San Francisco

Zip: 94102

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0835-004

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 30 Van Ness Avenue is a reinforced concrete five-story commercial building located on the northeast corner of Market Street and Van Ness Avenue. The building is polygonal in plan, with the southern elevation angled to follow the line of Market Street and a narrow chamfered elevation at the southwest corner. All elevations excepting the eastern are exposed, with the eastern directly abutting a neighboring building on Market Street. The three exposed elevations are clad in dark stone veneer panels on the first level, interspersed with retail entry insertions consisting of aluminum framing and glass (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP7 (3+ Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 30 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northeast from Market Street, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1908, with major addition and renovation in 1964 (San Francisco Building Permits)

***P7. Owner and Address:**
City and County of San Francisco
25 Van Ness Avenue, #40
San Francisco, CA 94102

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: White Garage

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: auto sales and servicing

B4. Present Use: office and retail

*B5. Architectural Style: corporate modern

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1908. In 1964 an additional three stories were added and the building was extensively altered in both the interior and exterior for office use. Alterations included metal panel sheathing, new panel window incisions, and new storefronts. Subsequent storefront alterations in 1973 and 1982 further altered the original construction (Source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: George Adrian Applegarth and Kenneth Macdonald, Jr. b. Builder: Unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

Although 30 Van Ness Avenue was previously documented in a 2006 reconnaissance level survey, the building was not evaluated for historical significance. After revisiting the building and conducting extensive historical research, this intensive survey and evaluation finds that 30 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000) (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



(This space reserved for official comments.)

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

Several aluminum-framed awnings project from the first level and large projecting letters are affixed to the building advertising each tenant. The upper four stories are sheathed in a metal-panel curtain wall, with regularly placed tinted glazed window insertions. The fenestration is regular, with a grid-like International Style aesthetic reflecting both horizontal and vertical massing. Vertically oriented stacks of three-light windows are separated by aluminum glazing bars spanning the full height of the building, contrasting with the largely horizontal orientation of the glass and metal curtain wall panels. The roof is flat, with no cornice. Some mechanical equipment projecting from the roof is visible from the ground. The building was built in 1908 as an automotive garage and was radically altered in the mid-twentieth century by the addition of several stories, the application of the curtain wall, and a reconfiguration of virtually all fenestration.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Although the building was designed by prominent San Francisco architect George Adrian Applegarth and was one of the earliest and entrants to San Francisco's Auto Row, massive mid-twentieth century vertical additions and substantial alterations have undercut any potential significance under the NRHP and CRHR criteria.

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

Constructed in 1908, 30 Van Ness Avenue was one of the earliest major automobile related facilities built along Van Ness Avenue. Following the dislocation of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Van Ness Avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed commercial avenue that was increasingly dominated by automobile sales, manufacturing, and repair. With the space afforded by the devastation of the disaster, the nascent auto industry and its array of support sectors found an ideal home along Van Ness Avenue. Close to the urban core, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west's largest Auto Rows. Initially appearing in the vicinity of Market Street, scores of auto related businesses steadily traveled north, flanking the broad avenue from Market to the San Francisco Bay.

The building was commissioned by The White Company and designed by architects George Adrian Applegarth and Kenneth Macdonald, Jr. Period photographs and building plans demonstrate that the building was originally two stories and built of reinforced concrete. With a stripped-down Neoclassical aesthetic reflective of both the architects' Beaux-Arts inclinations and the functional mandate of the fledgling automobile industry, the building was a prominent gateway fixture that bound the emerging automobile industry of Van Ness Avenue to the established commercial hegemony of Market Street. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps from 1913 indicate that the Market Street side featured a central automobile showroom, with smaller partitioned areas housing a wide array of services located along the remainder of the building. Including a tin shop, fabric printing area, motorcycle repair facility, painting area, and wallpapering alcove, the strikingly diverse program of the building indicates the substantial challenge of accounting for form and function for the relatively untested automobile market. Combining salesroom grandeur with the more prosaic requirements of mechanical repair and development, the building was highly integrated; a basic pattern that would continue to remain a vital design feature in development along Auto Row.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

At the time of the showroom's construction, The White Company produced the White Steamer at its main manufacturing plant in Cleveland, Ohio. This steam driven car proved widely popular in California and the media frequently covered new makes and models of the car at the White Sales Rooms in San Francisco and Los Angeles. In the ten years of assembly, the car's engine advanced from twenty to thirty to forty horsepower. Ventures from San Francisco to Los Angeles, climbs in Tahoe, and a local race, the Nineteenth Avenue Hill Climb, routinely demonstrated the prowess of the White Steamer.¹

The popularity of the White Steamer, and other steam driven cars such as the Stanley Steamer and the Doble Detroit, faded with the ascendancy of electric and gasoline driven autos and the transformational assembly line tactics perfected by Henry Ford in the early 1910s. Although the White Company remained in operation, they shifted their emphasis from steam to gasoline and from automobiles to their more durable counterparts, trucks. Into the 1920s the company advertised their Van Ness showroom, boasting that, "every good truck does the work of eight horses;" however, building permits suggest that by 1923 the White Company had vacated their showroom at 30 Van Ness Avenue."²

Throughout the 1920s to the mid-1960s, the building was occupied by an array of tenants, with the majority unrelated to the auto industry. In 1923 the original storefront was reconfigured to accommodate new commercial usage, the first in a series of major alterations culminating in the 1964 addition of three stories and an International Style glass curtain wall overseen by civil engineer August E. Waegemann. After the White Company vacated the building, it was never again devoted to a singular purpose, but instead housed diverse businesses with distinct programmatic needs and high turnover. A sampling of the tenants include Devonshire Hills, an ice cream parlor and gift shop in the 1920s; the Speedometer Service Company in the 1930s; the United States Air Force in the 1950s; and a Gene Comptons Cafeteria in the 1960s. Throughout this period of tenant turnover, the ground floor was generally devoted to commercial retail while the second story was filled with office functions. Beginning in the 1950s, major interior alterations and partition work served to modernize the building for continued office use, however by 1964 the owners, the Herbst Brothers, opted to add a three-story vertical addition to the building and install a glass and metal curtain wall to impart a more modern aesthetic. Portions of the original building were demolished and what remained was entirely sheathed in the new exterior. Subsequently, 1980s storefront alterations have even further eroded the integrity of the building.

Evaluation

As a prominent showroom of one of the earliest of the major competitors in the early auto industry, 30 Van Ness Avenue has a direct association with the foundational development of San Francisco's Auto Row, and by extension the modern American car industry. Furthermore, the building's architectural form originally represented an experimental architectural expression arising from the modern mandate of a nascent auto industry and the Beaux-Arts Classicism of the time. These associations, however, under NRHP Criterion A and Criterion C and CRHR Criterion 1 and 3, have been entirely undermined by massive mid-century additions and alterations to the building. 30 Van Ness Avenue does not convey its potential significance under either criterion. Because the fenestration, massing, and function of the building have so widely departed from its original form, the building cannot convey its relationship to the broad themes of development of both the auto industry as a whole and Van Ness' Auto Row (Criterion A or 1).

¹ "Official Figures Show Big Increase in Number of Automobiles," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 18, 1912.

² "White Truck Exhibit," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 9, 1911.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Similarly, because the massing, fenestration, and architectural treatment of the building as designed by George Adrian Applegarth and Kenneth Macdonald, Jr. has been entirely dismantled, 30 Van Ness Avenue does not convey significance related to distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. Further, the building cannot be viewed as an important representation of either's work, as it bears no visible trace of the original form (Criterion C or 3).

The building does not meet the criteria for listing in the NRHP or CRHR under Criteria B or D (2 or 4). The building is not associated with any significant individual. As one of many showrooms for the White Company, the building related to the general theme of auto development rather than any specific individual (Criterion B or 2). While in rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, this type of commercial property is otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criterion D or 4). Both as an early twentieth century reinforced concrete classically oriented construction and a mid-century modern curtain wall rehabilitation, the building fails to meet this criterion.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 30 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing southeast, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 30 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing southwest, 3/8/09

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 4: 30 Van Ness storefront detail, camera facing northeast, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
NRHP Status Code _____

Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

Page 1 of 1 *Resource name(s) or number (assigned by recorder) 30 Van Ness Ave.

P1. Other Identifier: _____

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted *a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956 (rev. 1973)

*c. Address: 30 Van Ness Ave. City: San Francisco Zip: 94102

d. UTM: Zone: 10 mE/ _____ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: Assessor's Parcel Number (Map, Block, Lot): 0835-004

*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries.)

30 Van Ness Avenue is located on an irregularly-shaped lot on the northeast corner of Van Ness Avenue and Market Street. Built ca. 1960, 30 Van Ness Avenue is a five-story commercial building with a reinforced concrete frame and flat roof redesigned in the International style. The building has an irregularly shaped plan and is clad in granite veneer at the first story and a metal panel system on the upper stories. The primary elevation is oriented south towards Market Street and is ten bays wide. The first story has multiple commercial entrances fitted with modern metal and glass doors and modern metal and glass fixed windows. The upper stories have fixed, glass panel windows inset into the metal sheathing system. The main entrance to the upper story commercial spaces is centered on the Van Ness Avenue (east) elevation. The building appears to be in good condition.

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (list attributes and codes) HP7: 3+ story commercial building

*P4. Resources Present: Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other

P5a. Photo



P5b. Photo: (view and date)
View from south
8/11/2006

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources: Historic
1908; rev. ca. 1960
SF Assessor, Sanborn maps/
visual assessment

*P7. Owner and Address:
City & County Of S F
% Director Of Property
25 Van Ness Av #400
San Francisco, CA

*P8. Recorded by:
Page & Turnbull, Inc.
724 Pine Street
San Francisco, CA 94108

*P9. Date Recorded:
8/11/2006

*P10. Survey Type:
Reconnaissance

*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none") None

*Attachments: None Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record
 Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record
 Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (list)

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 3S

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 13

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #6

P1. Other Identifier: 799 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. **USGS 7.5' Quad:** San Francisco North, Calif. **Date:** 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 799 Van Ness Avenue

City: San Francisco

Zip: 94102

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0743-001

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 799 Van Ness Avenue is a reinforced concrete, two-story commercial building located on the southwest corner of Van Ness and Eddy Street. Located on a gentle grade, the building has a basement which projects above the ground level as the hill slopes to the south. Constructed in 1917 for use as an automobile painting and repair room and enlarged in 1926, the building reflects a simple Neoclassical style elegantly translated to the utilitarian requirements of housing auto maintenance and sales (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6 (1-3 story commercial building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 799 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northwest, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1916, with 1925 addition (San Francisco Department of Buildings)

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Tanaka Family
Iwamura Audrey
28 Addison Street
San Francisco, CA 94131-2621

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: various

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: auto painting, servicing, and sales B4. Present Use: vacant

*B5. Architectural Style: Commercial Neoclassical

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The first story of the building was constructed in 1916. In 1925, the second story was added. In 1943, the entrances were widened, a mezzanine floor was added, and several internal partition were erected to convert the building from a garage to an auto sales room.

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Willis Polk Company b. Builder: Barrett & Hilp

*B10. Significance: Theme: Architectural development of Auto Row Area: San Francisco
Period of Significance: 1925 Property Type: Commercial Applicable Criteria: A (1) and C (3)

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

799 Van Ness Avenue was previously documented in a 1984 San Francisco Downtown Inventory undertaken by San Francisco Architectural Heritage and found to merit a level "B" (major importance) in their rating system. The building is also referenced in the City of San Francisco's Van Ness Avenue Area Plan as a significant building. According to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: "City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources," neither of these ratings qualify as an adopted local register for the purposes of CEQA, and both require further consultation and review which is provided herein (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

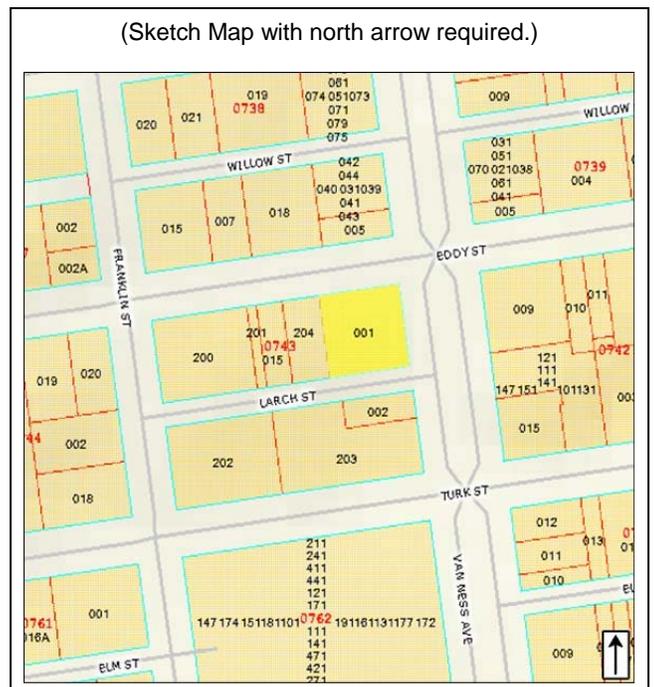
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*; San Francisco History Center; Online Archive of California; Clarke, *Trust and Power* (2007); McShane, *Down the Asphalt Path* (1994); Rae, *The American Automobile* (1965); Ling *America and the Automobile* (1990); *American Architect*; *Architect and Engineer*.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The building is rectangular in plan, with chamfered elevation at the northeast and southeast corners (photographs 1 and 2). The southeast corner frames a garage bay filled by two hinged metal doors at the street level and the northeast corner frames the customer entryway. The massing of the building is very regular, with seven identical bays on the primary elevation fronting Van Ness Avenue, a single bay on the chamfered southeast corner, and eight of the same bays on both the northern and southern elevation. The western elevation directly abuts the neighboring building on Eddy Street. Two levels of large, steel-frame casement windows dominate each exposed bay, with an additional level of windows continuing to the above-ground portions of the basement. The second-story windows are in a five-by-five fixed configuration, with a small operable sash in the upper portion of the window. The first-story windows alternate between a five-by-six fixed configuration and a fifteen-over-one fixed configuration, with the same small operable window. One first-story bay on the northern elevation fronting Eddy Street has a sliding aluminum frame glass insertion. The basement level is of the same basic configuration as the upper-stories, with increasingly large steel-frame casement windows reflecting the slope of the hill.

On the first and second levels, each window bay is separated by a pair of simple pilasters with a flared horizontally banded capital and base. The basement level bays are separated by vertically stacked scored concrete. A simple horizontally banded stringcourse separates the three levels and a paneled parapet rises above the second story.

The primary customer entryway is located at the northeast corner of the building, and reflects an understated Neoclassical treatment indicative of the entry's elevated status in the hierarchical order of the building (photograph 3). Accessed by a semi-circular concrete stair, the recessed entry consists of tall steel double doors flanked by a simple banded architrave and crowned by a pediment and a two-by-five window. The doors each have five small fixed window panels. Two pilasters similar to those separating the window bays flank the doorway.

In addition to the garage bay at the southeastern corner of the building, two additional garage bays appear on the northern Eddy Street elevation. The garage doors are modern corrugated metal rolling with single personnel door insertions. While the placement of the door openings of some kind is most likely part of the original configuration of the building, the doors themselves are replacements to the original and have resulted in widening of the openings and partial removal of pilasters (photograph 4).

Currently vacant, the building retains a very high degree of physical integrity, with the sole alteration being the single aluminum frame insertion and new garage doors.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 799 Van Ness Avenue appears eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and local designation under Criterion A (Criterion 1) for its local significance in the physical and social development of San Francisco's Auto Row and under Criterion C (Criterion 3), as a locally significant architectural representative of urban automobile related development. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has also been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and appears to be a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Historic Context

Originally constructed as a one-story garage in 1916, 799 Van Ness Avenue reflects the meteoric rise of San Francisco's Auto Row in the early years of the twentieth century. The building was one of many automobile related facilities built in San Francisco between 1908 and the late 1930s, as rampant market growth in the automobile industry produced a strikingly dense and diverse urban building stock that centered upon Van Ness Avenue. This commercial development required an array of buildings, from grand showrooms to humble garages, however the hierarchical diversity was bound by a singular association with the promotion of the automobile. Accommodating the particular marketing and social mandates of the fledgling industry, the buildings of Auto Row reflected the work of an eclectic array of both prominent and obscure architects, some steeped in the Beaux-Arts Classicism of the nineteenth century and some at the vanguard of twentieth century industrial design. The buildings of the Row cogently expressed the constantly evolving aesthetic and social role of the automobile in America, with 799 Van Ness Avenue as an intriguing exemplar. Unlike the high-profile showrooms along the avenue, such as the Don Lee Building or the Paige Auto Building, the architectural grandeur of 799 Van Ness Avenue belied the relatively prosaic function of the establishment. As a common garage and auto painting facility, the building's elevated architectural treatment was an emphatic affirmation of both the preeminence of the automobile in early twentieth century America and the critical role of advanced architectural expression in the early development of America's automobile industry.

The opportunity for the intensive development of Van Ness Avenue as an Auto Row largely arose from the destruction of the 1906 earthquake and fire. Following the disaster, the avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed and rapidly developing commercial corridor. Although much of the southern reaches of the avenue lay in ruins following the four day inferno, in comparison to the ravaged Market Street corridor Van Ness emerged relatively intact. Much of the western side of the avenue and the upper portion of the thoroughfare near present-day Fort Mason and the Aquatic Park remained untouched by the fire, as the road's wide expanse had served as one of the city's primary fire breaks. In the months following the earthquake, the area was the center of a speculative boom, as businesses sought temporary quarters within easy reach of downtown and commercial interests sought profits from a frenzy of leasing activity.¹

Between 1906 and 1909, a large number of residents and business decamped for the undamaged stretches of Van Ness Avenue. Along with Fillmore Street to the west, Van Ness became San Francisco's premier commercial and economic hub, supplanting the devastated areas of downtown. Only weeks after the earthquake, the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted that Van Ness was, "now a livelier avenue than ever before in its history," and extolled the rapid construction of numerous temporary buildings and requisition of damaged mansions for commerce. Even at this early date, a slew of the city's preeminent commercial establishments were opening doors on Van Ness, including the famed Emporium department store, as well as City of Paris, and the White House.² Rather than erecting new quarters, many of the stores occupied abandoned mansions, with the City of Paris filling the Hobart Mansion, a commodious Queen Anne located on the prominent corner of Van Ness and Washington Street.

¹ "Speculation Stops in Buying Real Property," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 27, 1909.

² "Retailers Leasing on Van Ness Avenue," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 6, 1906.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

Despite the widespread rapidity of redevelopment, the emergence of Van Ness Avenue as a central economic and social hub was short-lived. Much of the commercial development along the avenue was considered a temporary expedient, and as conditions in the traditional business and retail core of the city improved, many businesses flooded back to newly constructed or repaired quarters.³ The illustrious City of Paris, with its silk finery and French wines, departed from the Hobart mansion in 1909, returning to its repaired Union Square Beaux Arts building. The local press commented on the exodus, noting that “although for a time it was believed the retail district would remain permanently in the Western Addition,” the force of the “Downtown Movement” proved too great.⁴ In several short years, therefore, the identity of Van Ness Avenue was dramatically uprooted again, leaving the broad avenue in flux. “What Van Ness may become in the future can probably not be imagined,” wrote the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1909, echoing a widespread sentiment, “it has been deserted by retail trade and will not regain any of it in the near future.”⁵

Despite this dour prognosis, while the avenue was being abandoned by traditional residential and commercial interests, it increasingly came to be defined by a burgeoning sector in both the economy and psyche of America: the automobile. The nascent auto industry and its array of support sectors including sales, repair, and parts manufacturing found an ideal home in the space afforded by the vacating retail sector along Van Ness. Close to the urban core and flanking the city’s broadest avenue, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west’s largest and most diverse Auto Rows. The industry first appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but scores of auto related businesses traveled steadily north, flanking the broad Van Ness Avenue from Market to the San Francisco Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops.

Emerging as a captivating modern marvel in the close of the nineteenth century, the automobile quickly became a potent symbol of the democratizing capability of industrial development in the twentieth century. In its earliest years, auto excursions were the domain of only the most privileged; monarchs in Europe or American leaders such as Theodore Roosevelt, but by the second decade of the twentieth century, cotton farmers in the San Joaquin Valley were driving the machines across their fields. In 1900, the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted with pride that there were, “fully fifty of the machines in and about the city,” and just eleven years later, the city was awash in automobiles, with an official count conducted along Van Ness Avenue documenting the passage of nearly 2500 cars over the course of only several hours.⁶ The rampant growth in automobile use in San Francisco mirrored trends across the country. Although only one percent of the population owned a car in 1910, by 1930 the number had grown to a full sixty percent, with cities like San Francisco acting as critical sales outlets for trade in the west. Along with New York, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles, San Francisco proved one of the most prominent distribution centers for the growing auto industry.⁷

With California leading the country in automobile sales and ownership throughout the 1910s and 1920s, the state proved a ready market for the increasingly standardized and reliable automobiles shipped largely from the middle-western industrial belt. The exponentially growing consumer market was accompanied by an equally explosive rise in the number of automobile manufacturing, sales, and service operations.

³ “Expansion of Retail Business an Example of City’s Enterprise,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 17, 1909.

⁴ “Expansion of Retail Business an Example of City’s Enterprise,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 17, 1909.

⁵ “The Future of Van Ness Avenue,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 30, 1909.

⁶ “Outlook for the Autos,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 7, 1900.

⁷ Sally H. Clarke. *Trust and Power: Consumers, the Modern Corporation, and the Making of the United States Automobile Market* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

A list compiled by the American Automobile Association in the late 1920s estimated that from 1900 onward more than 3000 makes of cars and trucks were produced by upward of 1500 identifiable companies. By the close of World War I many had shuttered, and by the 1930s most were gone, pushed out of a maturing industry increasingly defined by consolidation and mass production.⁸ As an early Auto Row, Van Ness Avenue housed hundreds of these firms throughout the 1910s and 1920s, with Hudsons and Hupmobiles, Cole Aeros and Cadillacs filling glassy showrooms. As a burgeoning sales corridor, the avenue became a nexus between the productive capacities of the automotive industry and the American consumer. In many senses, the showrooms were a face for the increasingly powerful auto industry, and the array of buildings erected represented an evolving conception of the automobile's central role in the city, state, and nation.⁹

This evolution was remarkably rapid. Although Auto Row developed in the wake of the 1906 upheaval, the city's first automobile club had already moved to Van Ness Avenue and Golden Gate Avenue in 1900, converting the city's oldest library, the Mercantile Library, into an auto showroom. The press noted that the "ancient and modern tomes and the bookworms will make way for the new fangled vehicle as meekly as the horses are expected to disappear from the stables."¹⁰ This forecast proved prescient, and within several years Van Ness was home to a remarkably diversified array of auto salesrooms, repair shops, and assembly rooms. Initially, many of the shops and display rooms were housed in small wood frame buildings, however as the clout of the industry grew, and the importance of branding escalated in a competitive market, larger auto palaces quickly sprung up along the avenue.

Throughout the 1910s, 1920s, and to a lesser degree the 1930s, large corner lots along the avenue were developed as automobile showrooms and smaller frontages in between were filled with modest repair shops and used car sales facilities. Undeveloped lots doubled as open air car lots, with bright banners and signs. At the eastern corner of Van Ness and Market Street, the White Garage boasted an auto show room, supplied auto and motorcycle parts, and offered repairs. The intersection of Van Ness Avenue and O'Farrell was an anchor for the district, with the Weeks and Day designed Don Lee Building on the northeast corner; the Earl C. Anthony Packard Showroom, designed by Bernard Maybeck in 1926, on the northwest corner; and a 1937 Art Moderne Chevrolet showroom designed by John E. Dinwiddie filling the southwest corner. At the southwest corner of Sacramento Street and Van Ness, the Paige Motor Car Company housed Max Arnold's "high grade automobiles," with the building doubling in size to accommodate increased business in 1924. Numerous other auto shops lined the street, specializing in everything from upholstery to wood working for the ornate fleet of new autos flooding the growing California market. As the wares within the showrooms evolved, so too did the architectural styling of their surrounds and the Van Ness corridor became defined by the breakneck commercial developments of the industry. The three decades were characterized by remarkably different architectural forms, from simple brick garages to classical pilasters and sweeping Art Moderne curves. Beginning in the 1920s, bright neon signs filled the streetscape, with rooftop billboards and bright signs framing the buildings.

⁸ John B. Rae, *The American Automobile* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965) 18.

⁹ Peter J. Ling, *America and the Automobile: Technology, Reform, and Social Change*. (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990) 13, 96-97.

¹⁰ "To Shelter Automobiles," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 31, 1900.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

With the mass market for cars only newly established and shrouded in a still-vibrant modern allure, this industry radiated an aura of excitement and grandeur that has largely faded today. In the 1920s, celebrations such as “Open Roads Week,” drew thousands to Van Ness Avenue, drawn by festivities marking “the call of the open road.” The Nash dealer filled his showroom at Van Ness Avenue and California Street with hundreds of pine and redwood trees brought from Mendocino County, transforming it into a rustic campsite with trails and tents. At the Willys Overland Pacific Company, a miner cooking flapjacks over a fire “lent a touch of reality,” to the auto affair.¹¹ This breed of theatrical showmanship reflected the immense cultural importance that the automobile had attained in only two decades. Far more than a simple mode of transport, the car had come to represent a host of modern aspirations and cultural desires. This “epitome of possessions,” had a profound impact upon development both in the Bay area and the state and country as a whole.¹² As the “open roads” celebrated by the early industry ceded to dense networks of automotive-based settlement, the auto became central in conceptions of twentieth century life. Throughout this transition, the buildings on Van Ness Avenue became a veritable stage-set for the advancement of the automobile.

Within this larger context, 799 Van Ness Avenue played an important representative role. Prior to the 1906 earthquake, the prominent lot was occupied by a large residence owned by the politically prominent William T. Wallace.¹³ The grand French Second Empire building filled much of the lot, and reflected the illustrious residential nature of the avenue. Before his death in 1909, Wallace served as both Chief Justice on the Supreme Court of California (1872-1879) and California’s Attorney General (1856-1858). Upon his death, the property remained in the hands of the Wallace Estate Company, which held a number of valuable properties around San Francisco. Although it is not clear whether or not the Wallace residence survived the 1906 earthquake and fire intact, Van Ness Avenue was the fire line in the vicinity of Eddy Street, and by 1913 the building was gone with scattered small commercial buildings remaining.¹⁴

In November of 1916, the Wallace Estate Company announced their intention of erecting a speculative two-story automobile building at the Van Ness Avenue site. As conceived, the building was to be two stories, and of reinforced concrete with a pressed brick exterior. Designed for garage purposes, with an auto livery on the first level and office and supply stores on the second, the relatively mundane function of the building did not preclude the selection of one of San Francisco’s preeminent architects, Willis Polk. Polk was one of San Francisco’s most influential architects in the years following the 1906 disaster, and he had a profound impact upon the architectural expression of the city, initially with his work under D.H. Burnham and subsequently as principal of Willis Polk and Company. The design of the Wallace Estate Company garage followed closely on the triumph of his role as supervising architect for the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, a veritable showcase for refined, yet fanciful, classical design.¹⁵ Viewed within the lens of this architectural language, the spartan classical ornamentation and clean aesthetic of the garage is striking in its architectural pretension. More a temple than a garage, the building was a monument to both Polk’s considerable talent and the growing importance of auto related architecture.¹⁶

¹¹ “Open Road Week Draws Crowd To Row,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 26, 1921.

¹² Henri Lefebvre introduced the conception of the “epitome of possessions,” in his seminal work *Everyday Life in the Modern World*. The conception is also referenced in: Clay McShane, *Down The Asphalt Path: The Automobile and the American City*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994) 126-148.

¹³ “Automobile Building For Wallace Estate,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 4, 1916.

¹⁴ “Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of San Francisco, California, 1913,” (New York: Sanborn Ferris Fire Map Company), Volume 3.

¹⁵ “Passing of Willis Polk, Architect and Master Builder,” *The Architect and Engineer*, Volume 78, Number 3, September 1924, 108-109.

¹⁶ “Building for the American Auto Painting Company,” *The Architect and Engineer*, Volume 50, Number 1, October 1917, 28, accessed online at <http://books.google.com>, April 25, 2009.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

It remains unclear why only a single level of the two story building was erected in 1916. The portion that was completed, however, was immediately occupied by the American Auto Painting Company. By 1923, a portion of the building was also filled by the PJ Kelly Garage. The second story was not added to the building until 1926. Although Willis Polk had passed away in 1924, the Willis Polk Company completed the 1926 commission, which consisted of the addition of an identical second level with large industrial windows and skylights. Advertising photographs from 1917 indicate that the 1916 construction provided the aesthetic and functional model, with the second story a basic duplicate.¹⁷

At the time of the 1926 addition, the building remained in use as an auto painting facility, however by the 1930s BH Rogers Company moved into the space and operated it as an auto sales room. Throughout the remainder of the twentieth century, the building remained in use by auto interests. Building permits indicate that the building was occupied by an array of prominent concerns along the row, including Gilmore Motor Cars, Pacific Motor Sales, Ellis Brooks, and Kasumi Inc. Honda. In use alternately for sales, storage, and repair, the general program of the building, with prominent industrial windows and an open floor plan, allowed for remarkable longevity as an urban auto related resource.

Evaluation

Within the historic context of the early physical and social development of San Francisco's Auto Row, 799 Van Ness Avenue is a significant representative of the important cultural impact that the development of the auto industry had on San Francisco and appears eligible for listing under Criteria A and 1. Erected in the 1910s and expanded in the 1920s; the building was one of the most prominent of the early Auto Row, and expressed the increasing economic importance of the industry for the city as well as the increasingly vaunted social status of the automobile. Filling a prime lot once occupied by some of the most illustrious denizens of San Francisco, the development indicated the rapid transition of Van Ness Avenue into a major Auto Row. This transition was part of a larger national movement, as the automobile gained in popularity across the country and profoundly altered the state of modern American life.

While the status of the initial auto related tenants of 799 Van Ness Avenue paled in comparison to the prominence of other franchises developing along Van Ness Avenue, the seemingly mundane operations of the Wallace Estate Company garage are in large part indicative of the building's overall significance. In contrast to franchise showrooms, service facilities such as 799 Van Ness Avenue generally filled lesser structures, most of which were nothing more than single story garages on narrow lots. This hierarchical treatment reflected the basic marketing precepts of the automobile industry. As the central point of contact between the customer and the manufacturer, purpose-built auto showrooms had a mandate for style. In many senses, showrooms had to both functionally accommodate and, equally importantly, sell the car. Architectural publications in the 1910s and 1920s routinely expressed this multi-faceted importance of the showroom, citing the need for a balance between modern functionality and architectural cohesiveness. A 1918 article in *The American Architect* encapsulates both the insecurities and opportunities inherent in showroom design, stating that "the design of small automobile sales buildings [was] a matter of increasing importance requiring special features."¹⁸ This critical attention resulted in a host of architectural expressions, from Beaux Arts classicism to exotic Orientalism, and, later, exuberant Moderne curves. Almost always, however, this often elaborate architectural treatment, was relegated to showrooms associated with the all-important point of sale.

¹⁷ "Building for the American Auto Painting Company," *The Architect and Engineer*.

¹⁸ "An Automobile Sales Building," *The American Architect*, Volume CXIV, Number 2228, September 4, 1918, (301-302).

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

Thus, the architectural expression of 799 Van Ness Avenue was a significant stylistic anomaly. Occupying a prime lot at the valuable southern edge of Auto Row, designed by one of the city's preeminent architectural figures, and representative of the avenue's most elegant auto related design, the building was, and is, a highly significant architectural design. As such, it appears to be eligible for listing on the NRHP and CRHR under Criteria C and 3. Built in 1916, before virtually all of the major showrooms of the Row, the architectural treatment of the building rivaled and even surpassed that lent to even the most prominent of the later showrooms of the period. Compared with those buildings most associated with Auto Row, such as the 1920s Paige Motor Company Building and the Earl C. Anthony Packard showroom, the 1916 garage proves both functionally and aesthetically comparable. The building melded a sophisticated Neoclassical design with pragmatic industrial requirements, with neither element compromised. The reinforced concrete frame was subsumed by the cascading industrial windows, in many senses a modest precursor for the architectural milestone of Polk's later Hallidie Building. This orderly and generous arrangement of industrial windows, flanking all exposed elevations, lent adequate light for operation and served as a monumental span along the avenue. The chamfered edges of the building broke the building's blocky mass, while providing coherent access for both customer and automobile. With broad open floors characterizing both the 1916 and 1925 construction, the program of the building was simple and straightforward, accommodating auto functions spanning from the 1910s to the 1990s. While the design of the building did not "pretend" to be anything but a garage, it celebrated, and even elevated, the very nature of a garage. Rather than a temple to auto sales, 799 Van Ness Avenue stands as a temple to the automobile itself.

The attention lent by both the Wallace Company in the commissioning of the building and Polk in his deft architectural expression provides insight into the importance of the built form in the early history of the auto sales and service industry. While more scholarly attention has been lent to the architectural importance of automobile manufacturing facilities, such as those of preeminent designer Albert Kahn in his development of Henry Ford's ground breaking plants in Michigan, the seemingly secondary regional sales and service buildings are also of vital importance. It was this within this tier of construction that much of the public face of the industry was cultivated, and it was within this farflung network that there was the most potential for regional expression. Across America, architects like Willis Polk adapted established architectural forms to regional and functional mandates, fundamentally altering both the built fabric of the city, and the context of modern architecture. Although the regional sales and repair buildings lacked much of the monumentality associated with high-style architecture, the buildings were an opportunity for new forms of expression. This opportunity was not lost on Willis Polk who, as an influential architect, stressed the importance of "everyday" buildings. Writing of Polk, architectural critic C. Matlock Price stated, "it has come to be recognized that "architecture may find expression in every form of building," and that the, "art of building beautifully should not be confined to public or monumental buildings," but instead incorporated in "office buildings, shops, and lofts."¹⁹ As an example of such everyday "architecture," the Wallace Estate Garage is a critical expression of Polk's mastery and conviction. The building melded well-wrought traditional architectural trappings with industrial requirements inherent in the auto industry, and remains an important building type that merits further study and recognition.

799 Van Ness Avenue stands as an exemplar of the auto building type. The building retains marked integrity, with few physical alterations. The building expresses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and stands largely as it did upon its completion. Unlike the vast majority of buildings along Auto Row, the building has had no major storefront alterations or rehabilitation. This integrity is critical, in that the storefront was perhaps the most vital and recognizable facet of Auto Row design. As a portal to the wares within, the storefronts of Auto Row were of the utmost importance to both marketer and consumer.

¹⁹ "Ideals In Every-day Architecture," *The Architect and Engineer*, Volume 50, Number 1, October 1917, 53-54.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 10 of 13

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #6

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

While this evaluation recognizes the significance of 799 Van Ness Avenue under Criterion A (1) and Criterion C (3), the building does not meet the other criteria for listing. It is not directly associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criterion B or 2) and the physical aspects of the property are not likely to be a principal source of information important for historical understanding (Criterion D or 4).

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 799 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing southwest, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 799 Van Ness Avenue, doorway detail, camera facing southwest, 3/8/09

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 4: 799 Van Ness Avenue, secondary garage entry, camera facing south, 3/8/09

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)

28

THE ARCHITECT AND ENGINEER



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Photograph 5: 1917 advertisement for 799 Van Ness Avenue, Volume 50, Number 1, October 1917, p. 28

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6L

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 6

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #7

P1. Other Identifier: 800 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

***a. County:** San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

***b. USGS 7.5' Quad:** San Francisco North, Calif. **Date:** 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 800 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0739-005

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 800 Van Ness Avenue is a two-story brick building located on the northeast corner of Van Ness Avenue and Eddy Street. Constructed in 1920 as an auto sales and repair building, the building is rectangular in plan, with a single bay fronting Van Ness Avenue and five bays on the Eddy Street elevation. The street level of the Van Ness Avenue bay is dominated by modern storefront insertions. The insertions consist of a modern brick clad entryway with two glass and aluminum framed doors, flanked by two aluminum-frame single-pane display windows (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6 (1-3 Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 800 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northeast, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1920, San Francisco Department of Buildings and Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
VNRE Properties
790 Eddy Street
San Francisco, CA 94109-7806

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: Mark Motor Company Showroom

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: auto sales and servicing

B4. Present Use: restaurant / office

*B5. Architectural Style: commercial with minimal classical ornamentation

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1920. In 1935 the building was altered in both the interior and exterior for restaurant use. Alterations included a new storefront surrounded by a stucco entryway. Subsequent storefront alterations in 1944, 1969, 1986, 1987 further altered the original construction, partitioning the interior and reconfiguring the exterior at the street level (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: William L. Schmolle b. Builder: Unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

800 Van Ness Avenue was previously documented in a 1984 San Francisco Downtown Inventory undertaken by San Francisco Architectural Heritage and found to merit a level "C" (contextual importance) in their rating system. The building is also referenced in the City of San Francisco's Van Ness Avenue Area Plan as a contributory building. According to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: "City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources," neither of these ratings qualify as an adopted local register for the purposes of CEQA, and both require further consultation and review which is provided herein (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

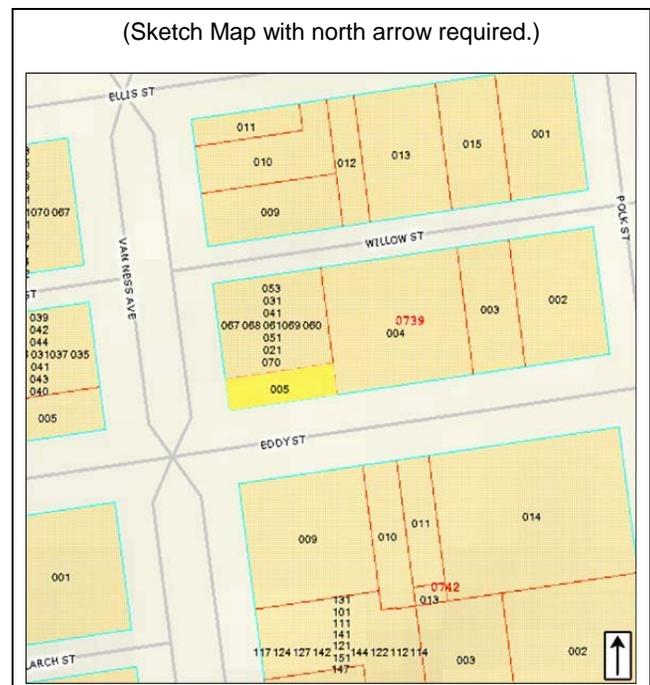
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco: *San Francisco Chronicle*; San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

Original twenty-four light steel frame casement windows appear above the modern aluminum-frame windows. A simple paneled stringcourse separates the first story from the second, and the second story is composed of three tripartite window insertions, each consisting of two steel-frame fixed windows crowned by a sixteen-light hinged transom. The Eddy Street elevation largely replicates the Van Ness elevation, with modern storefront insertions on the first level and original material on the second level. The modern insertions consist of affixed plastic signage, boxed-awning storefronts, and an aluminum-frame glass door entry that is most likely infill for the original garage door entry. The original portions of the window configuration on the first and second level matches that of the Van Ness elevation, although the casement windows have several fewer panes. A simple cornice bands the building, with a low flat parapet above. The cornice features simple dentils. A steel fire escape is mounted on the Eddy Street elevation. Although the first level has been substantially altered to accommodate modern retail insertions, much of it is removable and the building retains a substantial degree of physical integrity. The most significant alteration is the infill of all garage door openings on the building, as well as the alteration of all storefront insertions and wall surfaces at the ground floor.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 800 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

Additionally, the building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and does not appear to be a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

Constructed in 1920, 800 Van Ness Avenue was one of many automobile related facilities constructed along Van Ness Avenue in the early years of the twentieth century. Following the destruction of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Van Ness Avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed commercial corridor that was increasingly dominated by automobile sales, manufacturing, and repair. The nascent auto industry and its array of support sectors found an ideal home in the space afforded by the devastation of the disaster. Close to the urban core, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west's largest Auto Rows. Initially appearing in the vicinity of Market Street, scores of auto related businesses steadily traveled north, flanking the broad Van Ness Avenue from Market and stretching nearly to the Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops.

Commissioned by the Mark Motor Company, 800 Van Ness Avenue was designed by architect William L. Schmolle, an English born architect who began practice in San Francisco in the early 1900s after practicing briefly in Buffalo, New York. With an understated Neoclassical aesthetic that conformed to the prevailing commercial style of the time and accommodated the functional mandate of the automobile business, the building was a well-received, yet relatively standard, contributor to San Francisco's established auto row. Its design was highly integrated, with a lofty salesroom and secondary spaces for the more prosaic requirements of mechanical repair. This basic pattern was a

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

common expression in auto buildings of the period, and would remain a vital design feature in development along Auto Row.

At the time of the showroom's construction, the Mark Motor Company distributed Elgin automobiles, developed in the Midwest and popular in the late 1910s and early 1920s. By 1921, they also distributed Dupont autos, an early luxury auto developed in Delaware, Maryland in very limited numbers by E. Paul du Pont. Mark Motor Company was situated throughout the west, with dealers and repair facilities located in Idaho, Oregon, California, Washington, and Nevada.¹ As the staggering institutional diversity of the early auto industry ceded to consolidation arising from the transformational assembly line tactics perfected by the largest companies, specialized brands such as the Elgin and Dupont autos lost market share, and by the Depression both companies had dissolved. Period photographs indicate that by 1930, the building was occupied by the Pioneer Motor Bearing Company and a used car dealership.²

Throughout the 1930s, the building remained in some form of auto use, with J.B. McDonald Used Cars occupying the Van Ness frontage and a restaurant and tavern located on Eddy Street. One of the entrances was altered during this time to accommodate the tavern function, with stucco siding and new swinging doors. From the 1940s onward, it appears that the building was occupied entirely by tavern and restaurant operations, with a restaurant and cocktail lounge, Super Hamburger Shop, and Woody's Tavern, which remained in operation into the 1980s. Restaurant usage continues today, with two tenants filling the building. As tenants have changed, major storefront insertions have greatly altered the building, largely effacing the evidence of its auto related form. The Van Ness Avenue elevation, which originally featured a central automobile entrance and large plate glass display windows, now contains a centered aluminum framed door as well as aluminum framed windows. The Eddy Street elevation, which originally was an austere grid of windows and masonry piers, is now cluttered with storefront signage and modern storefront entryways.

Evaluation

As a relatively modest auto showroom, built in 1920 when Van Ness' Auto Row was well-established and the foundation of the American auto industry well-developed, 800 Van Ness Avenue does not demonstrate direct associations with significant themes of development in both the American auto industry or the development of Van Ness' Auto Row (Criterion A or 1). The dealership was one of several across the western United States, selling automobiles that enjoyed popularity for only a brief period of time before the consolidation of the auto industry and the dislocation of the 1930s. The commissioning client only retained ownership for a brief period of time, and the building was devoted to an array of secondary auto functions and subsequent retail uses far outside of the auto realm.

Similarly, the building is not associated with any specific individual significant in local, state, or national history (Criterion B or 2). The various auto firms that occupied the building were only small components of an increasingly vast industry supply chain that included manufacturers, suppliers, and dealers spreading across the country and no single individual has documented important associations with the building. Further, the building does not demonstrate distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a well-established design sensibility that includes allusions to classical detailing and basic functional requirements

¹ "Mark Company Opens New Quarters," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 7, 1920.

² "Van Ness Avenue and Eddy Street," 1934. San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection. Photo ID AAB-5698. Accessed <http://sflib1.sfpl.org:82/record=b1010646~S0>, April 9, 2009; "Eddy Street at Van Ness," 1929. San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection. Photo ID AAB-3470. Accessed <http://sflib1.sfpl.org:82/record=b1008473~S0>, April 9, 2009.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

(Criterion C or 3). While indicative of the urban development of San Francisco's Auto Row, the building is not an exemplar. The architect, William L. Schmolle, was a relatively modest figure, with a residentially driven practice

that included the 1910 Wilson Building at the northeast corner of Stockton Street and Campton Place as well as other smaller commissions. As such, the building is not the work of a recognized master architect.

In addition to its lack of historic significance, the building displays a marked loss of integrity from its original construction that further removes it from association with its Auto Row related context. Years of commercial entryway insertions and reconfigurations at the ground level have eroded the building's functional form; most notably the prominent central automobile doorway on the Van Ness Avenue. While the building does retain many of its original features on the second story, and its cornice, these features do not impart any specific associations with Auto Row. The remaining architectural details are simply typical features of commercial buildings of this period and do not convey the original automotive function of the building that was most apparent at the first floor.

Finally, while in rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, this type of commercial construction is otherwise documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criterion D or 4).

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 800 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing east, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 3S

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 14

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #8

P1. Other Identifier: 945-999 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 945-999 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0719-001

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 945-999 Van Ness Avenue is a two story Art Moderne automobile showroom building located on the corner of Van Ness Avenue and O'Farrell Street. Constructed in 1937, the building is rectangular in plan and composed of unarticulated reinforced concrete. The roof is flat, with a modern canopy structure that protects a rooftop parking lot. The roofline is stepped in the northwestern portion of the building, where it rises to accommodate the sloping building site. The primary elevation fronting Van Ness Avenue has a sweeping curvilinear form and horizontal massing (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6 (1-3 story commercial building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 945-999 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northwest, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1937 San Francisco Department of Buildings and Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
999 Van Ness LLC
119 Gable Court
San Rafael, CA 94903-5215

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: Ernest Ingold Chevrolet

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: auto showroom B4. Present Use: auto showroom

*B5. Architectural Style: Art Moderne

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1937. There have been no major alterations (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits) .

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: John Dinwiddie b. Builder: Barrett & Hilp

*B10. Significance: Theme: Architectural development of Auto Row Area:
Period of Significance: 1937 Property Type: Commercial Applicable Criteria: A (1) and C (3)

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

945-999 Van Ness Avenue was previously documented in a 1984 San Francisco Downtown Inventory undertaken by San Francisco Architectural Heritage and found to merit a level "A" (highest importance) in their rating system. The building is also referenced in the City of San Francisco's Van Ness Avenue Area Plan as a significant building. According to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: "City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources," neither of these ratings qualify as an adopted local register for the purpose of CEQA, and both require further consultation and review which is provided herein (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

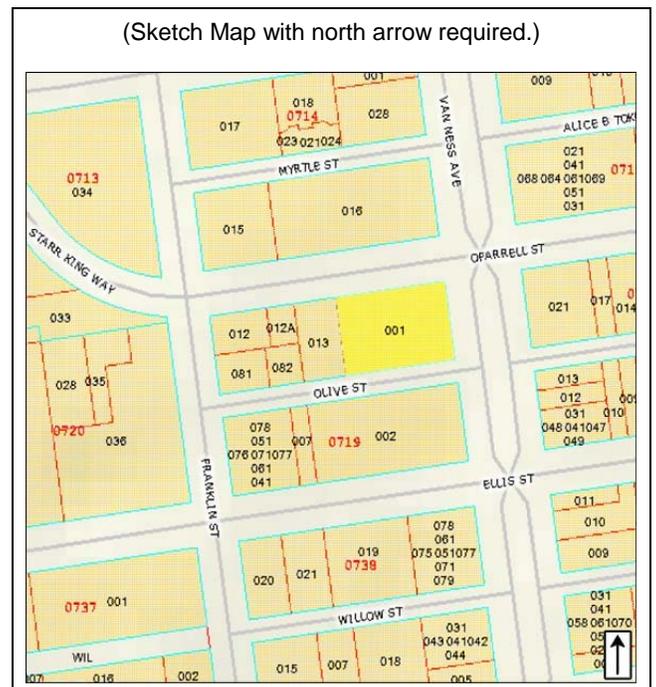
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; San Francisco Architectural Heritage Building Files; Van Ness Avenue Area Plan; *San Francisco Chronicle*; *Splendid Survivors*; Online Archive of California; Clarke, *Trust and Power* (2007); Rae, *The American Automobile* (1965); Ling *America and the Automobile* (1990); McShane, *Down The Asphalt Path* (1994); Ingold, *Tales of a Peddler* (n.d); *Out West*; *The Architect and Engineer*; *Oakland Tribune*; *The American Architect*; *Signature Architects of the San Francisco Bay Area*.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The first level is composed of large glass display windows with replacement aluminum framing and muntins flanked by fluted columns that feature a subtle foliated detail at their upper terminus. A smooth concrete stringcourse separates the first level from the second, featuring a narrow band with pairs of decorative concrete corbels. The second level, which projects slightly over the first, is dominated by a virtually uninterrupted band of steel frame casement windows. With a smooth concrete sill and slightly projecting concrete lintel, the windows are separated at regular intervals by decorative piers with a blocky, angular notched form. The windows are sixteen-light with a four-light hinged awning center component. The roofline is smooth, with no projections (photograph 1).

The primary customer entryway is located on the Van Ness elevation, and is framed by a prominent circular concrete canopy. The entryway is recessed, with a faceted semicircular form, and consists of four glass window bays separated by gold-colored metal framing and two hinged glass doors (photograph 7). Two square clocks appear on either end of the Van Ness elevation, with Moderne yellow lettering with neon illumination. Although they are not original to the design, they are complementary to the overall architectural aesthetic of the building (photograph 8). The secondary northern and southern elevations contain a wide row of steel frame casement windows along the first story, and the same window configuration as the Van Ness elevation on the second story.

Because the building is built into a hill that rises to the northwest, an additional basement level row of windows appears on the southeastern corner, tapering toward the southwestern corner. Two garage doors line the northern elevation, one of which is crowned with projecting moderne lettering reading, "SERVICE." Both doors are composed of rolling corrugated metal (photograph 3 and 4).

The building retains a high degree of integrity, with the sole notable alteration being replacement aluminum frame windows on the Van Ness elevation. Additionally some of the concrete detailing is spalling and chipped throughout the building.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 945-999 Van Ness Avenue appears eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and local designation under Criterion A (Criterion 1) for its local significance in the physical and social development of San Francisco's Auto Row and under Criterion C (Criterion 3), as a locally significant architectural representative of urban automobile related development. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and appears to be a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

Constructed in the waning years of development along Auto Row, 945-999 Van Ness Avenue reflects the meteoric rise of San Francisco's Auto Row in the early years of the twentieth century. The building was one of many automobile related facilities built in San Francisco between 1908 and the late 1930s, as rampant market growth in the automobile industry produced a strikingly dense and diverse urban building stock that centered upon Van Ness

CONTINUATION SHEET

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Avenue. This commercial development required an array of buildings, from grand showrooms to humble garages, however the hierarchical diversity was bound by a singular association with the promotion of the automobile.

Accommodating the particular marketing and social mandates of the fledgling industry, the buildings of Auto Row reflected the work of an eclectic array of both prominent and obscure architects, some steeped in the Beaux-Arts Classicism of the nineteenth century and some at the vanguard of twentieth century industrial design. The buildings of the row cogently expressed the constantly evolving aesthetic and social role of the automobile in America, with 945 Van Ness Avenue as a Moderne exemplar. The building was the final major showroom developed on the avenue, erected in defiance of both the harrowing economic decline of the Depression years and the waning success of the urban Auto Row. Filling the last major vacant lot along Van Ness, the curvilinear form of the Ernest Ingold Showroom was an emphatic affirmation of the preeminence of the automobile in early twentieth century America and the critical role of advanced architectural expression in the early development of America's automobile industry. Standing adjacent to Bernard Maybeck's exuberant Packard Showroom, the striking design of the Art Moderne Chevrolet building represented both continuity in the architectural aspirations of Auto Row, and a great stride forward in cohesive modern design.

The opportunity for the intensive development of Van Ness Avenue as an Auto Row arose from the destruction of the 1906 earthquake and fire. Following the disaster, the avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed and rapidly developing commercial corridor. Although much of the southern reaches of the avenue lay in ruins following the four day inferno, in comparison to the ravaged Market Street corridor Van Ness emerged relatively intact. Much of the western side of the avenue and the upper portion of the thoroughfare near present-day Fort Mason and the Aquatic Park remained untouched by the fire, as the road's wide expanse had served as one of the city's primary fire breaks. In the months following the earthquake, the area was the center of a speculative boom, as businesses sought temporary quarters within easy reach of downtown and commercial interests sought profits from a frenzy of leasing activity.¹

Between 1906 and 1909, a large number of residents and business decamped for the undamaged stretches of Van Ness Avenue. Along with Fillmore Street to the west, Van Ness became San Francisco's premier commercial and economic hub, supplanting the devastated areas of downtown. Only weeks after the earthquake, the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted that Van Ness was, "now a livelier avenue than ever before in its history," and extolled the rapid construction of numerous temporary buildings and requisition of damaged mansions for commerce. Even at this early date, a slew of the city's preeminent commercial establishments were opening doors on Van Ness, including the famed Emporium department store, as well as City of Paris, and the White House.² Rather than erecting new quarters, many of the stores occupied abandoned mansions, with the City of Paris filling the Hobart Mansion, a commodious Queen Anne located on the prominent corner of Van Ness and Washington Street.³

Despite the widespread rapidity of redevelopment, the emergence of Van Ness Avenue as a central economic and social hub was short-lived. Much of the commercial development along the avenue was considered a temporary expedient, and as conditions in the traditional business and retail core of the city improved, many businesses flooded back to newly constructed or repaired quarters.⁴ The illustrious City of Paris, with its silk finery and French wines, departed from the Hobart mansion in 1909, returning to its repaired Union Square Beaux Arts building.

¹ "Speculation Stops in Buying Real Property," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 27, 1909.

² "Retailers Leasing on Van Ness Avenue," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 6, 1906.

³ Online Archive of California Photograph Collection, The Bancroft Library Photograph Collection, "Temp Quarters, Hobart Res. - Van Ness and Washington. City of Paris Dry Goods Company," 1906.

⁴ "Expansion of Retail Business an Example of City's Enterprise," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 17, 1909.

CONTINUATION SHEET

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #8*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

The local press commented on the exodus, noting that “although for a time it was believed the retail district would remain permanently in the Western Addition,” the force of the “Downtown Movement” proved too great.⁵ In several short years, therefore, the identity of Van Ness Avenue was dramatically uprooted again, leaving the broad avenue in flux. “What Van Ness may become in the future can probably not be imagined,” wrote the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1909, echoing a widespread sentiment, “it has been deserted by retail trade and will not regain any of it in the near future.”⁶

Despite this dour prognosis, while the avenue was being abandoned by traditional residential and commercial interests, it was increasingly came to be defined by a burgeoning sector in both the economy and psyche of America: the automobile. The nascent auto industry and its array of support sectors including sales, repair, and parts manufacturing found an ideal home in the space afforded by the vacating retail sector along Van Ness . Close to the urban core and flanking the city’s broadest avenue, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west’s largest and most diverse Auto Rows. The industry first appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but scores of auto related businesses traveled steadily north, flanking Van Ness Avenue from Market nearly to the Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops.

Emerging as a captivating modern marvel in the close of the nineteenth century, the automobile quickly became a potent symbol of the democratizing capability of industrial development in the twentieth century. In its earliest years, auto excursions were the domain of only the most privileged; monarchs in Europe or American leaders such as Theodore Roosevelt, but by the second decade of the twentieth century, cotton farmers in the San Joaquin Valley were driving the machines across their fields. In 1900, the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted with pride that there were, “fully fifty of the machines in and about the city,” and just eleven years later the city was awash in automobiles, with an official count conducted along Van Ness Avenue documenting the passage of nearly 2500 cars over the course of only several hours.⁷ The rampant growth in automobile use in San Francisco mirrored trends across the country. Although only one percent of the population owned a car in 1910, by 1930 the number had grown to a full sixty percent, with cities like San Francisco acting as critical sales outlets for trade in the west. Along with New York, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles, San Francisco proved one of the most prominent distribution centers for the growing auto industry.⁸

With California leading the country in automobile sales and ownership throughout the 1910s and 1920s, the state proved a ready market for the increasingly standardized and reliable automobiles shipped largely from the middle-western industrial belt. The exponentially growing consumer market was accompanied by an equally explosive rise in the number of automobile manufacturing, sales, and service firms. A list compiled by the American Automobile Association in the late 1920s estimated that from 1900 onward more than 3000 makes of cars and trucks were produced by upward of 1500 identifiable companies. By the close of World War I many had shuttered, and by the 1930s most were gone, pushed out of a maturing industry increasingly defined by consolidation and mass production.⁹ As an early Auto Row, Van Ness Avenue housed hundreds of these firms throughout the 1910s and 1920s, with Hudsons and Hupmobiles, Cole Aeros and Cadillacs filling glassy showrooms.

⁵ “Expansion of Retail Business an Example of City’s Enterprise,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 17, 1909.

⁶ “The Future of Van Ness Avenue,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 30, 1909.

⁷ “Outlook for the Autos,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 7, 1900.

⁸ Sally H. Clarke, *Trust and Power: Consumers, the Modern Corporation, and the Making of the United States Automobile Market* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3.

⁹ John B. Rae, *The American Automobile* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965) 18.

CONTINUATION SHEET

B10. Significance: (Continued)

As a burgeoning sales corridor, the avenue became a nexus between the productive capacities of the automotive industry and the American consumer. In many senses, the showrooms were a face for the increasingly powerful auto industry, and the array of buildings erected represented an evolving conception of the automobile's central role in the city, state, and nation.¹⁰

This evolution occurred remarkably rapidly. Although Auto Row developed in the wake of the 1906 upheaval, the city's first automobile club had already moved to Van Ness Avenue and Golden Gate Avenue in 1900, converting the city's oldest library, the Mercantile Library, into an auto showroom. The press noted that the "ancient and modern tomes and the bookworms will make way for the new fangled vehicle as meekly as the horses are expected to disappear from the stables."¹¹ This forecast proved prescient, and within several years Van Ness was home to a remarkably diversified array of auto salesrooms, repair shops, and assembly rooms. Initially, many of the shops and display rooms were housed in small wood frame buildings, however as the clout of the industry grew, and the importance of branding escalated in a competitive market, larger auto palaces quickly sprung up along the avenue.

Throughout the 1910s, 1920s, and to a lesser degree the 1930s, large corner lots along the avenue were developed as automobile showrooms and smaller frontages in between were filled with modest repair shops and used car sales facilities. Undeveloped lots doubled as open air car lots, with bright banners and signs. At the eastern corner of Van Ness and Market Street, the White Garage boasted an auto show room, supplied auto and motorcycle parts, and offered repairs. The intersection of Van Ness Avenue and O'Farrell was an anchor for the district, with the Weeks and Day designed Don Lee Building on the northeast corner; the Earl C. Anthony Packard Showroom, designed by Bernard Maybeck in 1926, slightly south; and a 1937 Art Moderne Chevrolet showroom designed by John E. Dinwiddie filling the southwest corner. At the southwest corner of Sacramento Street and Van Ness, the Paige Motor Car Company housed Max Arnold's "high grade automobiles," with the building doubling in size to accommodate increased business in 1924. Numerous other auto shops lined the street, specializing in everything from upholstery to wood working for the ornate fleet of new autos flooding the growing California market. As the wares within the showrooms evolved, so too did the architectural styling of their surrounds and the Van Ness corridor became defined by the breakneck commercial developments of the industry. The three decades were characterized by remarkably different architectural forms, from simple brick garages to classical pilasters and sweeping Art Moderne curves. Beginning in the 1920s, bright neon signs filled the streetscape, with rooftop billboards and bright signs framing the buildings.

With the mass market for cars only newly established and still shrouded in a modern allure, this industry radiated an aura of excitement and grandeur that has largely faded today. In the 1920s, celebrations such as "Open Roads Week," drew thousands to Van Ness Avenue, drawn by festivities marking "the call of the open road." The Nash dealer filled his showroom at Van Ness Avenue and California Street with hundreds of pine and redwood trees brought from Mendocino County, transforming it into a rustic campsite with trails and tents. At the Willys Overland Pacific Company, a miner cooking flapjacks over a fire "lent a touch of reality," to the auto affair.¹² This breed of theatrical showmanship reflected the immense cultural importance that the automobile had attained in only two decades.

¹⁰ Peter J. Ling, *America and the Automobile: Technology, Reform, and Social Change* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990) 13, 96-97.

¹¹ "To Shelter Automobiles," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 31, 1900.

¹² "Open Road Week Draws Crowd To Row," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 26, 1921.

CONTINUATION SHEET

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Far more than a simple mode of transport, the car had come to represent a host of modern aspirations and cultural desires. This “epitome of possessions,” had a profound impact upon development both in the Bay area and the state and country as a whole.¹³ As the “open roads” celebrated by the early industry ceded to dense networks of automotive-based settlement, the auto became central in conceptions of twentieth century life. Throughout this transition, the buildings on Van Ness Avenue became a veritable stage-set for the advancement of the automobile.

The rampant growth of this stage-set was dramatically undercut by the economic turmoil of the 1930s. In 1929, the American auto industry produced a record 5,337,087 cars, a volume of production that would not return for over two decades. By 1932, that number had shrunk to only a little over 1,000,000 cars. This dramatic decrease in production had a crippling ripple effect across the country, as thousands of dealers, repair shops, and parts manufacturers found themselves awash in competition with little accompanying demand.¹⁴ Along Auto Row, this dramatic upheaval had serious physical and economic repercussions. With much of the two mile stretch filled with vying auto companies and dealers, many of the more marginal of the industry closed their doors and dropped their leases. Building permits from the era indicate that a number of auto buildings stood vacant, others were transformed to bakeries and taverns, laundry facilities, and warehouses. Although most of the major dealers weathered the downturn, the diversity and dynamism of the 1920s Row faded with the onset of the Depression, in large part never to return. As famous concerns folded across the country, including once unassailable competitors Franklin, Pierce-Arrow, Peerless, and Stutz, the dense network of accompanying showrooms were suddenly cast as archaic components of an insecure industry.¹⁵

The site history of 945-999 Van Ness Avenue in large part reflects this tumult. In 1929, Robert A. Smith erected a single story shed on the lot, which was to be used as a used car sales lot. The modest building was built by Barrett and Hilp, who would later also build the Ernest Ingold Showroom in 1937. By all considerations, Smith’s timing was remarkably poor, because although he still owned the lot, by 1930 he converted it from auto use to a miniature golf course. This improbable humbling reflected the highly diminished sales realm of the time, as fewer and fewer consumers had the means to, “heed the call of the open road.” The small investment and meager return of the miniature golf venture likely seemed a safer avenue, as the sport required nickels rather than hundreds of scarce dollars.¹⁶

Ernest Ingold, a practiced salesman in a wide range of capacities, stepped into this rather bleak milieu in the mid-1930s. Ingold, who produced a self-published autobiography in 1942 entitled *Tales of a Peddler*, recounted his purchase of the property for less than half of its appraised worth and noted that it was the, “only large unimproved holding on Van Ness Avenue.”¹⁷ Ingold’s temperament and experience was profoundly shaped by his early experience in southern California real estate development, and 1920s work in the radio and electricity industries.

¹³ Henri Lefebvre introduced the conception of the “epitome of possessions,” in his seminal work *Everyday Life in the Modern World*. The conception is also referenced in: Clay McShane, *Down The Asphalt Path: The Automobile and the American City*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994) 126-148.

¹⁴ Rae, *The American Automobile*, 105.

¹⁵ Rae, *The American Automobile*, 110.

¹⁶ San Francisco Building Permits.

¹⁷ Ernest Ingold, *Tales of A Peddler* (a self-published autobiography on file at California Historical Society), 41.

CONTINUATION SHEET

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #8*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

Expressing a deft capacity for boosterism early on, Ingold wrote in 1911 that, “home building was city beautiful building,” and that, “to own a home makes a man a better citizen.”¹⁸ His approach to the auto industry appeared much the same, guided by a similar sales drive and conviction that, “the automobile man, his display room, his shop, his windows, the entrance, the floor, the greeting, the contract clerk, the cashier, the service desk, the service men, the mechanics, the car washer, the janitor, all are combined in a single selling team.”¹⁹

Building the showroom against the advice of both banks and General Motors officials in 1937, and with the aid of architect John Dinwiddie, Ingold incorporated this holistic vision into the design of the building. Writing later, Ingold asserted that, “only by building to a design which would treat new car sales and service sales as equals could a retail automobile dealership be set up to withstand to a large degree the ups and downs of the business cycle.”²⁰ As a salesman, Ingold was chastened by the Depression, and although the building seemed grand in its Moderne design and scale it was built with an advanced appreciation of the tenuous nature of the industry. Rather than focusing solely upon the gleaming metal of the newest car, the building supported and promoted the steady, simple maintenance that kept the old car running. America was indeed a nation of automobile owners, however no longer could these owners be relied upon to grab the newest and brightest car off the line. With its clean design and impressive scale, the building represented an integrated service and sales awareness of the maturing industry and did so with architectural aplomb.

Upon its opening, the building garnered praise both for its design and the volume of sales it transacted. A 1938 article in *Architect and Engineer* expressed admiration, valuing the building’s, “honest attempt to reconcile four sets of conditions: the peculiarities of the site, display and advertising possibilities, facilities, and the budget.”²¹ Noting that the service department received “first consideration,” the article went on to detail the particular methods by which the design encourage fluidity and sales. The mezzanine level, accommodating those awaiting service appointments, yielded a broad vista to the new cars in the showroom below. This indirect sales pitch was neither gaudy or pushy, but a subtle reminder of the possibility of a new car. Ingold, consulting with Dinwiddie on the design, altered original plans for the building by requesting a far more open floor plan that could “facilitate the servicing and movement of cars,” an important sales driven adaptation. In addition to these critical design elements, architectural critics found that, “the building [was] an interesting example of what can be achieved trying to bring out the native beauty of simple materials simply used.” In many ways, this architectural achievement was mirrored by the automotive achievement, as the simple beauty of service and repair rivaled its more lauded counterpart, sales.²²

The Ernest Ingold Showroom remained a prominent fixture on Van Ness Avenue for much of the twentieth century. Until his death in 1977, Ingold acted as both a regional ambassador for Chevrolet and a vocal proponent of the city’s Auto Row.²³ In the 1970s, the dealership was taken over by longtime partner George Olsen, and was converted to a Cadillac dealership. At present, the building is in use as a Bentley Motors Showroom.

¹⁸ “Home Building and the Southland.” *Out West*, Volume 1, Number 33, March 1911, 233-240.

¹⁹ Ingold, *Tales of A Peddler*, 140.

²⁰ Ingold, *Tales of A Peddler*, 64.

²¹ “Modern Trend Reflected in New Auto Sales Building,” *The Architect and Engineer*, Volume 133, June 1938, 13-16.

²² “Modern Trend Reflected in New Auto Sales Building,” *The Architect and Engineer*, Volume 133, June 1938, 13-16.

²³ S.F. Dealers Choose Officers,” *Oakland Tribune*, April 28, 1935.

CONTINUATION SHEET

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Evaluation

Within the historic context of the physical and social development of San Francisco's Auto Row, 945-999 Van Ness Avenue is a significant representative of the important cultural impact that the development of the auto industry had on San Francisco. As a late example of a prominent local auto business in Auto Row the building appears eligible for listing in the NRHP and CRHR under Criteria A and 1. Erected in 1937, the building was the last of the purpose-built auto facilities, conceived in an era at far remove from the booming construction years of the 1910s and 1920s. Even at a time when the automobile was increasingly providing means toward greater commercial and residential suburbanization, the building represented the continued, although waning, importance of the urban Auto Row. The building also expressed the resiliency of the industry following the travails and dislocation of the Depression. Its design incorporated significant lessons gleaned from the challenge, namely the paramount importance of service as well as sales. Unlike many of the earlier auto buildings along the row, which boasted commodious and elegant showrooms with far less attention given to the functional attributes of service, the leading concept for the Ingold design was related to holistic service attributes.

Founder and owner Ernest Ingold filled the last of the major lots on the avenue with this building, which served as a potent symbol for the changing face of both the Row and the industry. With only a handful of major manufacturers remaining, largely dominated by the "Big Three," brand recognition and differentiation remained paramount. As a Chevrolet dealership, the Ernest Ingold Showroom stood as an affirmation that brand strength could be interwoven into the built form of the dealer. Through its design, the building served as a powerful local symbol for the Chevrolet brand. Designed with the bold letters "CHEVROLET" prominent upon the thoroughfare, the building was arguably the most recognizable Bay Area face for the manufacturer. Even as the cohesiveness of Auto Row declined, with purpose-built showrooms converted to a myriad of unrelated uses, demolished, and abandoned by dealers, the building continued to maintain a powerful commercial role in an industry that was increasingly fragmenting to the growing suburbs.

In addition to its significant association with the development and decline of the Van Ness Auto Row, the design of the building possesses significant architectural features that embody important characteristics of auto related design under Criteria C and 3. The building also appears to be eligible for listing in the NRHP and CRHR under Criteria C and 3 as the work of a master. The architectural expression of the building was equally derived from Dinwiddie's Bay area Modernist inclinations and Ingold's assertion of a holistic sales vision. Thirty-five at the time, Dinwiddie had only recently established his own firm. As a student he had studied with Eliel Saarinen at the University of Michigan, and his modern aesthetic reflected both the surrounding International Style milieu and the regional Bay Area tradition. Ultimately, Dinwiddie would become known for his residential design, characterized by a boxy International Style aesthetic adapted to the regional context through redwood and vernacular detailing. Examples include the 1938 Roos House in Pacific Heights, a well-articulated boxy design with canted windows, a form which was later copiously repeated by tract home developers.²⁴ Within this portfolio, the showroom is a significant representative of both Dinwiddie's general approach and its application to a commercial setting. The Art Moderne stylings melded well with the increasingly streamlined curves of the wares within, and the building was a highly effective foil for Chevrolet's fleet of chrome and metal.

²⁴ Dave Weinstein, *Signature Architects of the San Francisco Bay Area* (Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith Publishing, 2006), 93.

CONTINUATION SHEET

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Equally important, the architectural design of the building attests to the complex functional and aesthetic role of a showroom, and illustrates a nuanced understanding of this function by Ernest Ingold and the architect. As the central point of contact between the customer and the manufacturer, purpose-built auto showrooms had a complex mandate for style. In many senses, showrooms had to both functionally accommodate and, equally important, sell the car. Architectural publications in the 1910s and 1920s routinely expressed this multi-faceted importance of the showroom, citing the need for a balance between modern functionality and architectural cohesion.

A 1918 article in *The American Architect* encapsulates both the insecurities and opportunities inherent in showroom design, stating that “the design of small automobile sales buildings [was] a matter of increasing importance requiring special features.”²⁵ This critical attention resulted in a host of architectural expressions, from Beaux Arts classicism to exotic Orientalism, and, later, exuberant Moderne curves. Almost always, however, this often elaborate architectural treatment, was relegated to showrooms associated with the all-important point of sale. The emphasis placed on service in the design of the Ingold facility was a radical departure from this singular fixation, and represented an important adaptation within both the industry and the local market.

The attention paid by both Ernest Ingold and architect John Dinwiddie in the design of the building provides insight into the importance of the built form in the early history of the auto sales and service industry. Although more scholarly attention has been lent to the architectural importance of automobile manufacturing facilities, such as those of preeminent designer Albert Kahn in his development of Henry Ford’s ground breaking plants in Michigan, the seemingly secondary regional sales and service buildings are of vital importance. It was this within this tier of construction that much of the public face of the industry was cultivated, and it was within this far-flung network that there was the most potential for regional expression. Across America, architects and dealers adapted established architectural forms to regional and functional mandates, fundamentally altering both the built fabric of the city, and the context of modern architecture. As buildings that melded evolving architectural trappings with industrial requirements inherent in the auto industry, the buildings of Auto Row remain an important building type that merits further study and recognition.

945-999 Van Ness Avenue stands as an exemplar of the Auto Row building type. The building retain marked integrity, with very few physical alterations. The building expresses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and stands largely as it did upon construction. Unlike the vast majority of buildings along Auto Row, the building has had no major storefront alterations or rehabilitation. This integrity is critical, in that the storefront was perhaps the most vital and recognizable facet of Auto Row design. As a portal to the wares within, the storefronts of Auto Row were of the utmost importance to both marketer and consumer.

While this evaluation recognizes the significance of 945-999 Van Ness Avenue under Criterion A (1) and Criterion C (3), the building does not appear to meet any of the other criteria for listing. It is not associated with any specific individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criterion B or 2). Further, the physical aspects of the property are not likely to be a principal source of information important for historical understanding (Criterion D or 4).

²⁵ “An Automobile Sales Building,” *The American Architect*, Volume CXIV, Number 2228, September 4, 1918, (301-302).

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 945-999 Van Ness Avenue (Packard building at left), camera facing northwest 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 945-999 Van Ness Avenue, secondary elevation, camera facing southwest, 3/8/09

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 4: 945-999 Van Ness Avenue, service entry, camera facing south, 3/8/09



Photograph 5: 945-999 Van Ness Avenue, central customer entry, camera facing west, 3/8/09

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 6: 945-999 Van Ness Avenue, streetscape, camera facing south, 3/8/09

CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #

HRI#

Trinomial

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*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #8

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 7: 945-999 Van Ness Avenue entry, camera facing west, 3/8/09



Photograph 8: 945-999 Van Ness Avenue, clock detail, camera facing northwest, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6L

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 9

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #9

P1. Other Identifier: 1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0715-009

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue is a five-story hotel that fills the block-front between Myrtle Street and Geary Street. The steel-frame concrete and brick building is sheathed in stucco and rests on a flush concrete foundation in a rectangular plan with recessed light courts that break the massing of the building into separated sections, each suggesting an individual building. The fenestration of the building is regular, and the sections largely repeat each other in architectural detailing and massing (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP5 (Hotel / Motel)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing southeast, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1908, San Francisco Department of Buildings, County Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Van Ness Hotel, Inc.
1619 Pennsylvania Avenue NW.
Washington, DC 20006-3404

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 8, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: Hotel Richelieu

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: apartment-hotel

B4. Present Use: tourist hotel

*B5. Architectural Style: Italian Renaissance Revival

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1908, alterations to the ground floor, entrances, wall cladding, and windows have taken place at various dates throughout the twentieth century

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Cunningham and Politeo b. Builder: Unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a

Area: n/a

Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue was previously evaluated on a DPR 523 form in 2000 as part of a proposed telecommunications development study. The evaluator found the building potentially eligible under National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Criterion C, as a contributor to the Lower Nob Hill Apartment Hotel District (San Francisco County - #91000957). The evaluation does not appear to have State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurrence and is not listed in the Historic Property Data File for San Francisco County (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*; Van Ness Avenue Area Plan; A.K. Sandoval-Stauz *Hotel* (2007); *Splendid Survivors*; Online Archive of California; San Francisco History Center.

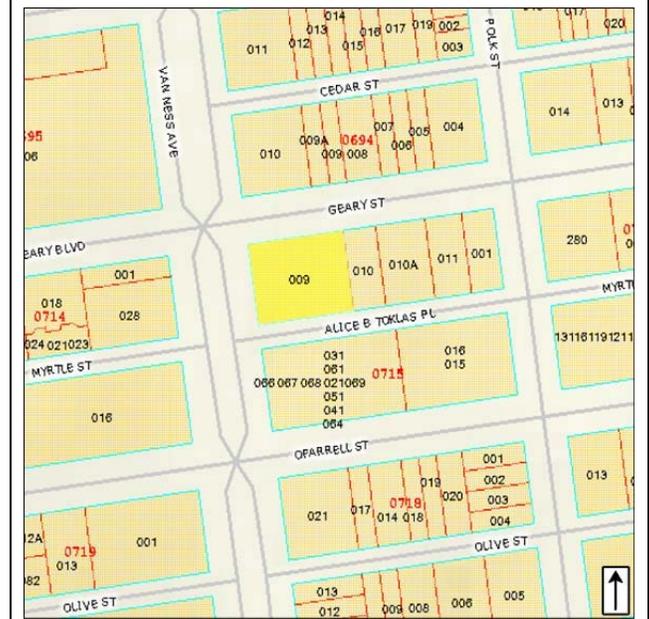
B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

Three such bays line the primary elevation on Van Ness, and two wider sections fill Geary Street and Myrtle Street. An elaborate cornice crowns the building, underscored by dentils, egg and dart molding, and pairs of over-scaled scroll brackets. Although the cornice and brackets are the most prominent architectural ornamentation on the building, each section of the building is also dominated by either one or two tripartite stacked bay windows that run from the second to the fifth floor. With a shallow semicircular form and paneled surrounds, the bay windows terminate with a cartouche that adjoins the cornice molding. The windows in the bays are a mixture of double-hung one-over-one and fixed. Some are original wood frame and sash, however many are replacement aluminum or vinyl. The remainder of the windows that flank the bays in each section are simple, double-hung one-over-one, with slightly projecting sills, no lintels, and no articulated framing. The recessed spaces between each distinct section of the building are filled with more of the same simple windows, and metal grate fire escapes. Fire escapes also appear prominently on the Myrtle Street elevation. Like the bay windows, many of the other windows throughout the building are replacements for the originals, and are a mixture of double-hung and fixed.

The first level of the building has been highly modified to accommodate modern functions, and bears little of its original architectural fabric. A box awning separates the first level from the second, upon which neon signage is hung that advertises the tenant, Mels Drive In. Additionally, a neon sign is affixed to the northwestern corner of the building that advertises the same. Aluminum and glass storefront insertions line the first level, particularly at the northwest corner, and the remainder of the first level is sheathed in modern stucco. Historic photographs indicate that the ground floor level was originally composed of concrete scored to replicate stone, and recessed arched windows. Photographs also indicate that a stringcourse and balustrade separated the first level from the second. None of this original material is evident. The scored masonry-like treatment has been lost under stucco that now covers almost all the wall surfaces; however the stringcourse and balustrade may simply be obscured by the modern boxed awning.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Because the 2000 NRHP evaluation left significant data gaps; including the construction date, architect, and general historic context, this evaluation develops a complete historic context and re-evaluate the building for NRHP and CRHR eligibility in relation to this context. This study specifically addresses the building as an individual resource and does not address its relationship to the Apartment Hotel Historic District. For reference, the DPR 523 form is included with this evaluation.

The building was also documented in a 1984 San Francisco Downtown Inventory undertaken by San Francisco Architectural Heritage and found to merit a level "B" (major importance) in their rating system. The building is also referenced in the City of San Francisco's Van Ness Avenue Area Plan as a significant building. According to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: "City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources," neither of these ratings qualify as an adopted local register for the purposes of CEQA, and both require further consultation and review which is provided herein.

This study finds that as an individual resource, 1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for listing in NRHP or the CRHR because it lacks significance and integrity. The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and is not a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)Historic Context

Constructed in 1908, 1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue was developed as an apartment hotel in the spate of construction unleashed in response to the havoc of the 1906 earthquake. Following the dislocation of the disaster, Van Ness Avenue was a locus for redevelopment and an array of commercial and residential construction lined the avenue, replacing the comparatively staid upper class residential nature that characterized it prior to the earthquake.¹ The predominant character of nineteenth century residential development along Van Ness Avenue was that of the single family residence. Whether a palatial stone edifice like the Claus Spreckels Mansion at the corner of Van Ness and Clay Street, or the more ubiquitous exuberant wood-frame Queen Anne homes found all along the avenue, most of the upper-class residences reflected a traditional single-family interpretation of urban life. By the late nineteenth century, however, the increasing acceptance of the apartment hotel for families, particularly the within the ranks of the wealthy, signaled a shift in residential patterns that steadily altered development along Van Ness Avenue, and throughout the city. By 1899, establishments calling themselves “family hotels,” appeared throughout the urban core, and along Van Ness Avenue. With the three-story Maybelle standing on the corner of Grove and Van Ness and the five-story Baltimore occupying a prominent lot on the corner of Van Ness and Myrtle adjacent to Saint Mary’s Cathedral, the lines between residential and commercial construction started to blur as the privacy of home was increasingly cast into the public realm.²

The development of the apartment hotel, alternately called the family hotel or the residential hotel, represented a profound shift in the mores of an American society that had long prized domesticity as an integral component of American family values. A nineteenth century precursor for the ubiquitous modern apartment building, the apartment “hotel” altered many social assumptions relating to the urban sphere, familial and gender relationships, and labor and class relationships.³ Equally important, the building type ushered in new opportunities for architectural expression, as the public and private spheres merged. Enabled by the elevator and accompanying developments in construction technology, the apartment hotel resulted in a new canvas for architectural design and embellishment that incorporated massive public facades with an articulation of privacy and residential exclusivity.⁴ This creative process was already well under way by the time of the 1906 earthquake, however the physical destruction of the event served as a catalyst for construction of a slew of apartment hotels across the city. As developers and speculators sought to meet the tremendous need for housing, and the public eagerly accepted the now established respectability of the building type, the apartment hotel became a driving force in the city’s residential redevelopment.

1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue, named Hotel Richelieu, was designed by the architectural firm of Cunningham and Politeo, a San Francisco based firm with an extensive portfolio of apartment and hotel designs that predated the earthquake.

¹ “Retailers Leasing on Van Ness Avenue,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 6, 1906; “Van Ness Now a Busy Street.” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 3, 1906.

² Sanborn Map Company, Fire Insurance Maps for San Francisco, California (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1899, vol. 1 and 1899 vol. 3.)

³ “The Eternal Servant Question,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 20, 1913.

⁴ A.K Sandoval-Stausz, *Hotel: An American History*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007) 263-264.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

In 1902 the firm constructed an apartment hotel on the northwest corner of Geary Street and Hyde Street, which boasted a plan in the “Chicago Style” with terra cotta ornamentation, a pressed brick façade, and an intricate bracketed cornice.⁵ The following year, the firm prepared plans expanding the St. Dunstan’s Hotel, a prominent seven-story apartment hotel on the southeast corner of Van Ness Avenue and Sutter Street. Originally built in 1901 to house bachelors, the St. Dunstan’s expansion was spurred by the decision to accommodate families, reflecting the growing acceptance of, and market for, the building type.⁶

In the first few years after the earthquake, the firm was inundated with commissions for apartment hotels, as well as private residences, office buildings, and even more prosaic commissions for early buildings at UC Berkeley’s new farm school at Davisville (now UC Davis). In addition to the Hotel Richelieu, the firm designed a number of San Francisco buildings including the Hotel Stewart in 1907, the Schroth Building in 1908, and the prominent Bancroft Building on Market Street in 1908 (all of which are featured in *Splendid Survivors*, San Francisco’s 1979 comprehensive downtown survey).⁷ The Hotel Richelieu received favorable press, garnering praise for its “perfect” appointments that included 225 rooms, a fine dining room, a refrigerating plant, an oil burning plant, and pneumatic cleaning machinery. It appears that the cost of these appointments caused some financial strain, as construction was briefly halted in 1909 while ownership changed hands and additional financing was secured.⁸

The basic plan and ornamentation of the Hotel Richelieu reflected a mature conceptualization of the apartment hotel. Most notably, the massing of the building was broken into discrete units, allowing the architects to conceal a very large building behind the punctuated façade. With three distinct bays affronting Van Ness Avenue that each imparted a near autonomous status, the living quarters of the building imparted notions of spaciousness and privacy rather than compression; an important element for a public still slightly leery of shared living space. The design of the base of the building was also important, as it acted as a basic buffer between the “private” quarters above and the public sphere beyond. With a scored façade punctuated by an imposing row of arched windows, the base was grand yet Classically simple, with little adornment. Suggesting removal from surrounding commercial concerns, the entry to the building was an important barrier between the residential life within and the commercially oriented nature of lower Van Ness Avenue and Market Street. Finally, the relative simplicity of the base and discrete bays was crowned by an exceedingly heavy bracketed cornice that acted as a visual anchor for the building, but was also on a scale that bordered on the ostentatious. The cornice clearly imparted the aspirations of the architects, the owners, and likely, the residents within.

Marketing of the Richelieu was a success, with society columns in the 1910s littered with references to parties, teas, and art shows filling the hotel, and accounts of the travels and activities of its residents.⁹ Widespread apartment hotel construction continued around the city, a phenomenon that was often credited by developers and speculators as a vital component of the city’s post-earthquake redevelopment success.¹⁰

⁵ “Hotel on Geary and Hyde Streets,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 27, 1902.

⁶ “St. Dunstan’s For Families,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 2, 1902. “September Situation of the Real Estate Market.” *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 12, 1903.

⁷ Michael R. Corbett, *Splendid Survivors*. (San Francisco: The Foundation for San Francisco’s Architectural Heritage, 1979) 86,129, 167.

⁸ “Hotel Richelieu Deal,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 14, 1909; “Richelieu Hotel.” *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 28, 1908; “Hotel Nearly Completed,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 4, 1909.

⁹ “Bazar Proceeds to Help Build New Italian Church,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 21, 1911; “Prominent Pair United at Pretty Church Wedding,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 26, 1914.

¹⁰ “Builders of a City Achieve Great Feat,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 6, 1914; “Hotel and Home Building Strengthen Real Estate Affairs,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 26, 1911.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

The designs of the buildings were, for the most part, in keeping with the basic template practiced by Cunningham and Politeo, with articulated bays, emphatic cornice lines, and restrained formal entry levels. Across the downtown area, particularly in the present day Lower Nob Hill Apartment Hotel District, examples of this type abound, with a prominent example on the southeast corner of O'Farrell Street and Cyril Magnin Street (Hotel Barclay) and more modest examples lining Market Street (Federal Hotel at 1083 Market). Even the esteemed St. Francis Hotel added a residential wing to their hotel, reflecting the general surge in demand.¹¹

By the 1920s, residential patterns were once again shifting, with increased development in the periphery and suburbs of the city. More widespread use of the automobile and expanding linkages in mass transit allowed for residential development in areas previously considered too far afield. Advertisements for bungalows in areas such as Mission Terrace and Westwood Park touted the privacy and comfort of the single family home and criticized the high rents paid by "the thousands of families living in apartments and hotels."¹² The lingering novelty of the apartment hotel faded, and predominant residential patterns moved increasingly toward private residences or true apartments, evolving away from the "service" oriented hybrid of the apartment hotel. In addition to shifting residential demand, the modern appointments of the 1908 Richelieu Hotel no longer represented the vanguard of modern residential design, and its stature appears to have already declined by the latter years of the 1910s. Once boasting exclusivity, the apartment hotel increasingly promoted its affordability in small unassuming advertisements in the classified section of Bay area newspapers.¹³ Competing with more modern developments, including the splendor of the 1924 Weeks and Day designed Huntington Hotel, Hotel Richelieu had lost much of its early cache by 1930. Although the building has remained a hotel to the present, a number of major alterations, particularly at the street level, have substantially transformed its architectural form. Most important, the building's original street level configuration has been altered and filled in with an array of modern infill. The simple, monumental base was an integral component that provided a Classical balance in the architects' design and was emblematic of the residential pretensions of the apartment hotel itself, and without it the building's design is substantially diminished.

Evaluation

As one of the earliest of the post-earthquake apartment hotels built in San Francisco and an architectural representative for much of the apartment construction that shaped the downtown, 1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue is an important indicator of early twentieth century urban residential construction. The contextual and architectural significance of the building is limited, however, by the building's lack of integrity. The building is best interpreted as a representative of San Francisco's rich apartment and hotel building type, but is not a singular historical resource within that context. While the building is representative of post-earthquake redevelopment and the ascendancy of urban apartment life, its role and associations within that context is not significant. Much of the city was being rebuilt at this time and this construction is relatively ubiquitous and does not convey any distinct or important understanding of significant events or broad patterns of local, state, or national history (Criterion A or 1). Further, while the building was marketed as a "apartment hotel," by 1908 this urban concept was a well-evolved and common place component in urban America.

¹¹ "Apartment Wing Will Be Added to St. Francis Hotel," *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 10, 1912.

¹² "Why Pay \$70 Rent When It Will Buy a Home?," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 10, 1922; "Those Paying \$50 a Month Rent Can Buy Home And It's a Dandy Bungalow With Excellent View," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 3, 1922.

¹³ "Hotel Richelieu," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 10, 1918; "Hotel Richelieu," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 29, 1922.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Emerging in the mid-nineteenth century, the concept was cloaked in a variety of monikers, including french flat, family hotel, and apartment hotel, yet all were bound by an evolving understanding of the spatial mandates of urban life. While the apartment hotel still caused glimmers of social unease relating to the decline of family mores, those developed in the years following the earthquake were following a long established precedent, and the Hotel Richelieu was not individually important within this pattern of development.

The building is not associated with any individual significant in local, state, or national history (Criterion B or 2). The building was commissioned by Louis A. Levy and Leopold Michele and quickly changed hands during construction to a more monetized concern called The Richelieu Investment Company. While remaining a hotel to the present, the building has changed ownership a number of times, as various investment companies developed the property. Similarly, while the building has housed innumerable short-term and long-term guests, it does not have any significant associations with individuals.

While the building does embody some distinctive characteristics of a type and period of construction (Criterion C or 1), it is not an exemplar of those characteristics and it is missing important original features. The punctuated massing, prominent cornice, and vertically oriented fenestration were common architectural expressions in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Beaux-Arts and revival architecture, and the Hotel Richelieu is more of a representative specimen than a significant adaptation or example. The building was largely an expanded form of the architects' earlier work, such as their 1902 hotel developed at the corner of Geary and Hyde Street.¹⁴ Further, within the framework of similar buildings erected in the period, and prior, Hotel Richelieu does not convey significant architectural or engineering characteristics. Earlier hotels, including the Palace Hotel and Hotel Pleasanton, boasted far more advanced engineering and architectural systems, and in comparison the Richelieu appears a rather straightforward architectural expression. A number of hotels and apartments built in the same time period equal or surpass the Richelieu in architectural significance, including the 1911 William H. Weeks designed Hotel Glenn and the Palace Hotel designed by Trowbridge and Livingston in 1909.¹⁵

Accompanying this relatively common place architectural expression, the building exhibits a marked loss of integrity that undercuts its ability to convey even limited architectural significance. The Richelieu was not designed or developed to have a commercial storefront but building permits indicate that the building's exterior ground level was altered in every decade between the 1930s and the 1990s. The effect of this intensive alteration has been to entirely displace the commercial ground floor from the remainder of the building above and to throw the building visually out of balance. The jarring amalgam of modern storefront insertions and resurfacing of the walls has left very little trace of the original composition. While a small component of these alterations may be removable, for example the original balustrade may be merely obscured, the fabric of the street level façade is entirely gone, making the building appear top-heavy. Fenestration and entries have also been altered at various locations throughout the building.

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of commercial property is otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criterion D or 4).

¹⁴ "Hotel on Geary and Hyde Streets," *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 27, 1902.

¹⁵ Corbett, *Splendid Survivors*, 83, 110.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #

HRI#

Trinomial

Page 8 of 9

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #9

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

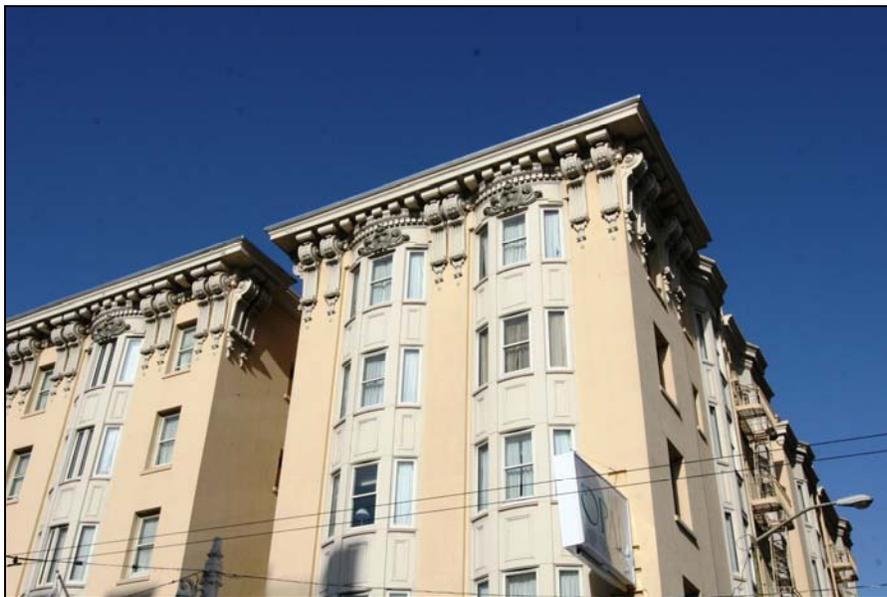
Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing southeast, 3/8/09



Photograph 3 : 1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue, bracket detail camera facing east, 3/8/09

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 4: 1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue storefront detail southwest corner, camera facing northeast, 3/8/09



Photograph 5: 1050-1066 Van Ness Avenue, storefront detail northwest corner, camera facing southeast, 3/8/09

Page 1 Of 2 * Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) CA-2237A

P1. Other Identifier: _____

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County San Francisco and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as Necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad San Francisco North Date 10/19/00 T _____; R _____; $\frac{1}{4}$ of $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec _____; B.M.

c. Address 1050 Van Ness City San Francisco Zip 94109 (418200N)

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone 10 ' 551053 mE 4182145 mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Parcel # 5-715-10. The subject property is located in San Francisco County, at the southeast corner of Van Ness and Geary streets. The structure is located in the San Miguel Rancho.

*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) The subject property is a 5-story stucco building, currently used as a hotel, located on the southeast corner of Van Ness Avenue and Geary Street. It is described as a 2-part vertical commercial structure, with Italianate styling, and is in excellent condition. The street level has been remodeled with the application of stucco, new windows, and repainted. The upper four floors are essentially intact on the exterior with an ornate parapet constructed of projecting eaves and scroll-sawn brackets. The windows on the upper floors consist of slightly projecting bay styles and flush with facade styles. There is an early period marquee sign indicating the "Richelieu Hotel", posted on the corner of the structure that faces the intersection of Geary Street and Van Ness Avenue. The street level portion of the structure houses Mel's Diner and the hotel lobby. Architecturally the structure remains essentially unaffected by the remodeling efforts on the lower floor.

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP5 - Hotel/Motel

*P4. Resources Present: Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (view, date, accession #) View of structure at 1050 Van Ness Avenue. 10/11/00 ET-4:#2A

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: Historic Prehistoric Both ca. 1920 - Architectural Style and Nearby historic structures

*P7. Owner and Address: Milespost Properties, 1050 Van Ness Avenue, 307, San Francisco, CA 94109

*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address) Lorna Billat, Historic Archaeologist, Earthtouch LLC, 2269 Canyon View Dr., Layton, UT 84040

*P9. Date Recorded: 10/11/00

*P10. Survey Type: (Describe) Building
examined and recorded for evaluation as it is the subject property for a proposed telecommunications facility.

*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

* Attachments: NONE Location Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record
 Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record
 Artifact Record Photographic Record Other (List):

Page 2 of 2 *NRHP Status Code 3D
 *Resource Name or #(Assigned by recorder) CA-2237A

B1. Historic Name: Hotel Richelieu
 B2. Common Name: _____
 B3. Original Use: Hotel
 B4. Present Use: Hotel, restaurant
 *B5. Architectural Style: 2-part vertical block, hotel/motel style

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)
 Based on the architectural styling and nearby historic structures, the building was likely constructed ca. 1920. The structure is a 5-story stucco building that is described as a 2-part vertical commercial block. The street level has recently been extensively remodeled with stucco and new windows, and modern signage. However, the architectural styling of the upper levels remains essentially intact, with new paint but few other changes.

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Unknown b. Builder: Unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme Hotel/Motel Development Area: San Francisco - western edge of the Apartment-Hotel Historic District

Period of Significance: ca. 1920 Property Type: hotel Applicable Criteria: C
 (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.) The retains much of its original historic integrity and is therefore recommended potentially eligible as a property very near the Apartment/Hotel Historic District in San Francisco.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP5 - Hotel/Motel

*B12. References:

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Lorna Billat

*Date of Evaluation: October 11, 2000

(This space reserved for official comments)

DPR 523B (1/95) [ACROBAT WEBDOC Posted 11/98]
 * Required Information

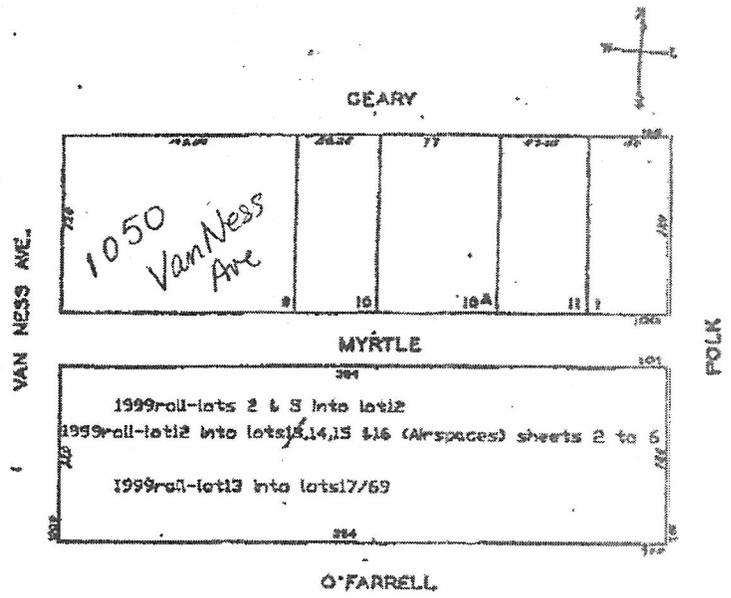
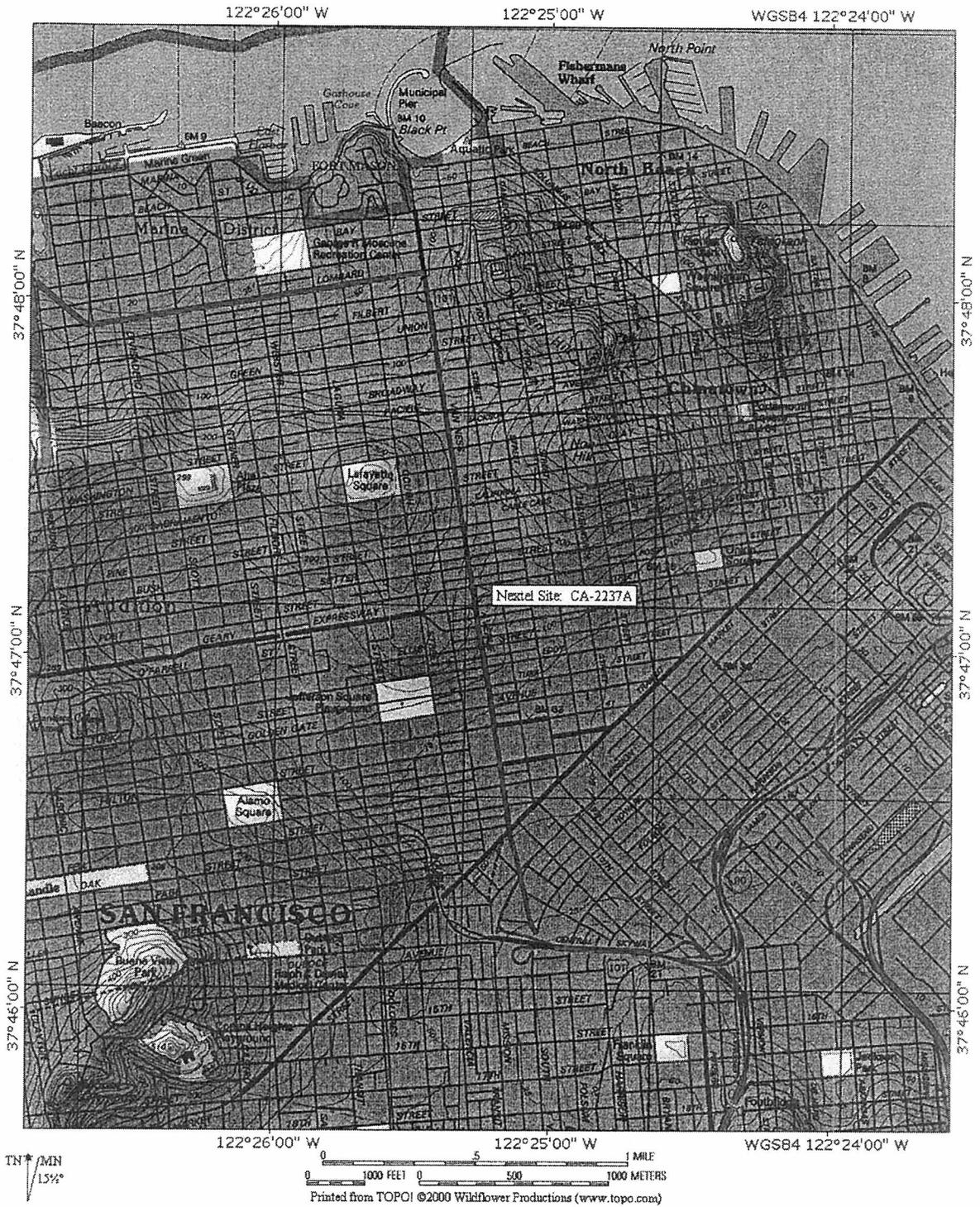




Figure 2. View east of the Hotel Richelieu.



EarthTouch, LLC
2269 Canyon View Drive
Layton, Utah 84040
Tel: 801.771.2800
Fax: 801.771.2838

Figure 1: Site Location-SF-38 (CA-2237A)
Site Location: 1050 Van Ness
San Francisco, San Francisco County, California
Map Source: USGS 7.5' Quadrangle - San Francisco North

a.

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 6

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #10

P1. Other Identifier: 1233 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 1233 Van Ness Avenue

City: San Francisco

Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0690-001A

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1233 Van Ness Avenue is a two story brick building that stands at the northwest corner of Van Ness Avenue and Daniel Burnham Court. The building was constructed in 1913, along with its northerly neighbor 1243 Van Ness Avenue, as a two-part store and loft building. The brick walls are covered in stucco, and a sheet metal cornice supported by simple modillions crowns the building (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6 (1-3 Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 1233 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northwest, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1913, San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits, County Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Kenneth C and Eva S. So Latch Trust
43 Cloud View Road
Sausalito, CA 94965-2006

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 8, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: none

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: tire sales and servicing

B4. Present Use: office/retail/restaurant

*B5. Architectural Style: commercial with minimal classical ornamentation

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1913. A mezzanine level was added to the interior in 1916. Storefront alterations to accommodate new commercial functions occurred in 1925, 1937, 1940, 1963, 1974, 1986, and 1996. These alterations entailed new window and door insertions, primarily on the Van Ness Avenue elevation (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: David C. Coleman b. Builder: Moses Fisher

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a

Area: n/a

Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

1233 Van Ness Avenue was previously documented in a 1984 San Francisco Downtown Inventory undertaken by San Francisco Architectural Heritage and found to merit a level "C" (contextual importance) in their rating system. The building is also referenced in the City of San Francisco's Van Ness Avenue Area Plan as a contributory building. According to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: "City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources," neither of these ratings qualify as an adopted local register for the purposes of CEQA, and both require further consultation and review which is provided herein (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

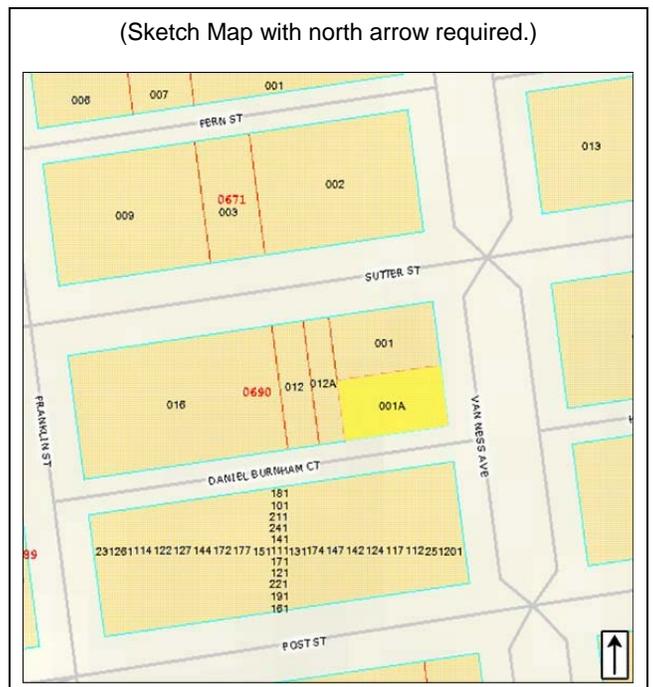
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; San Francisco History Center; *San Francisco Chronicle*; *Architect and Engineer*; *The Trademark Reporter*.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



(This space reserved for official comments.)

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

Small, unscrolled cartouches appear regularly along the cornice. A stringcourse with a key pattern and egg and dart detailing demarcates the first and second stories of the building, both of which are dominated by large window insertions that form three bays. The first level, particularly along the primary eastern Van Ness Avenue elevation, is highly modified by modern commercial storefront alterations. The three bays are filled with aluminum and glass floor-to ceiling windows, with each containing a recessed aluminum and glass double doors. Two of the bays are obscured by an aluminum frame canopy, which runs along the building and extends across the sidewalk over the customer entry area. In addition to the canopy, a modern advertising banner is affixed across the building, running almost the length of the façade under the stringcourse detailing. The second story of the Van Ness elevation retains most of the original materials and configuration, with three multi-component window insertions filling each bay. In each, a large central fixed window is flanked by two rectangular hinged windows and crowned by three of the same. The windows are slightly recessed into the building and are framed in wood.

The southerly elevation is the sole additional exposed elevation. The wall closest to Van Ness Avenue mirrors the treatment of the Van Ness façade, however as the building extends east the treatment becomes simpler, reflecting the secondary nature of the elevation. The first two bays are identical to those on the front, with modern storefront insertions on the first level and multi-component original windows on the second. The stringcourse and cornice of the Van Ness Avenue elevation also extends across the first two bays. The remainder of the elevation is simpler in treatment, with a far more austere narrow cornice supported only by widely spaced scroll brackets. As on the Van Ness façade, the windows lining the southern elevation are primarily modern infill aluminum-framed on the first floor and original wood frame on the second story. Although the second story windows on the southern elevation are of the same massing of those on the Van Ness Avenue, they are of a three-part two-over-one double-hung configuration. Additionally, some original fixed-windows line a basement course that runs at the base of the southern elevation. At the eastern edge of the elevation, a pair of modern metal doors are set into an infill stucco surround flanked by a scored concrete frame.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 1233 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and is not a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

Constructed in 1913, 1233 Van Ness Avenue was one of many automobile related commercial facilities built along Van Ness Avenue in the early years of the twentieth century. Following the dislocation of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Van Ness Avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed commercial corridor that was increasingly dominated by automobile sales, manufacturing, and repair. The nascent auto industry and its array of support sectors found an ideal home in the spaces afforded by the vacating retail sector along Van Ness Avenue. Close to the urban core, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

quickly became one of the west's largest Auto Rows. The industry first appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but soon scores of auto related businesses steadily traveled north, lining the broad avenue from Market nearly to the San Francisco Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops.

The building was constructed as a speculative commercial venture by California-born builder and real estate developer Moses Fisher. Active across the city in the years following the earthquake, Fisher was responsible for both commercial and residential development near Auto Row, as well as in the expanding periphery of the city in newly established residential enclaves such as Jordan Park.¹ He built this building, a two-part structure that included its northerly neighbor 1243 Van Ness Avenue (see DPR523 form), in conjunction with New York-born architect David C. Coleman, with whom he often collaborated in development projects.² Unlike many of the buildings constructed during this period on Auto Row, 1233 Van Ness was not purpose-built for a specific auto industry client but rather was developed as a generic space for "shops and lofts" that could be filled by any number of commercial interests.³

The speculative nature of the construction attests to the economic might of the newly expanding Auto Row, as a variety of smaller support services and lower-tiered sales rooms sought prime locations along the burgeoning auto sector of the avenue. The building has an understated Neoclassical aesthetic that conformed to the prevailing commercial style of the time and could accommodate the functional mandate of the automobile business, and as such was a standard addition to San Francisco's established auto row. Combining a simple sales room with secondary convertible spaces, the building expressed the basic design integration that characterized both the modest and architecturally prominent auto construction of the period.

By 1916, the building was occupied by Tansey Crowe Company, a tire distributor featuring Pennsylvania "Vacuum Cup" Tires developed by the Pennsylvania Rubber Company. The rubber company was an early entrant into the tire manufacturing business, and remained intact until after World War II, when it was bought by rival General Tire.⁴ The tire company added a mezzanine level to the building, further transforming the speculative building to suit auto use. Building permits indicate that the Tansey Crowe Company retained ownership of the building only into the early 1920s, but in 1925 the storefront was remodeled for new commercial use. In 1935, the building was occupied by a used car salesroom operated by Sidney S. Lowenthal and by 1940 the building was vacant. The building was never again used for auto related purposes from this point forward. Housing a lunch counter, coffee shop, classroom space, and medical offices, the flexible program of 1233 Van Ness Avenue accommodated an array of changing functions as the avenue's commercial character evolved during the mid-twentieth century. As tenants have changed, major storefront insertions have greatly altered the first level of the building, largely effacing the evidence of its auto related form. The Van Ness Avenue elevation contains a number of aluminum framed door and window insertions, which divide the building into distinct commercial units.

¹ "Jordan Park," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 8, 1913; "Nat Goodwin's Property Passes To Other Hands," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 14, 1913; "Moses Fisher Sells," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 6, 1912; 1910 United States Census Records.

² "To Build Several Residences," *The Architect and Engineer*, August, 1912, 113.

³ San Francisco Department of Buildings, Application for Building Permit, 1231 Van Ness Avenue, November 14, 1913.

⁴ "Pennsylvania Rubber Company V. Dreadnaught Tire and Rubber Company," *The Trademark Reporter* (New York: The United States Trademark Association, 1915) 429; "Display Ad 93: Substantial Price Reductions," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 1, 1916.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Evaluation

As a modest and generalized commercial building, 1233 Van Ness Avenue does not convey direct associations with significant themes of development in either the American auto industry or the development of Van Ness' Auto Row (Criterion A or 1). While the building housed a number of auto related functions, first as a tire salesroom and subsequently as a used car salesroom, the property was a standardized speculative venture undertaken when Van Ness' Auto Row was well-established and the foundation of the American auto industry well-developed. The building remained related to the San Francisco auto industry for a relatively brief period of time, and was subsequently devoted to an array of generic commercial uses that hold no direct associations to significant local, state, or national events or developments.

Similarly, the building is not associated with any historically significant individual (Criterion B or 2). The various auto firms that occupied the building were only small components of an increasingly vast industry supply chain that included manufacturers, suppliers, and dealers and spreading across the country. There is no documentation of direct association with any individuals important in these various fields of endeavor. Further, the building does not demonstrate distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a well-established design sensibility that includes allusions to classical detailing and basic functional requirements (Criterion C or 3). While indicative of the urban development of San Francisco's Auto Row, the building is not an exemplar. The architect, David C. Coleman, was a relatively modest figure, with a speculative design practice that included an array of residential and commercial construction. Similarly, while the developer Moses Fisher is indicative of the rampant speculation that arose in the wake of the 1906 earthquake, his role in real estate development is not significant but rather basically illustrative of the period's urban development history. The building, therefore, is not important as the work of a master architect or designer.

In addition to failing to meet any of the criteria for listing on the NRHP or the CRHR, the building displays a marked loss of integrity that severs it from even a basic association with its Auto Row related context. Years of commercial entryway insertions and reconfigurations at the ground level have eroded the building's functional form. While the building does retain many of its original features on the second story, and its cornice, these features do not impart any specific associations with Auto Row and are able on their own to convey potential architectural significance.

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of commercial construction is otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criterion D or 4).

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 1233 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing west, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 1233 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northeast, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 6

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #11

P1. Other Identifier: 1243 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 1243 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0690-001

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1243 Van Ness Avenue is a two story brick building that stands at the southwest corner of Van Ness Avenue and Sutter Street. The building was constructed in 1913, along with its southerly neighbor 1233 Van Ness Avenue, as a two-part store and loft building. The brick walls are covered in stucco, and a sheet metal cornice supported by simple brackets crowns the building (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6 (1-3 Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 1243 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing southwest, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1913, San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits, County Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
VNAP LLC / VWAP LLC
PO Box 591572
San Francisco, CA 94159-1572

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 8, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: none

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: tire sales and servicing

B4. Present Use: office/retail/restaurant

*B5. Architectural Style: commercial with minimal classical ornamentation

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1913. A Storefront alterations to accommodate new commercial functions occurred in 1925, 1928, 1939, 1961, 1983, and 1986. These alterations entailed new window and door insertions, on both the Van Ness Avenue and Sutter Street elevation (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: David C. Coleman b. Builder: Moses Fisher

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

1243 Van Ness Avenue was previously documented in a 1984 San Francisco Downtown Inventory undertaken by San Francisco Architectural Heritage and found to merit a level "C" (contextual importance) in their rating system. The building is also referenced in the City of San Francisco's Van Ness Avenue Area Plan as a contributory building. According to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: "City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources," neither of these ratings qualify as an adopted local register for the purposes of CEQA, and both require further consultation and review which is provided herein (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

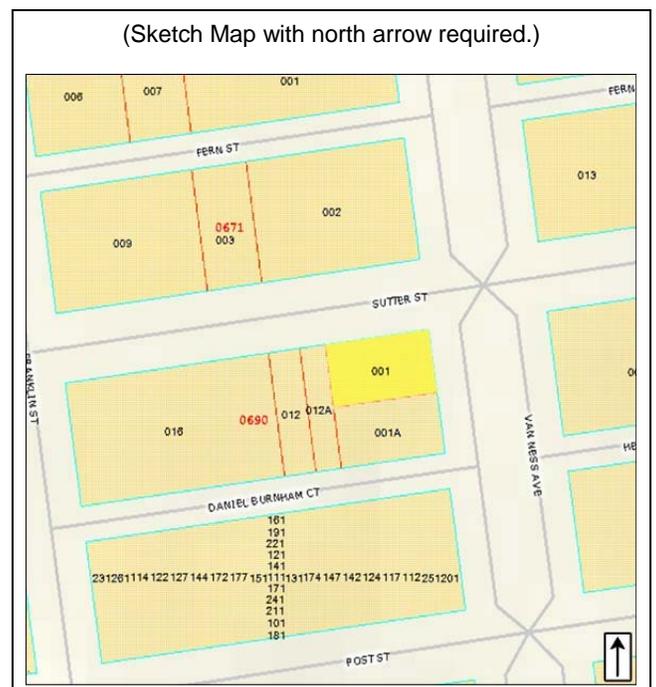
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; San Francisco History Center; *San Francisco Chronicle*; *The Architect and Engineer*; *The Automobile*.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

A stringcourse underscored by egg and dart detailing demarcates the first and second stories of the building, both of which are dominated by large window insertions that form three bays. The first level, on both the Van Ness Avenue and Sutter Street elevation, is highly modified by modern commercial storefront insertions. Large incisions alter the original three bay configuration of the first level, filled with aluminum and glass windows and doors. Additionally, a stucco wash lines the first story, on both the Van Ness Avenue and Sutter Street elevations. Aluminum frame commercial awnings extend across the entirety of the Van Ness elevation, wrapping around the corner of Sutter Street. The second story of the Van Ness elevation retains the original three bay configuration, with multi-component window insertions filling each bay. In each, a large central fixed window is flanked by two rectangular hinged windows and crowned by three of the same. The windows are slightly recessed into the building and have aluminum sashes with wood framing.

The northerly elevation is the sole additional exposed elevation. The treatment of the elevation mirrors that of the Van Ness façade, with the cornice and stringcourse extending the entirety of the elevation and a largely original second story underlain by a highly altered first level. Like the Van Ness elevation, aluminum frame commercial awnings line the building, and large aluminum-framed window and commercial entry insertions appear irregularly the length of the first level. The second level is divided into eight bays, with prominent recessed window insertions. On either edge, the windows are six-part fixed with aluminum sashes and wood framing. The remaining six are four-part fixed, also with aluminum sashes and wood framing. One of the windows has been converted to a glazed wood door, which leads to a fire escape.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 1243 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and is not a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

Constructed in 1913, 1243 Van Ness Avenue was one of many automobile related commercial facilities constructed along Van Ness Avenue in the early years of the twentieth century. Following the dislocation of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Van Ness Avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed commercial corridor that was increasingly dominated by automobile sales, manufacturing, and repair. The nascent auto industry and its array of support sectors found an ideal home in the space afforded by the vacating retail sector along Van Ness Avenue. Close to the urban core, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west's largest Auto Rows. The industry initially appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but quickly scores of auto related businesses steadily traveled north, flanking the broad avenue from Market nearly to the Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

The building was constructed as a speculative commercial venture by California-born builder and real estate developer Moses Fisher. Active across the city in the years following the earthquake, Fisher was responsible for both commercial and residential development near Auto Row, as well as in the expanding periphery of the city in newly established residential enclaves such as Jordan Park.¹ He built this building, a two-part structure that included its southerly neighbor 1233 Van Ness Avenue (see DPR523 form), in conjunction with New York-born architect David C. Coleman, with whom he often collaborated in development projects.² Unlike many of the buildings constructed during the period on Auto Row, 1243 Van Ness was not purpose built for a specific auto industry client, but rather was developed as a generic space for “shops and lofts” that could be filled by any number of commercial interests.³

The speculative nature of the construction attests to the economic might of the newly expanding Auto Row, as a variety of smaller support services and lower-tiered sales rooms sought prime locations embedded along the burgeoning auto sector of the avenue. The building has an understated Neoclassical aesthetic that conformed to the prevailing commercial style of the time and could accommodate the functional mandate of the automobile business, and as such, was a standard addition to San Francisco’s established Auto Row. Combining a simple sales room with secondary convertible spaces, the building expressed the basic design integration that characterized both the modest and architecturally prominent auto construction of the period.

By 1916, the building was occupied by George I. Abel, a tire distributor featuring Houk Wire Wheels produced by the Houk Manufacturing Company of Buffalo, New York. The company was an early entrant into the tire manufacturing business, and later became the Wire Wheel Corporation of America. At its peak, the company was producing upwards of 5,000 tires a day.⁴ In addition to the Van Ness Avenue storefront, Abel held distributorships across seven western states.⁵ Building permits indicate that Abel retained ownership of the building only into the early 1920s, and in 1925 the storefront was remodeled for use as an auto sales room owned by Denton H. Smith. After this brief salesroom tenant in the mid-1920s, however, the building was never again used for auto related purposes. In 1928, the building was occupied by a cigar store, and the plate glass windows of the storefront were replaced with an iron sliding gate. By 1939 the building was vacant and after 1940 the building was used for a variety of office and commercial purposes, including 1960s use by Heald College. The flexible program of 1243 Van Ness Avenue accommodated an array of changing functions as the avenue’s commercial character evolved. As tenants have changed, major storefront insertions have greatly altered the first level of the building, largely effacing the evidence of its auto related form. The Van Ness Avenue elevation contains a number of aluminum framed door and window insertions, which divide the building into distinct commercial units.

¹ “Jordan Park,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 8, 1913; “Nat Goodwin’s Property Passes To Other Hands,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 14, 1913; “Moses Fisher Sells,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 6, 1912; 1910 United States Census Records.

² “To Build Several Residences,” *The Architect and Engineer*, August, 1912, 113.

³ San Francisco Department of Buildings, Application for Building Permit, 1231 Van Ness Avenue, November 14, 1913.

⁴ “Instructions for Applying Houk Quick Change Wire Wheels,” An undated brochure produced by the Houk Manufacturing Company, accessed online at <http://www.stanleymotorcarriage.com/735restoration/WireWheels/HoukWireWheelBrochure.htm>, April 14 2009; “Display Ad 22: Houk Wire Wheels,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 19, 1916; *Standard Corporation Service: September-December 1917*, (New York: Standard Statistics Company, Inc, 1917) 413.

⁵ *The Automobile*, Vol XXXIII, No. 5, July 29, 1915, 224.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Evaluation

As a modest and generalized commercial building, 1243 Van Ness Avenue does not convey direct associations with significant themes of development in both the American auto industry or the development of Van Ness' Auto Row (Criterion A or 1).

While the building housed a number of auto related functions, first as a tire salesroom and subsequently as a used car salesroom, the property was a standardized speculative venture undertaken when Van Ness' Auto Row was well-established and the foundation of the American auto industry well-developed. The building remained related to the San Francisco auto industry for a relatively brief period of time, and was subsequently devoted to an array of generic commercial uses that hold no direct associations to significant local, state, or national events or developments.

Similarly, the building is not associated with any historically significant individual (Criterion B or 2). The various auto firms that occupied the building were only small components of an increasingly vast industry supply chain that included manufacturers, suppliers, and dealers and spreading across the country. There is no documentation of direct association with any individuals important in these various fields of endeavor. Further, the building does not demonstrate distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a well-established design sensibility that includes allusions to classical detailing and basic functional requirements (Criterion C or 3). While indicative of the urban development of San Francisco's Auto Row, the building is not an exemplar. The architect, David C. Coleman, was a relatively modest figure, with a speculative design practice that included an array of residential and commercial construction. Similarly, while the developer Moses Fisher is indicative of the rampant speculation that arose in the wake of the 1906 earthquake, his role in real estate development is not significant but rather basically illustrative of the period's urban development history. The building, therefore, is not important as the work of a master architect or designer.

In addition to failing to meet any of the criteria for listing on the NRHP or the CRHR, the building displays a marked loss of integrity that severs it from even a basic association with its Auto Row related context. Years of commercial entryway insertions and reconfigurations at the ground level have eroded the building's functional form. While the building does retain many of its original features on the second story, and its cornice, these features do not impart any specific associations with Auto Row and are not able on their own to convey potential architectural significance.

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of commercial construction is otherwise well documented and the building does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criterion D or 4).

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 1243 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing south, 3/8/09



**Photograph 3: 1243 Van Ness representative storefront insertion,
camera facing southeast, 3/8/09**

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 3S

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 10

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #12

P1. Other Identifier: 1320 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. **USGS 7.5' Quad:** San Francisco North, Calif. **Date:** 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 1320 Van Ness Avenue

City: San Francisco

Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0670-013

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1320 Van Ness Avenue fills the block-front between Sutter Street and Fern Street. The four-story Renaissance Revival palazzo-style building is rectangular in plan and of steel-frame concrete construction with a concrete foundation. While relatively restrained, the Van Ness elevation of the building is composed of several distinct design elements, resulting in a variegated composition (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP13 (Community Center / Social Hall)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 1320 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northeast, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1911, San Francisco Department of Buildings, County Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Van Ness Hotel, Inc.
1619 Pennsylvania Avenue NW.
Washington, DC 20006-3404

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 8, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: Scottish Rite Masonic Temple

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: Masonic Temple

B4. Present Use: theater

*B5. Architectural Style: Italian Renaissance Revival

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1909 and has not had any major external alterations (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: O'Brien and Werner b. Builder: Mahony Brothers

*B10. Significance: Theme: Social and Architectural Development of Masonic Fraternal Organizations

Area: California Period of Significance: 1909-1911 Property Type: Fraternal Applicable Criteria: A and C

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

1320 Van Ness Avenue was previously documented in a 1984 San Francisco Downtown Inventory undertaken by San Francisco Architectural Heritage and found to merit a level "A" (highest importance) in their rating system. The building is also referenced in the City of San Francisco's Van Ness Avenue Area Plan as a significant building. According to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: "City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources," neither of these ratings qualify as an adopted local register for the purpose of CEQA, and both require further consultation and review, which is provided herein (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *Splendid Survivors*; *San Francisco Chronicle*; Dumenil, *Freemasonry and American Culture* (1984); Brockman, *Theatre of the Fraternity* (1996); *The Architect and Engineer of California*; Ivey, *Prayers In Stone* (1999); *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*.

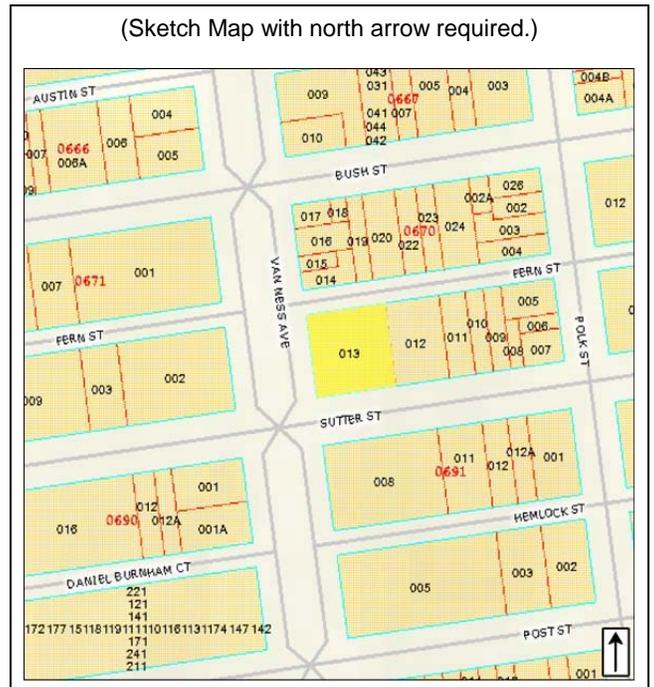
B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The base of the building is composed of two courses of smooth granite, which cedes to a scored concrete entryway level that replicates limestone in color and massing. A simple dentil stringcourse separates this from the upper stories of the building, which are dominated by seven two-story arched window insertions. The smooth facing of these upper stories is given texture by orderly rows of metal anchors that project slightly from the smooth surface, giving the wall a “beaded” surface. The fourth story of the building is demarcated by a narrow course of windows, separated by eight embossed panels with a bas relief rosette. The elaborate galvanized iron cornice flows virtually uninterrupted from this window course, with a highly ornate entablature. The cornice features a foliated fleur-de-lis band, slim dentils, egg and dart molding, scroll brackets, and a terminates in a course of bears and foliated wreaths, and provides a rich and emphatic anchor that unites the disparate elements of the facade.

Each section of the façade is characterized by distinct window types, although all of the windows are vertically aligned. The first level of the building features a central recessed entryway flanked by three pairs of recessed hinged wood frame windows on either side. The window insertions have simple projecting sills. The entryway, accessed by granite steps and paneled in marble, is framed by a molded entablature and balustrade. With foliated brackets, masks, and a wreath encircling a scroll, the doorway detail mirrors the intricacy of the cornice. Iron lamps, designed as scrolled vines with crowning filigree, appear on either side of the doorway and seals related to the Scottish Rite appear in escutcheons flanking the balustrade above. The second and third story window treatment consists of seven round-arched window insertions with subtle decorative hoods and embossed tracery detailing. Spanning two levels, the window configuration is composed of four panes: two recessed wood frame windows crowned by two recessed wood frame arched windows. Decorative panels underscored by scroll brackets separate the two levels. The fourth story window level consists of pairs of wood frame single-pane windows, separated by the eight embossed rosette panels referenced above.

Although the Van Ness elevation is the most exuberant, the southern Sutter Street elevation boasts nearly the same architectural form, with only the following minor differences. The central doorway on the southern elevation is arched, with the scored concrete surround simulating arch stones and a polychrome tile ensemble featuring the Double Headed Eagle of the Scottish Rite. Additionally, a basement doorway appears on the southeastern corner of the building, with a fabric and aluminum frame projecting canopy.

The northern elevation, lining the secondary and less visible Fern Street, reflects a diminished architectural treatment. The characteristic ornamentation of the building only extends two bays, with the remainder finished in unarticulated concrete. A fire escape traverses the building, and an elevator bulkhead projects from the roof. Three pairs of stained glass windows appear on the northern elevation, however, embedded in a slightly projecting smooth arched frame.

Visible alterations to the building are few, with replaced doors perhaps the most significant. The Van Ness entryway consists of two pairs of anodized aluminum doors, and the southern elevation is filled with a pair of glass and metal framed doors flanked by sidelights. Additionally, gold colored metal panels depicting the name of the current theater tenant, the Regency, appear on either side of the Van Ness entrance. All other architectural features and configurations remain intact, however, and the building exterior is in excellent structural condition (see Section B10).

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 1320 Van Ness Avenue appears eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and local designation under Criterion A (Criterion 1) at the regional (state) level, for its significance in the social development of the fraternal Masonic order. Additionally, the building appears significant at the state level under Criterion C (Criterion 3), as a significant design by Masonic architect Carl Werner that is representative of important aspects of Masonic architecture. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000)

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and is a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

1320 Van Ness Avenue was constructed in 1911 by the San Francisco Chapter of the Scottish Rite Masons. The building was the body's second, because the first temple on Geary Street collapsed and burned only months after construction in the 1906 Earthquake and Fire.¹ The Scottish Rite branch of the Masons was enjoying a surge in popularity in the early years of the twentieth century, and the organization used the loss as an opportunity to build a prominent temple that reflected the increasingly high-profile status of the fraternal organization. Although the group's 1905 Albert Pike Memorial Temple on Geary had been considered adequate at the time of construction, the Van Ness temple was of a far grander and more elaborate scale that set a new tone for the Scottish Rite across California. The palazzo-style temple on Van Ness Avenue was the first in a wave of California construction commissioned by the body that rivaled the monumentality of other civic and public buildings across the state and created a long-lasting architectural legacy for the group.

The Masonic tradition is one of the most widespread and influential of American fraternal organizations. Across America, both grand and modest nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings bear the telltale square and compass of Masonry, indicating the remarkable geographic distribution of the group. With obscure roots that extend deep into Medieval Europe, the organization thrived in Colonial America, counting many prominent early leaders as members. As settlement expanded westward, the organization grew, establishing temples across virtually all settled portions of the United States. Similar to the "civilizing" forces embodied by edifices devoted to education, law, and trade; the physical presence of the Masonic body was an often touted symbol of American civic progress and consolidation.

Participation in the Masonic order reached its zenith in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. During the period, America was awash in a general mania for fraternal organization, as a wide array of citizens sought to navigate the increasingly complex social and industrial order of a rapidly expanding nation. Although much of this organizational fervor sought to establish highly pragmatic and tangible ends, such as temperance, religious, and social reform, the motivations driving the Masons ultimately more complex. Predicated upon a highly ritualistic and often esoteric social framework, the group was far less concerned with widespread social reform than it was with providing a social bastion for its members. With orderly ranks, largely secret processes, and elaborate rituals woven around

¹ "Masons Enjoy Their New Home," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 7, 1905; "All That Remains of the Fine New Scottish Rite Temple Recently Dedicated," May 3, 1906.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 5 of 10

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #12*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

shared ideals and moral norms, the Masonic movement represented a cohesive framework for its members that stood in contrast to the chaotic political, social, and economic conditions shaping the nation as a whole. The lure of the system was widespread. In 1879, the organization claimed to have 550,000 members. By 1925, the group boasted over three million Masons, spread throughout every state in the nation.²

The organization was, and remains, divided into two basic upper orders: the York Rite and the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. The Scottish Rite was the more esoteric of the two and consisted of a progressive system of moral education that hinged upon, “the struggle of good and evil, insight and ignorance.” This dramatized journey evoked historical and religious symbols, parables, and mythology, with grandiose levels that included Prince of Jerusalem, Chief of the Tabernacle, and Knight Kadosh. Prior to the 1880s, the orchestration of the journey primarily relied upon role playing, texts, and intensive dramatizations using the spoken word. Beginning in the 1880s, however, the Scottish Rite increasingly turned to a ritualistic framework that employed rich stage-sets, props, costumes, and complex lighting systems. This shift toward a theatrical presentation was accompanied by a marked surge in membership, as members were drawn to the entertainment experience of the group. In 1900, a total of 40,000 men were identified as members of the Scottish Rite. By 1930, that number had surged to 600,000.³

In large part, this late nineteenth century transition was enabled by rapid advances in technology. As new production methods produced an abundance of sets, costumes, illumination, and décor, American citizens became increasingly sophisticated consumers of material culture. With the spoken word and recitation of arcane texts no longer sufficient, the Scottish Rite cloaked its traditional ritual in a rich entertainment package that reflected the modernization of American life in general. These material advances served to ensure the continued popularity of the group even as a modern innovations such as radio, movies, and telephones vied with the fraternal realm for private allegiances. This increasingly complex theatrical mandate, accompanied by the exponential growth of the body, led to a spate of lodge construction across the country. Rather than simple meeting halls, the buildings reflected a host of allegorical and mythological associations. As an organization steeped in historical associations, the buildings spoke a diverse revivalist architectural language, with Islamic, Moorish, Renaissance, Gothic, and even Colonial overtones. The buildings themselves served as stage-sets for the rituals of the body, with theaters, iconography, and precise spatial orders written into the building’s form.⁴

The construction of 1320 Van Ness Avenue reflects the intimate union between ritual and the built form. The four story building was modeled upon the Strozzi Palace in Florence, Italy. Apart from replacing the rusticated stone of Strozzi with concrete construction, the mass and fenestration of the building was strikingly reminiscent of the fifteenth century design. The cohesive unity of the palazzo exterior, however, belied a veritable explosion of historical influences within the building. The vestibule of the Van Ness building was designed in the Greek-Doric form, with sixteen columns and a rotunda. The men’s parlor was in the Louis XIV design, with the women’s parlor cloaked in trappings of the American Colonial period. The auditorium and ballroom were described as a “splendid piece of architecture from the French Renaissance of the Louis XV period,” and could accommodate 1,500 people. The banquet hall, done in the Dutch design, was separated from the auditorium by monumental wooden doors. In addition to these major meeting spaces, an array of secondary rooms, chambers, and offices boasted elaborate and intricate historicist dressing, reflecting a sense of exuberant architectural costumery.⁵ At the time of construction,

² Lynn Dumenil, *Freemasonry and American Culture 1880-1930* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984) xi-xv.

³ C. Lance Brockman, *Theatre of the Fraternity: Staging the Ritual Space* (Jackson, Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 1996) 14-15.

⁴ Brockman, *Theatre of the Fraternity*, 25.

⁵ “Imposing Masonic Temple Completed,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 11. 1911.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 6 of 10

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #12*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

both the interior and exterior elicited rapturous praise, with the San Francisco Chronicle marveling that, “the perfect appointments, decorations, brilliant illumination, and stage and scenic effects combine to represent a scene of enchantment the likes of which has rarely been beheld in this or any other city.”⁶

The building was designed by O’Brien and Werner, a Bay Area firm centered in Alameda. Both of the architects were members of the Freemasons, a prerequisite for commissions that was common in Masonic construction. At the time, the partners were both rather young and the firm relatively untested, however Carl Werner went on to design most pre-war Masonic Temples in California, including prominent edifices in Oakland, Bakersfield, Sacramento, Fresno, Petaluma, and Santa Rosa. At his death, Werner was a 33rd Degree Mason of the Scottish Rite, the highest possible level within the fraternity.⁷ Werner’s architectural designs embodied a full range of periods, including Italian Renaissance, Gothic, Classical, Georgian, and Colonial. His designs were considered to be exemplars of the Masonic form, with the San Francisco palazzo arguably the most noted. In 1918, California’s *Architect and Engineer* affirmed this mantle, stating that Werner had, “made a study of Masonic building,” and had, “given the buildings an architectural treatment that is refreshing when compared to the monstrosities built in the earlier days of the Golden State.”⁸

The completion of the San Francisco Temple was the first major commission undertaken by Werner for the Scottish Rite, and as such provided an important aesthetic model for subsequent work. The construction also elevated architectural expectations for the Scottish Rite and the Masons in general. As quasi-public buildings, Masonic Temples had a complex mandate to both house the internal functions of the group and project a suitable public façade. *The Architect and Engineer* noted this mandate, stating that, “probably no building outside of those generally recognized as of a public character calls for more critical inspection than the Masonic Temple.” Prior to Werner’s commissions, the article continued, “the Masonic bodies had not appreciated the fact that better architecture and better buildings are desired, in fact expected, from them.”⁹

The looming palazzo at Van Ness fulfilled this mandate on a number of levels. Although its fanciful design satisfied the theatrical and ritualistic functions of the expanding body, it also wove itself well into the Beaux Arts language of the era. The monumental order of the building in many ways forecasted later developments at both the San Francisco Civic Center and the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition. The temple’s design drew extensively from the past, yet reflected intensely current social standards of monumentality and grandeur. Beginning with the construction of the Van Ness Temple, Werner displayed a sophisticated grasp of classical expression, a form which he recommended for its, “crystal-like character and calm stately dignity.” This design mastery manifested itself in much of Werner’s Masonic work, as well as in a range of other commissions undertaken by the architect. During the period of his most intense Masonic construction, he designed several churches for Bay Area Christian Scientists including First Church Alameda, Fourth and Fifth Churches in San Francisco, and Fourth Church Oakland. In all of the work, the buildings reflected the complex juncture between civic and mystical, modern and historical, and public and private.¹⁰

⁶ “New Scottish Rite Temple Formally Dedicated: Splendid Ceremony, Inspiring and Impressive,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 4, 1911.

⁷ “Carl Werner Dies,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 4, 1943; “Some California Masonic Temples,” *The Architect & Engineer of California*, Vol. L.II., Number 2, February 1918, 49-67.

⁸ “Some California Masonic Temples,” *The Architect & Engineer of California*, 67.

⁹ “Some California Masonic Temples,” *The Architect & Engineer of California*, 49.

¹⁰ Paul Eli Ivey, *Prayers In Stone: Christian Science Architecture in the United States 1894-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999) 167-168.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the public and private social functions of the Van Ness Avenue Temple also reflected aspects of these junctures as in addition to traditional Scottish Rite activities, the organization sponsored a diverse assortment of public events. Throughout the 1910s and 1920s, the organization hosted open lectures, meetings, balls, and benefits, indicating the increasingly public role of the once reclusive Masonic tradition. In 1911, the Temple sponsored a lecture on the construction of the Panama Canal as a benefit for the San Francisco General Hospital. The same year a smaller fraternal organization, The Woodmen of the World, held its ceremonies in the Temple, renting space for a number of events. Only weeks later, the building hosted an event for the suffrage movement. Later in the 1910s, William Butler Yeats presented in the auditorium, followed by a series of lectures on applied psychology given by Dr. D.V. Bush.¹¹ This sampling of events represents only a small portion of the public outreach, and it appears that almost immediately upon construction the massive building became a de facto civic space.

Despite the prominent position enjoyed by the San Francisco Scottish Rite, by the 1930s the organization was in decline. The widespread popularity of Freemasonry, and fraternal organizations in general, diminished in the late 1920s and by 1930 the Masons reflected what one commentator declared, “the Tuberculosis of Fraternalism.”¹² Across the country, membership declined and lodges faced bankruptcy and neglect. After 1930, the Scottish Rite largely ceased their building of grand new temples, and the group gradually dwindled in size and influence throughout the twentieth century. The decline of the group can be attributed to a number of factors influencing twentieth century life, including a decreased interest in ritual, a decline of public participation in favor of the private realm, and increasingly sophisticated social outlets including television and the auto that made the theater and pageantry of the Scottish Rite and other fraternal organizations appear anachronistic and dated.¹³ Although the Scottish Rite remained in the building until the 1960s, the rapid expansion that characterized the early twentieth century and the corresponding building of temples like that on Van Ness faded quickly. When the Scottish Rite moved to new quarters in the mid-1960s, the temple was converted for use as a theater. In many senses this conversion was in keeping with the building’s original function, as the pageantry of the Scottish Rite was transformed into the traditional pageantry of the general stage. The exterior of the building remains much as it did upon construction, with very few alterations.

Evaluation

As one of the earliest and most prominent Scottish Rite Temples in the state of California, the Temple at 1320 Van Ness Avenue appears eligible for listing in the NRHP and CRHR under Criteria A and 1 for its significant associations with important aspects of early twentieth century fraternal identity in California. The building reflects the massive growth of the Scottish Rite, as Californians flocked to fraternal organizations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Further, the building directly reflects an important transition within the Scottish Rite itself, as traditional trappings of the organization were enveloped in pageantry enabled by modern technological and social advances. This wedding of entertainment and social identity reflects larger advances in state and national culture. By the early twentieth century, Americans had become increasingly sophisticated consumers of popular entertainment and theatrics, and the building was in many senses commissioned as a cohesive entertainment

¹¹ “Plan Lecture For Hospital Benefit,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 16, 1911; “Woodmen of World to Honor Memory of Departed Members,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 4, 1911; “Suffrage Cause Fills Scottish Rite Temple,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 17, 1911; “13 Free Lectures On Applied Psychology,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 22, 1922.

¹² “The Masonic Lodge Room, 1870-1930: A Sacred Space of Masculine Spiritual Hierarchy,” *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, Volume 5*, 1995, 26.

¹³ Lynn Dumenil, *Freemasonry and American Culture 1880-1930* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984) 163
DPR 523L (1/95)

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

spectacle. Its erection was accompanied by parades, and rituals, speeches and pageantry, and its physical form represented an organization at its zenith in social cohesion and clout.

In addition to its significant role in the organizational history of the fraternal body, the Temple at 1320 Van Ness is also significant at the state level for its definitive architectural role under Criteria C and 3. The building was the first, and arguably the most esteemed, major Masonic commission undertaken by Carl Werner. With its Renaissance Revival exterior and sumptuously eclectic historicist interior, the building stood as an exemplar for the Scottish Rite and provided a template for all subsequent Masonic construction in the 1910s and 1920s. Unlike the relatively modest California temples of the nineteenth century, the Temple on Van Ness Avenue fully incorporated the lore and pageantry of the Scottish Rite into its physical form. The structure itself was a sort of stage-set that enabled the body to interact with and reflect the surrounding community of San Francisco. This pivotal role was acknowledged almost immediately upon construction, with architectural critics declaring the Van Ness building the finest Masonic structure in California and even the country.¹⁴

In its design and stature, the building also reflected heightened architectural expectations surrounding Masonic construction. As the group emerged as an increasingly integral component of popular American identity, the form of its temples evolved into a distinct breed of quasi-public undertakings that satisfied both internal and external design requirements. Werner's work exhibited this ascendancy masterfully, with the San Francisco Temple standing as a compelling example. The integrity of the external portions of the building is notable, with no major alterations to the basic form and ornamentation of the building. As an example of Werner's imaginative and sophisticated work and the complex design mandate of the Scottish Rite, the building remains an intact and immensely valuable design representative. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association, the building illustrates the enormous cultural impact of both the Masonic tradition and the Scottish Rite in California.

Although this evaluation recognizes the significance of 1320 Van Ness Avenue under Criteria A and C (1 and 3), the building does not meet any of the other criteria for listing. It is not directly associated with any specific individuals that are significant in local, state, or national history (Criterion B or 2). Rather, the building is indicative of the general rise of the Masonic order and fraternal traditions in California. Additionally, the physical aspects of the property are not likely to be a principal source of information important for historical understanding (Criterion D or 4).

¹⁴ "Some California Masonic Temples," *The Architect & Engineer of California*, 67.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #

HRI#

Trinomial

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #12

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 1320 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northeast, 3/8/09



Photograph 3 : 1320 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing east, 3/8/09

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 4: 1320 Van Ness Avenue, tile work above secondary doorway, 3/8/09



Photograph 5: 1320 Van Ness Avenue, stained glass windows on secondary elevation, camera facing south, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6L

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 9

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #13

P1. Other Identifier: 1625 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 1625 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0642-003

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1625 Van Ness Avenue is embedded in the Van Ness block-front between California Street and Sacramento Street. The four story building is composed of reinforced concrete, with a concrete foundation and a flat concrete and asphalt roof with a decorative parapet. The building is L-shaped in plan, wrapping around its northerly neighbor, the Paige Automobile Company Building (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP7 (3+ Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)

See Continuation Sheet

P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) See Continuation Sheet

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1919, San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits, County Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Wherco
235 Montgomery Street #1012
San Francisco, CA 94104-3003

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 8, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: The Allen Building

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: auto sales

B4. Present Use: office/retail

*B5. Architectural Style: commercial with minimal classical ornamentation

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1919. In 1935 new tenants reconfigured the storefront. In 1949 the building was converted to office use, with accompanying storefront and interior alterations. In 1978, more interior alterations adjusted the office space. A major storefront alteration occurred again in 1994, as well as a roof replacement (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Macdonald and Kahn Engineers b. Builder: Macdonald and Kahn Engineers

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

1625 Van Ness Avenue was previously documented in a 1984 San Francisco Downtown Inventory undertaken by San Francisco Architectural Heritage and found to merit a level “B” (major importance) in their rating system. According to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: “City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources,” this rating does not qualify as an adopted local register for the purpose of CEQA, and requires further consultation and review, which is provided herein (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*; *Oakland Tribune*; *The San Francisco Examiner*; *The Commercial Vehicle*; *Motor West*; Ling, *America and the Automobile* (1990); Stevens, *Hoover Dam* (1988); Bucci, *Albert Kahn Wolf, Big Dams and Other Dreams* (1996); Dyble, *Paying The Toll* (2009); *Journal of San Diego History*; Smith, *Influence of the Great War Upon Shipping* (1919); *The American Architect*; Rae, *The American Automobile* (1965); Scharchburg, *Carriages Without Horses* (1993); Indiana Historical Society Manuscript and Visual Collections.

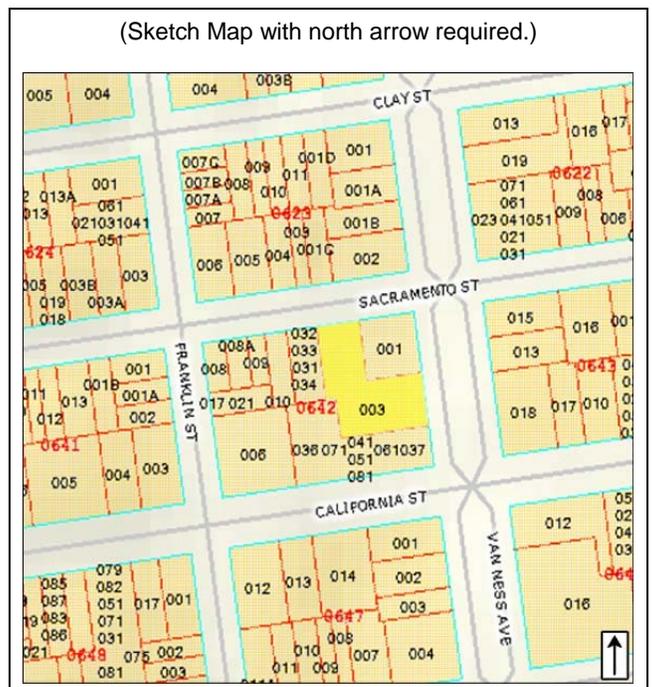
B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The primary elevation fronting Van Ness Avenue is faced in multi-toned brick and dominated by three bays of recessed multi-pane casement windows. A narrow cornice, underscored by subtle arabesque ornamentation crowns the building. The secondary elevation fronting Sacramento Street is far simpler and has a vary different aesthetic, with a garage entryway and a smooth finish of unarticulated concrete interspersed with steel-frame casement windows.

Modern commercial retail usage has significantly altered the first level of the building on both elevations, with the addition of glass and aluminum windows and entryways and infill stucco surrounds. Metal signage and an offset sidewalk canopy appear along Van Ness Avenue on the first level, both of which are also modern infill. While a single garage entrance appears on the Sacramento Street elevation, two other garage entrances present in the original design have been removed and replaced with modern window and door infill. Despite substantial reconfiguration, original pilasters flank the first floor of the Van Ness elevation, featuring stucco palmettes and foliation. Additionally, the narrow scrolled stringcourse appears above the commercial infill along the Van Ness Avenue elevation, creating a foundation for the floors above.

The upper portions of the building largely retain their original configuration and material. The façade is divided into three, three-story recessed window bays. Each floor is separated by incised spandrels, lending a horizontal orientation to the façade that balances the verticality of the window bays. The two side bays feature single sixteen-light steel casement windows. The central bay consists of three twelve-light casement windows, separated by fluted terra cotta pilasters with volute ornamentation. An iron fire escape runs along the front of the southern bay. Significantly less ornate in form, the upper stories of the Sacramento Street elevation retain their original window configuration. The horizontally oriented windows form three bays, all of which are flush and unornamented. The two outer bays consist of a pair of windows and the central bay consists of a tripartite window insertion flanked on either edge by a single window insertion. All of the windows are composed of a large single pane fixed window flanked at the top and bottom by a smaller hinged awning window.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 1625 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

Constructed in 1919, 1625 Van Ness Avenue was one of many automobile related commercial facilities constructed along Van Ness Avenue in the early years of the twentieth century. Following the dislocation of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Van Ness Avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed commercial corridor increasingly dominated by automobile sales, manufacturing, and repair. Close to the urban core and the economic opportunities inherent to the city, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

corridor quickly became one of the west's largest Auto Rows. The industry initially appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but scores of auto related businesses soon traveled steadily north, flanking the broad avenue from Market Street nearly to the Bay.

Leading the country in automobile sales and ownership throughout the 1910s and 1920s, California proved a ready market for increasingly standardized and reliable automobiles shipped largely from the middle-western industrial belt. With primary consumers arising from the ranks of California's expanding agricultural sector and professional middle class, demand for automobiles quickly funneled to Los Angeles and San Francisco. Satisfying this demand, distributorships along Van Ness Avenue became a nexus between the productive capacities of the automotive industry and the commercial marketing development necessary for widespread auto sales and ownership. In many senses, the showrooms were a face for the increasingly powerful auto industry, and the array of buildings erected represented an evolving conception of the automobile's role in America.¹ By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops, and the avenue reflected a diverse building stock demonstrating the unparalleled ascendancy of the automobile.

1625 Van Ness Avenue was constructed by the San Francisco based engineering and contracting firm of Macdonald and Kahn. Formed in 1911 and active across the city in the years following the earthquake, the firm acted alternately as architects, engineers, and contractors in a remarkably wide range of projects both in San Francisco and elsewhere in the state of California throughout the first half of the twentieth century. With a particular emphasis in reinforced concrete construction, the partnership undertook contracts for a strikingly diverse array of both prosaic and high profile ventures including construction of sewers, storm drains, bridges, concrete ships; as well as more standard speculative residential, industrial, and commercial properties. Displaying an adept technical and networking ability, the firm ultimately entered the upper echelon of the American civil engineering profession with their central participation in the construction of the Hoover Dam. As part of the Six Companies consortium that included Bechtel Corporation as well as other western construction giants, the firm played a substantial role in the successful completion of the dam, as well as the completion of the Grand Coulee Dam and subsequent World War II era defense related projects spearheaded by the Six Companies.² Individually, the engineers also displayed marked professional versatility, with Alan Macdonald hired in 1929 as the first General Manager for the as yet unconstructed Golden Gate Bridge. In this capacity he was an influential, albeit controversial, figure in the contracting and early construction of the seminal bridge span.³

At the time of the 1919 construction of 1625 Van Ness Avenue, the firm was far less established, with few high profile contracts. A few years earlier, Macdonald and Kahn were commissioned by Zellerbach Paper Company to construct a six-story reinforced concrete factory and warehouse in North Beach, on the Embarcadero. During that time the firm was also developing pueblo-style single family residences in a speculative venture on Sea Cliff Avenue along San Francisco's coastline. The most high-profile activities of the firm arose from its central participation in the

¹ Peter J. Ling, *America and the Automobile: Technology, Reform, and Social Change*. (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990) 13, 96-97.

² Joseph E. Stevens, *Hoover Dam: An American Adventure*. (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988) 40; Donald E. Wolf, *Big Dams and Other Dreams: The Six Companies Story*. (Norman Oklahoma: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1996) 32-33.

³Louise Nelson Dyble, *Paying The Toll: Local Power, Regional Politics, and the Golden Gate Bridge*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) 48-50.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

1918 development of America's first concrete freighter, aptly named Faith. Hired by a speculative venture named the San Francisco Ship Building Company, the engineer's designed the 5000 ton vessel in six months.⁴ The successful maiden voyage of the ship in the spring of 1918 garnered much praise, as the shortages of steel accompanying America's entry into World War I had spurred funding and political will for development of the technology. Following the launch, scores of contracts for concrete ships were undertaken by the company, many of which were under the auspices of the United States government's Emergency Fleet activity.⁵

With such marked professional breadth, it appears that the two principals of the young firm sought to establish the most lucrative professional and commercial applications for reinforced concrete construction, resulting in a varied professional repertoire. On several levels, however, construction projects in and around Auto Row were a logical extension for the firm. In the late 1910s development along the row was booming, with prominent architects, auto companies, and businessmen increasingly attracted to the dense two-mile urban automotive corridor. Since 1913 auto sales rooms and auto repair shops had dominated the avenue, however by 1920 the development had reached a fevered pitch. In the 1920s, celebrations such as "Open Roads Week," drew thousands to Van Ness Avenue, drawn by festivities marking "the call of the open road." In the mid-1920s, dealers routinely screened movies, complete with orchestral sections, showing films with dramatic titles including, "The Saga of Transportation." As dealers sought to introduce consumers to the freedom and leisure opportunities afforded by the automobile, the buildings on Van Ness became a veritable stage-set for the advancement of the automobile.⁶ As speculative businessmen, contractors, and engineers, the opportunities inherent in such growth and mass popularity were apparent to Macdonald and Kahn. Further, the capacities of construction along Auto Row to provide a similar stage set for the company's prowess in both reinforced concrete and industrial design also encouraged the firm to undertake Auto Row projects. In 1920 alone the firm constructed at least four buildings on Van Ness Avenue, all far larger in scale than those from the preceding decade and all reflective of an increasingly perfected conception of the requirements of auto sales.

Additionally, Felix Kahn's technical proficiency in building with reinforced concrete was paired with an intimate, albeit indirect, knowledge of designing for the auto industry. The same year that the firm was working along Van Ness Avenue, Felix Kahn's brother, the prominent industrial designer and architect Albert Kahn, was designing the enormous General Motors Building in Detroit, Michigan. A decade earlier Albert Kahn had designed both the Highland Park Ford Plant and the Packard Plant, providing an aesthetic and functional model for construction adopted by his brother's firm in much of the Van Ness Avenue construction. Like Macdonald and Kahn, Albert Kahn Associates Inc. Architects and Engineers of Detroit was a firm that blurred the boundaries between design and function. Ultimately, this skill lent itself well to the particular mandates of auto related architecture, which centered upon a sophisticated understanding of how the building's form aided the technological development of the auto product within.⁷

⁴ "Realty Sales Downtown Approximately Normal," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 8, 1916; "City's Growth Demands New Apartments and Homes," *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 20, 1917; "Concrete Ship to Slide into Water Today," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 14, 1918; Robert Eberhardt, "Concrete Shipbuilding in San Diego 1918-1920." *Journal of San Diego History*, Spring 1995, Volume 41, Number 2.

⁵ Russell J. Smith, *Influence of the Great War Upon Shipping*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1919) 217-243.

⁶ "Open Road Week Draws Crowd To Row," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 26, 1921; Earl C. Anthony Reception and Preview," *Oakland Tribune*, April 2, 1927.

⁷ Federico Bucci, *Albert Kahn: Architect of Ford*. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002) 27-58.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

Although designing and constructing a branch salesroom represented a far more modest endeavor than the design of revolutionary automobile plants such as Highland Park, the work undertaken by Macdonald and Kahn in San Francisco is representative of important strands of auto-related design. At the time of construction, the building was the largest single-dealer building in the west, a feat made possible by the firm's advanced reinforced concrete engineering capacities. With a broad and open L-shaped plan that overcame the embedded location in the center of the lot, the building was endowed with ample light, a feature which was accentuated by well-placed industrial windows and numerous skylights.

The first level was defined by prominent floor to ceiling plate glass windows, beckoning those who passed and serving as a transparent foil for the solidity and enticing glint of the cars within. The second, third, and fourth floors were divided effectively into functional sections, with two garage entrances leading directly to the second floor where a large service section was located. The third and fourth floors were divided into parts, repair, and paint departments. Such design conformed to the vanguard of architectural theory relating to auto sales. Although the matter received far less attention than the industrial design of factories, by the close of the 1910s architectural trade publications advocated open floor plans, ample light, and a vertical solution incorporating sales at the base and maintenance and repair above; a retinue of requirements elegantly and pragmatically addressed by Macdonald and Kahn.⁸

Unlike other Auto Row building's constructed concurrently by the firm, 1625 Van Ness Avenue reflected a decidedly traditional and embellished architectural aesthetic. Their other auto work, including the design of neighbor 1700 Van Ness Avenue, was of a straightforward and functional aesthetic, in many senses similar to that of the elder Kahn's massive Highland Park in industrial form. 1625 Van Ness was constructed for one of the more prosperous dealers along the row, and departed from the firm's established stripped-down tone with a multi-tone brick faced façade, more prominent framing walls and pilasters, arabesque ornamentation, and an opulent vaulted showroom. While these design elements were lauded at the time, as "the row's most magnificent showroom," these embellishments were of secondary importance to the functional appointments of the building, which accommodated a complex program in a rather awkward urban lot.

Upon completion, the building was occupied by L.D. Allen, a distributorship that carried the Cole Aero-Eight and Stevens Duryea cars, as well as Sandow trucks. The building served as the distribution center for northern California, Nevada, Arizona, and the Hawaiian Islands.⁹ In 1920, the three companies represented the prosperity and success of the industry, however by decade's end all had ceded to pressures in the market as standardization and consolidation transformed the industry. The Cole Motor Company, established in Indiana, was prominent from 1909 to 1925, producing "standardized" cars that competed early on with General Motors. The production method of the company relied upon the parts of various manufacturers rather than the "in-house" assembly of General Motors and Ford. As Ford's influence and assembly line tactics gained coherency and the advantages of specialization waned, Cole faded as a major competitor.¹⁰ Similarly, Stevens Duryea was a Massachusetts manufacturing firm that ceased operation in 1927, largely because of shortcomings in scale, efficiency, and cost. Although the company had been a very early entrant into the industry, making a model as early as the 1890s, the massive expansion within the industry

⁸ "An Automobile Sales building," *The American Architect*. (New York, Volume CXIV, No. 2228, September 4, 1918) 301-302.

⁹ "Allen Opens New Building On Auto Row," *The San Francisco Examiner*, May 2, 1920.

¹⁰ John B Rae, *The American Automobile*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965) 18; "Cole Motor Company Photographs, Ca. 1920." Indiana Historical Society Manuscript and Visual Collections Department, accessed online at http://www.indianahistory.org/Library/manuscripts/collection_guides/P0041.html, April 17, 2009.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

drove the company, like thousands of others, out of the business only decades after its inception.¹¹ Succumbing only several years later, the Chicago based Sandow Truck Company reflected a similar tale, with the companies assets liquidated by the early 1920s.¹² The rapid transition during this time period reflects the general consolidation that shaped the industry, as the mass production of firms such as Ford and Chevrolet supplanted smaller firms. A list compiled by the American Automobile Association in the late 1920s estimated that from 1900 onward more than 3000 makes of cars and trucks were produced by upward of 1500 identifiable companies. By the close of World War I many had shuttered, and by the 1930s most were gone.¹³

By the mid-1920s, the building was occupied by H.O. Harrison, a distributor of Hudson, Essex, and Dodge Cars.¹⁴ Building Permits indicate that Harrison installed a new storefront in the building, replacing plate glass windows with several doors. The building remained in auto use only until 1949, when the American Red Cross converted it into an office space. The building remained in use by the American Red Cross until the late 1960s, and was subsequently used for various office purposes. In the 1990s the building was occupied by a chain retail store, and remains in this use to the present. Major interior demolitions and reconfiguration accompanied the transition from auto functions to office and retail capacities.

Evaluation

While the automobile commissions undertaken by Macdonald and Kahn were relatively modest when compared to both their later work and the architectural precedents of major automobile plants such as Highland Park, the firm's work was important in that it tangibly consolidated the efficiency and standardization practices learned in the production arm of the industry and channeled them to the sales and consumption sectors. Although the conception and construction of early regional Auto Rows has received far less attention and academic inquiry, these locales were a critical channel by which an increasingly mechanistic and consolidated auto industry received diverse and fickle consumers, a meeting point that was instrumental for the financial success of the industry. Understanding Macdonald and Kahn's design as an auto sales "factory," the building exists as a derivative of lessons embodied by the rise of "Fordism." The entire construction was predicated upon the solution of a single design problem: promoting, selling, and maintaining the automobile.

As engineers, Macdonald and Kahn appeared to press the functional efficacy of the building in a more consistent manner and at a greater scale than previous showroom designers, who were often hampered by limited space and accustomed to greater ornamentation. Even compared with similarly scaled construction from a mere decade earlier, such as that of the White Garage at the corner of Market Street and Van Ness Avenue constructed by the Beaux Arts trained George Adrian Applegarth, the building was a far more cohesive and effective portal for the cars within; with lighter framing members, greater light, and a more open plan. Equally striking is the replicative capacity of the firm, in the years 1919-1920, they constructed at least four massive auto buildings along Van Ness, each quite similar to the other and each representative of the standardization in building techniques that was accompanying the standardization in automobile manufacturing. Each was a purpose-built building for distinct clients, yet each could be replicated with ease. 1625 Van Ness was one of the largest of the auto showrooms constructed by the firm, and

¹¹ Richard P. Scharchburg, *Carriages Without Horses: J. Frank Duryea and the Birth of the American Automobile Industry*. (SAE, 1993)

¹² "Sandow Truck Assets Sold," *The Commercial Vehicle*, Volume XXVI, Number 8, May 15, 1922.

¹³ Rae, *The American Automobile*, 18.

¹⁴ "San Francisco Car Dealers Coming Into Own," *Motor West*, Volume XXX11, number 3, November 15, 1919, 20.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

was recognized at the time as a substantial addition that represented the maturity and economic growth of the auto industry by 1920.¹⁵

Despite the fact that the building's construction did embody these distinctive characteristics of early twentieth century industrial design and melded them successfully to the basic requirements and mandates of a regional showroom, its potential significance has been effaced by substantial alterations and the building cannot convey individual significance under Criteria A (1) or C (3). With all of the streetlevel features removed, including the singularly important element of display windows along the showroom, the building is no longer an individual representative of either the showroom building type or a significant example within the overall portfolio of Macdonald and Kahn. Major interior alterations also diminish critical components of the building's form and open plan. With the inventive capacity displayed only a year before in the frenzied construction of the concrete freighter Faith, the firm proved proved remarkable facility in concrete engineering, a characteristic that was likely interpreted in the Auto Row construction. What direct effect these developments had, if any, cannot be conveyed by the building in its altered condition, however, and the building cannot be considered a significant remnant of the firm's work. 1625 Van Ness Avenue cannot individually convey any significant association with either the development of auto row or the development of the auto sales industry in general (Criterion A or 1).

The potential significance of the building primarily arose from its association with the development of the Row (Criteria A and 1) and architectural and engineering themes (Criteria C and 3), both of which have been undermined by extensive diminishment in integrity. Even barring consideration of the extensive loss of integrity, the building does not have any significant associations with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criterion B or 2). The various auto firms that occupied the building were only small components of an increasingly vast industry supply chain that included manufacturers, suppliers, and dealers spreading across the country and the building is not directly associated with any important individual. Similarly, while in rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, the destruction of much of the building's fabric precludes consideration under Criterion D (4).

Despite the building's lack of individual significance, it remains an extant, if diminished, representative of the development of Auto Row. Should there be further thematic study relating to Auto Row, 1625 Van Ness Avenue should be studied as a representative component and be evaluated within this broader context.

¹⁵ "S.F. Dealers Look For Prosperity," *Motor West*, XXXII, Number 4, December 1, 1919, 20.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 1: 1625 Van Ness Avenue
Van Ness façade, camera facing west, 3/8/09



Photograph 2: 1625 Van Ness Avenue
Sacramento Street façade, camera facing south, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: Detail Van Ness Avenue storefront, camera facing west, 3/8/09

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCERS use only
received
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

RECEIVED

1. Name

AUG 06 1982

historic Paige Motor Car Company Building

OHP

and/or common n/a

2. Location

street & number 1699 Van Ness Avenue n/a not for publication

city, town San Francisco n/a vicinity of congressional district 5

state CA code 06 county San Francisco code 075

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name The Bransten Trust, William & Edward Bransten Trustees

street & number c/o MJB Company, 665 Third Street

city, town San Francisco n/a vicinity of state CA 94107

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office

street & number City Hall

city, town San Francisco state CA 94102

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title (See Continuation Page 1.) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	n/a
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Paige Motor Car Company Building is an auto showroom with offices, storage and repair space above in a nearly square, four-story-and-mezzanine concrete structure 56 feet tall, at the southwest corner of Van Ness Avenue and Sacramento Street. Like all the buildings on this part of six-lane-wide Van Ness Avenue, it occupies the entire lot and adjoins but does not share wall with its neighbors. Along the other facade Sacramento Street climbs a fairly steep hill. The two facades are as alike as the hill permits, each organized in two divisions: the lower is a five-bay arcade with segment arches enclosing giant windows on a twenty-foot module; the upper continues the five bays, filling each with nine pairs of casement windows mullioned to look like three small ones over three large. The roof is not visible; instead the building is topped with a consoled cornice above which is a rail on simple pedestals at the divisions of the five bays. The second and fourth floors can be seen behind the glass, as their vertical placement does not relate to any facade features. This independence of the structural floors from the decorative exterior or curtain wall is original, as can be seen from autos visible on the second floor in the 1919 rendering and the 1924 photograph.

Structurally the building is two parts: the northern three bays, occupying the first 60 feet south of Sacramento, constructed in 1919; and the two southern bays, extending the building another 42 feet and constructed in 1922. Today's Sanborn map shows two sections, the northern one "fireproof", the southern of masonry or concrete construction with reinforced concrete floors and wood roof. Originally the building was planned to carry an additional story at some future date. The southern addition is a single design with the original structure, as the owners bought the second lot three months before 1919 publication of the original rendering. Since the addition is two feet greater than two 20-foot modules, the architect fit in the extra width inconspicuously by widening the end treatment and by adding an extra subordinate unit to the piers at the fourth bay.

The exterior finish was announced in 1919 as "granolithic"; it appears to be painted stucco. The pilasters, soffits and fascia are decorated with moldings and round and diamond medallions. A string course with pedestals at the piers separates the two main facade divisions. An auto entrance to upper floors is up the hill on Sacramento. The showroom has original moldings as paneling on the walls and as capitals for the large piers.

The only apparent exterior alterations are a bulkhead cover and the disappearance of the original roofline balustrade and entry lamps.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1919, 1922 **Builder/Architect** Sylvain Schnaittacher

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Paige Motor Car Company Building is significant as a nearly intact, 60-year-old automobile showroom; as one of the half-dozen grandest buildings of San Francisco's "Auto Row," Van Ness Avenue; as the property now and for over 60 years of the Edward Bransten family, important figures in San Francisco's business, charitable and architectural life; and as an important work by Sylvain Schnaittacher, an architect who served the American Institute of Architects for many years as chapter officer and president, and as Western States director.

The building has been an auto showroom since its inception: for Max Arnold's "high grade automobiles" in the original phase of the structure, 1919-1921; for the Paige Company and later Graham-Paige 1923 well into the 1930s. The Paige Motor Car Company of Detroit (1908-1927) was best known for its Datona roadster (1922-1926), a sporty six-cylinder with a pull-out third seat over the right running board. Jewett cars (1923-1927) were Paige's economy line. The Graham brothers bought the Paige concern and produced Graham-Paige cars (1927-1931) and then Grahams (1931-1941), including the 1932 "Blue Streak" immortalized as a children's "Tootsie Toy." Then the building served as an adjunct to Howard Buick Company at 1601 Van Ness in 1939-1940, for J.L. Glikbarg Company's cars in the early 1950s, followed successively by Borgward, Van Ness Dodge, British Motors used and California Porsche Audi used cars. However the owners have never used change of tenant or brand as an excuse to change the building. They have kept it intact over the years, making exterior changes only for maintenance: refacing of the bulkhead, which seems the first portion of any building to be damaged; and removal of the roofline balustrade, which probably had weathered badly from water retention. The pedestals above the cornice are probably remains of the balustrade, which can be reconstructed.

The 1919 real estate news story announcing construction of the Paige Building's first phase used the still-current term "auto row" to describe Van Ness Avenue. For some time the street had been developing as the best location for auto showrooms, a natural progression for the wide street spared in part by the 1906 earthquake and fire, used immediately thereafter as temporary location for many businesses, and then deserted as the stores, etc., moved back to their rebuilt downtown locations. Both the availability of space and the wide street good for demonstration rides and perspective viewing pointed to showrooms for the new commerce in automobiles. The first showrooms on Van Ness appear to have been one-story industrial buildings, often with parapets decorated in Classical or Mission Revival styles. Then owners decided to construct upper floors for more intense land use and, proud of their new buildings, had them decorated usually with simple pilasters and Classical Revival cornices, keeping the

(See Continuation Page 1.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(See Continuation Page 2.)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.2

Quadrangle name San Francisco North

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	0	5	5	0	9	3	0	4	1	8	2	5	8	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

Zone	Easting				Northing									

E

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property occupies lot 1 of city block 642 and is roughly 102.7' by 100' in size. Boundaries are the lot lines which encompass the historic resource.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	n/a	code	county	n/a	code

state	n/a	code	county	n/a	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Bloomfield

organization n/a

date 3 August 1982

street & number 2229 Webster Street

telephone (415) 922-1063

city or town San Francisco

state CA 94115

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date

For HCERS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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received
date entered

Continuation sheet Paige Motor Car Company
Building, San Francisco Item number 6 & 8

Page 1

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

Architectural Survey, San Francisco Department of City Planning
1976 -- county -- eligible
450 McAllister Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

Heritage Survey (Splendid Survivors, see Bibliography)
1979 -- local -- eligible
Heritage, 2007 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109

8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

wide areas of glass and entry on the ground floor. A few of the Auto Row buildings were grander still, and of these perhaps five remain, most notably the Don Lee Cadillac Building at 1000 Van Ness, by Weeks & Day in 1921 with sculpture by Jo Mora; and the Earl Anthony Packard Building at 901 Van Ness, by Maybeck in 1927. The Paige Motor Car Company Building, or at least its conception and earlier three-bay phase of 1919, predates both of these. The other two of the five surviving grandest Auto Row showrooms, 1400 and 1415 Van Ness, are smaller and earlier than the Paige Building. Of all the auto showrooms and former auto showrooms on Van Ness Avenue, only Paige Motor Cars and No. 700, which is not intact, span the big show windows with arches; on all the others the openings are rectangular. The Paige Building is significant as an early essay in commissioning a name architect to aggrandize the design of the open span required to display automobiles.

The "name" architect here was Sylvain Schnaittacher (1874-1926), director of the San Francisco chapter of the American Institute of Architects 1906-1922, its president 1918-1920, and regional Director for the national A.I.A. 1923-1926. He also served on the California State Board of Architecture 1910-1926. Born in San Francisco and educated at its schools including the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art (now the San Francisco Art Institute), Schnaittacher received practical training in the office of A. Page Brown 1891-1896 as that architect was working on the Ferry Building. After Brown's death he worked for and became partner with Frank Van Trees, did a few industrial buildings south of Market Street, traveled in Europe 1900-1901, and then settled down to his own practice. In addition to the Paige Motor Car Company Building, he designed the Argonaut Club, the Beresford Country Club, residences and apartment houses, Mt. Zion Nurses' Home on Sutter, and Temple Emanu-El, the last in cooperation with Bakewell & Brown, who also finished the building after Schnaittacher's death. An Emanu-El congregant as were the Branstens, Schnaittacher was especially responsible for the Temple House building and the cloistered court. His name was published as architect of the Paige Motor Car Building in the accounts of both its phases, 1919 and 1922. Indeed the design itself is a single conception.

(See Continuation Page 2.)

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
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Paige Motor Car Company
Continuation sheet Building, San Francisco Item number 8 & 9

Page 2

8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

Shortly after the 1919 part of the building opened, the property was acquired by the Florined Company of Florine and Edward Bransten. This ownership continued until 1973, when the property passed to the Bransten Trust, which benefits their children William Haas Bransten, Edward Bransten Junior, Alice Bransten Block and Frances Bransten Rothman. Edward Bransten (senior) (1870-1948), tea expert with his older brother Max Joseph Bransten's MJB Coffee Company, was one of the ten children of Joseph Brandenstein, merchant who came to San Francisco from near Cassel, Germany, in 1855. Father, brothers, sisters and the next generations have all been active in various San Francisco organizations, most notably Temple Emanu-El, the Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915, German (now Ralph K. Davies) Hospital, Mt. Zion Hospital, the Federation of Jewish Charities and other Jewish organizations. Florine Bransten nee Haas (1881-1973) came from a family similarly involved in San Francisco's history, and she had grown up in what is now called the Haas-Lilienthal House at 2007 Franklin Street, San Francisco Landmark #69 and on the National Register, home of the Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage ("Heritage"). After their marriage in 1903, the Branstens moved into 1735 Franklin (San Francisco Landmark #126) where they stayed the rest of their lives, only a block and a half from their property at Van Ness and Sacramento, the Paige Motor Car Company Building.

This building is now proposed for adaptive reuse as offices. The owners intend to restore and freshen the facade, restore the balustrade, keep most of the ground floor as showrooms, provide parking on the second floor (which will retain the original appearance), and convert mezzanine, third and fourth floors to offices.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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Georgano, G.N., editor, The Complete Encyclopedia of Motor Cars, 1885-1968, New York, 1968, Dutton: 255, 307, 430-431.

Goss, Gary A., Index to The Architect & Engineer, Volume 1-95, ed. M.K. Swingle, San Francisco, 1982, California Historical Society: 46.

(See Continuation Page 3.)

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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received
date entered

Paige Motor Car Company
Continuation sheet Building, San Francisco Item number 9

Page 3

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (cont.)

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Pacific Coast Architect, May 1924: 56.

Rosenbaum, Fred, Architects of Reform: Congregational and Community Leadership: Emanu-El of San Francisco, 1849-1980, Berkeley, CA, 1980, Western Jewish History Center: 84, 92-98.

Rothman, Frances Bransten, The Haas Sisters of Franklin Street, Berkeley, CA, 1979, Judah L. Magnes Museum: 73-74, 86.

Sanborn Map Company, San Francisco, updated to May 1982, vol. 3: 232.

San Francisco Chronicle, 25 Oct. 1919: 12R.

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San Francisco Recorder, Index to Grantees: 10 June 1920, Bransten.

San Francisco Recorder & Assessor, Sales Ledgers for Block 642 Lots 1&2: 29 May 1913; 28 July 1919; 14 May 1973; 7 Oct. 1975.

Snyder, John William, "A Partial Index to The California Architect & Building News, 1 April 1879 to 20 June 1900," Master's thesis, University of California, Davis, undated (ca. 1976): 459.

DEMAND ACTIVE TREND

20 Optimistic; 1 Bungalows; 1141

REPORTED

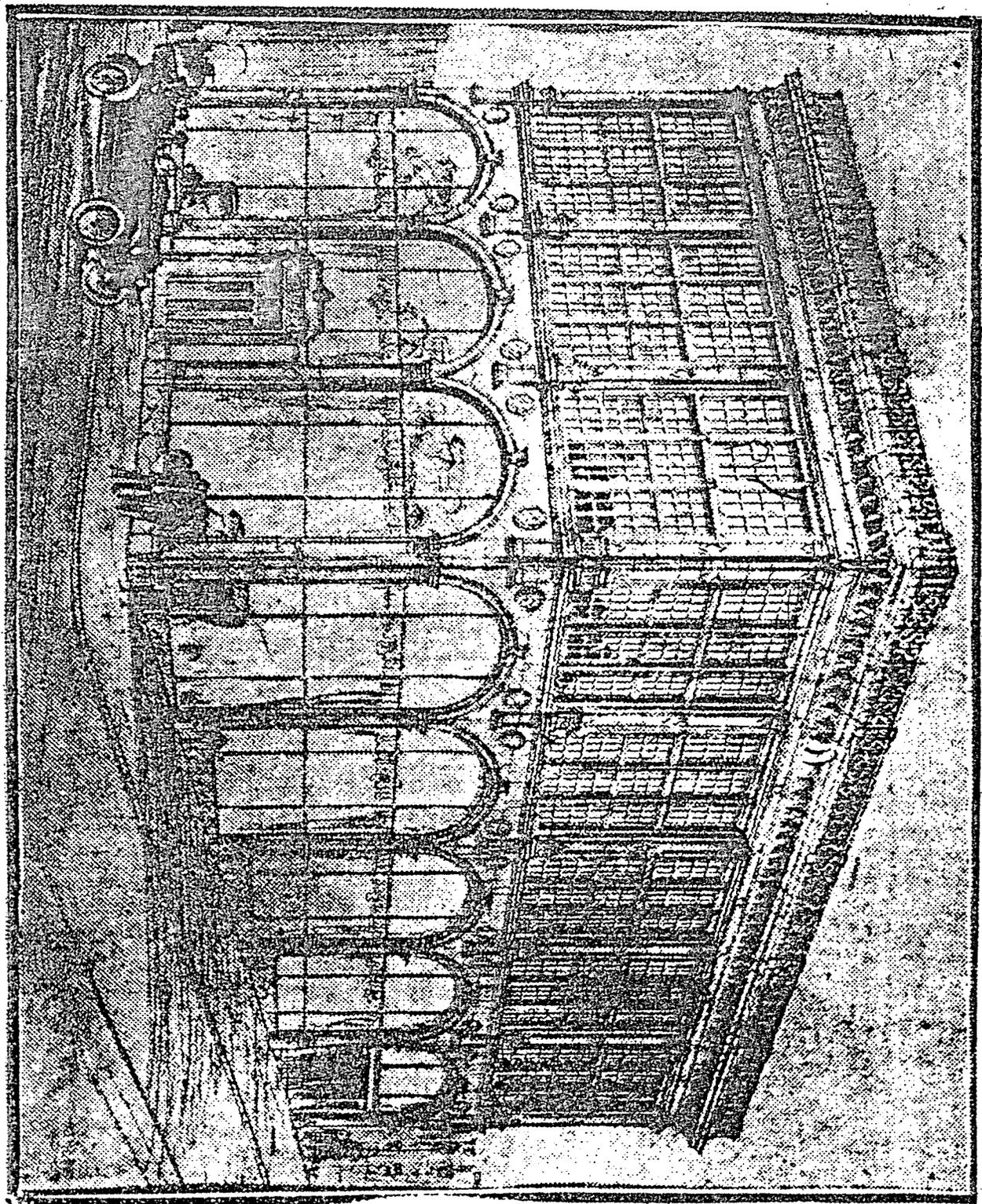
Is Rent Habit Payment Vogue

DERMAN

outlook for the Francisco is very bright. Residential conditions are in line with the latest home building. Design inaugurated has stimulated the industry. In analyzing the reason for paying rent instead of buying, the payment on the home, in a few instances, is a valuable parcel of real estate. Their earning capacity will have increased for a rainy day.

BUNGALOWS "Bunzelow" Ter-

A CLASS 'A' AUTOMOBILE SALESROOM BUILDING SOON TO GO UP at the corner of Van Ness avenue and Sacramento street. The structure has been leased to Max Arnold by Alanson Bros. & Co.



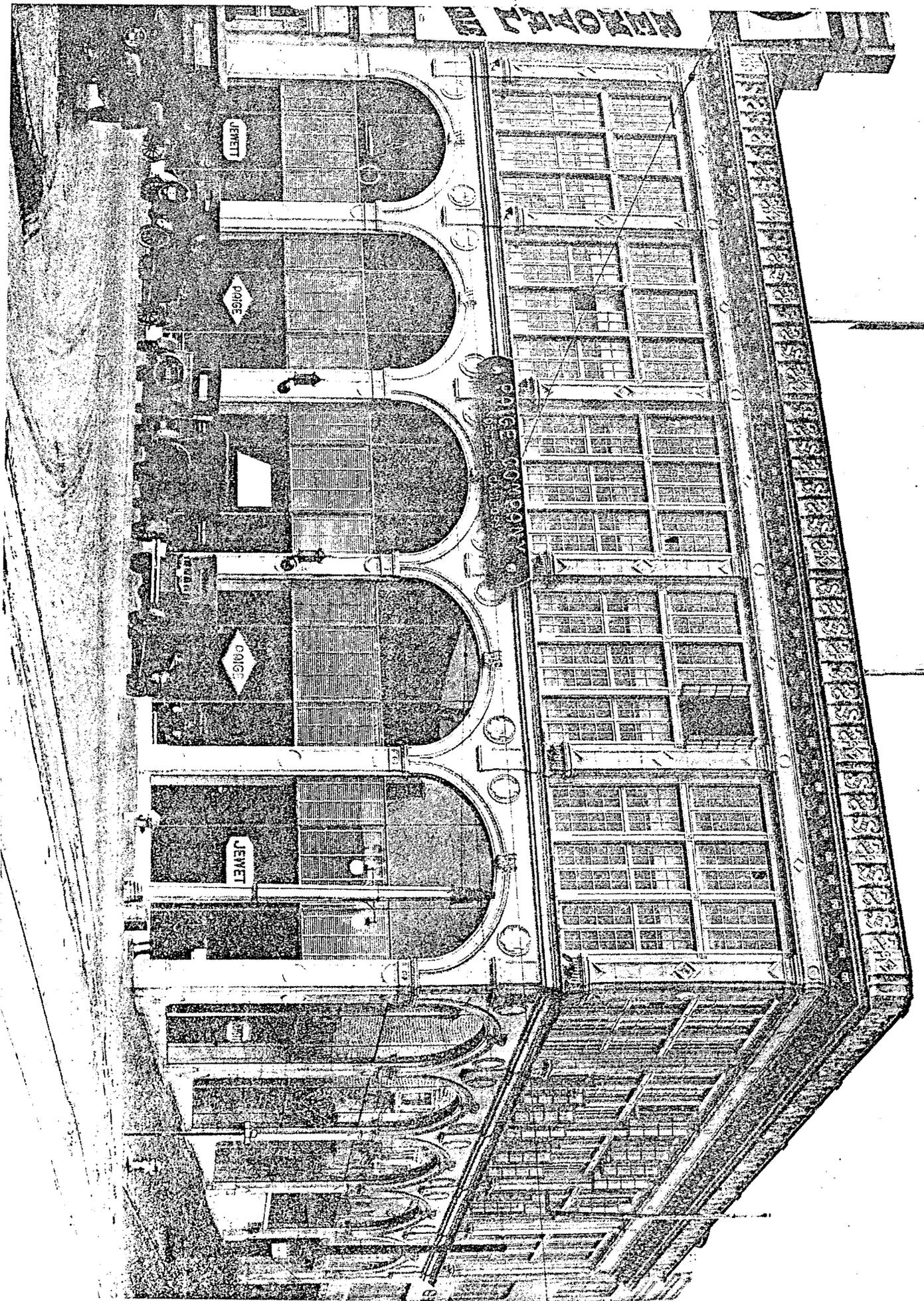
shelf, the living-room and dining-room. **Exterior** **Class 'A'** automobile sales establishments in San Francisco.

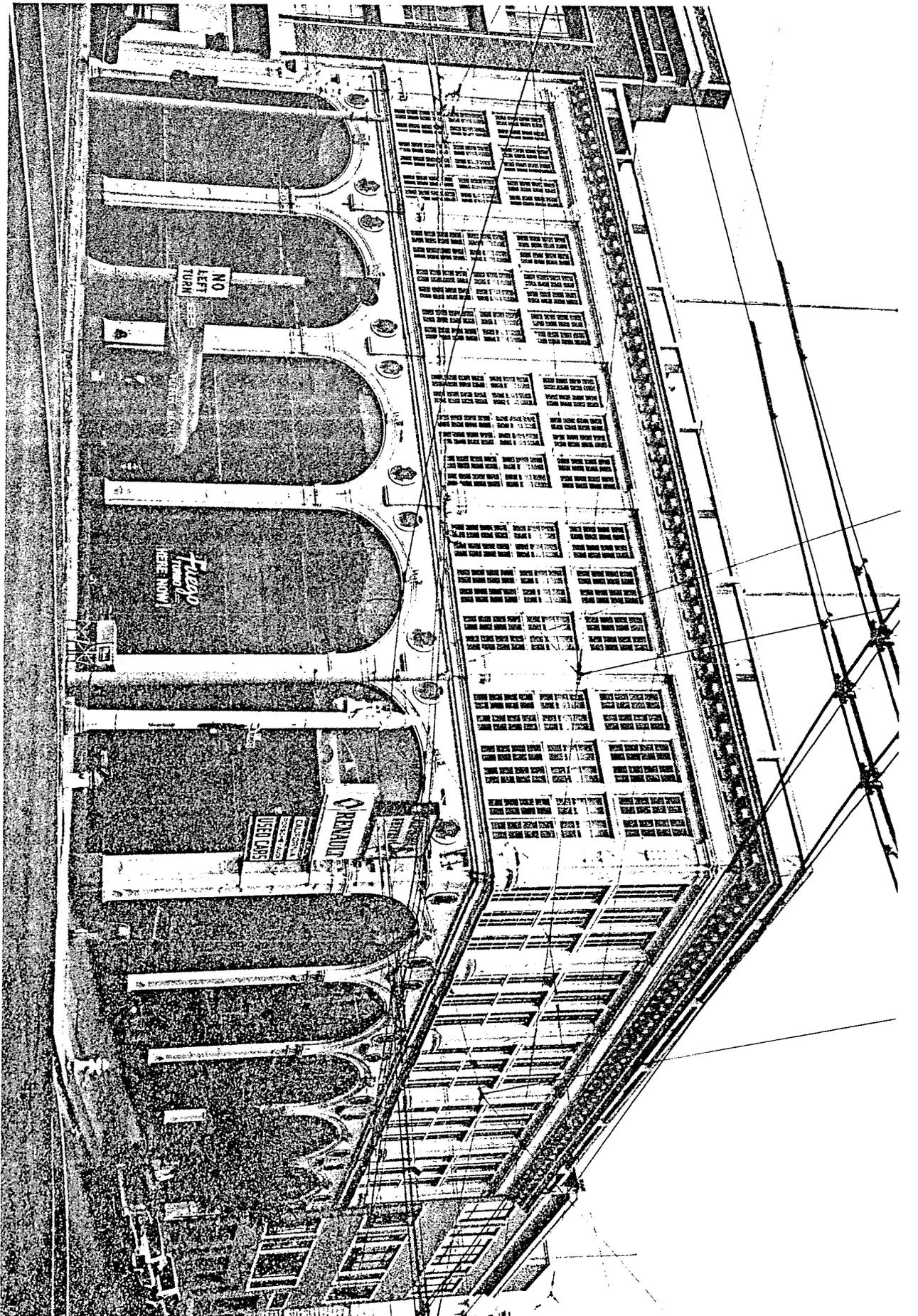
BUILDING TAXING FACILITY

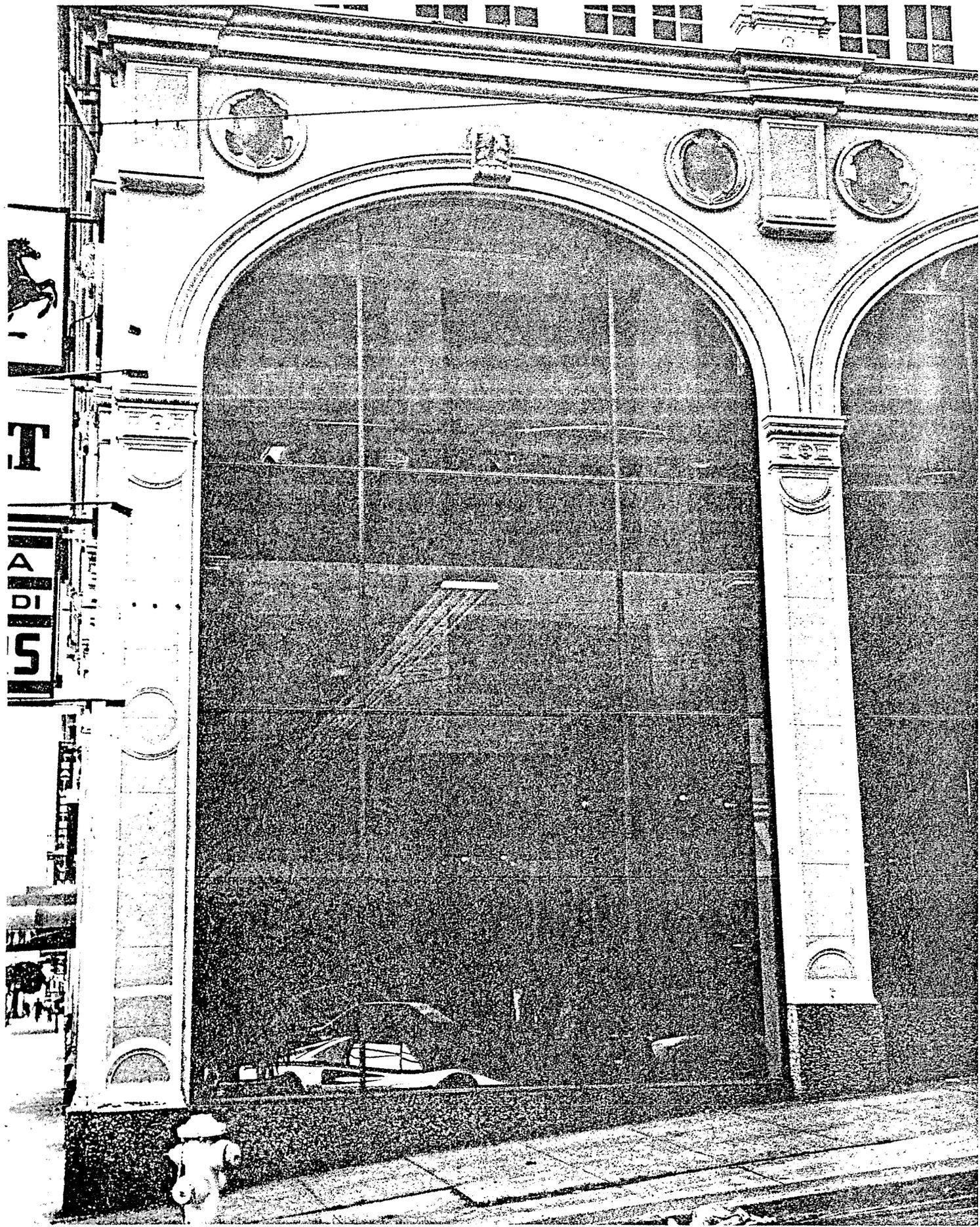
Report Made of Investm Assn

There is a development extending over the United States, in the way of taxing the mortgage interest according to the report of the committee of the Investment Assn, held last month. Aside from this report, a consideration of our cities, not virtually have to next twenty year mortgage mach for the purpose.

This committee report may be said not highly speculative are in most not upon present rather upon a fifteen pre-war at upon proved ear study. In twenty that labor costs ing the last two 55 per cent and per cent. "The building costs ha rapid developer business at a thin factors normal, have been pronounced.









PAIGE MOTOR CAR COMPANY BUILDING
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
UTM 10/550930/4182580



State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 7

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #15

P1. Other Identifier: 1776 Sacramento Street and 1700 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 1776 Sacramento Street City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0622-020

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1776 Sacramento Street is a seven story reinforced concrete residential building located at the northeast corner of Van Ness Avenue and Sacramento Street. U-shaped in plan, the building was constructed as a two story automobile sales and repair building in 1919 and converted into its current residential use in 1992 (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP7 (3+ Story Commercial Building), HP3 (Multiple Family Property)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 1776 Sacramento Street, camera facing northeast, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1919 with 1992 addition. San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits, County Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Heath Family Partners
440 Grand Avenue #248
Oakland, CA 94610-5011

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 8, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #15

B1. Historic Name: Peacock Motor Sales Company / 1700 Van Ness Avenue

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: auto sales/showroom

B4. Present Use: residential / retail

*B5. Architectural Style: Neo-Eclectic

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1919. In 1992, a major vertical addition as well as major rehabilitation that included residing, new fenestration, and a new roof drastically altered the original construction (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Macdonald and Kahn Engineers b. Builder: Macdonald and Kahn Engineers

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

1776 Sacramento Street was previously documented in a 1984 San Francisco Downtown Inventory undertaken by San Francisco Architectural Heritage and found to merit a level "C" (contextual importance) in their rating system. The building is also referenced in the City of San Francisco's Van Ness Avenue Area Plan as a contributory building. Both of these studies occurred before the building's 1992 vertical addition and conversion to residential use. Additionally, according to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: "City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources," neither of these ratings qualify as an adopted local register for the purposes of CEQA, and both require further consultation and review which is provided herein (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

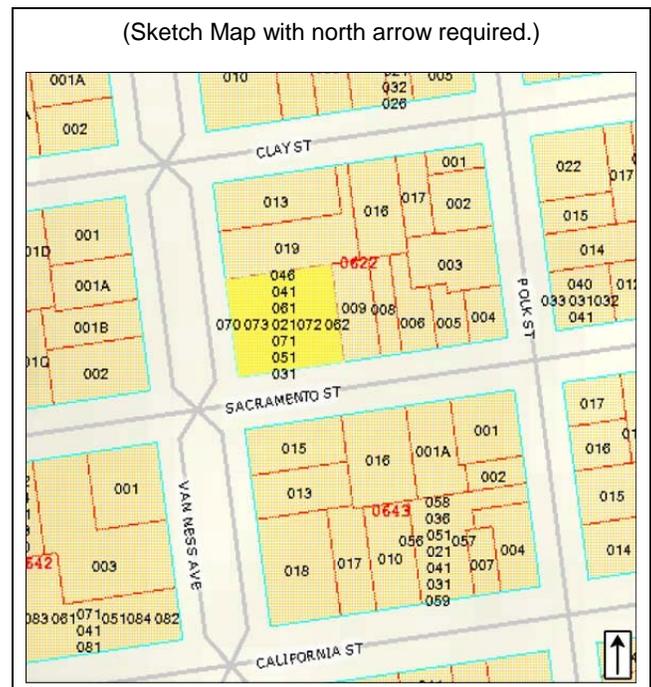
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*; *Oakland Tribune*; *The San Francisco Examiner*; *The Commercial Vehicle*; *Motor West*; Ling, *America and the Automobile* (1990); Stevens, *Hoover Dam* (1988); Bucci, *Albert Kahn Wolf, Big Dams and Other Dreams* (1996); Dyble, *Paying The Toll* (2009); *Journal of San Diego History*; Smith, *Influence of the Great War Upon Shipping* (1919); *The American Architect*; Rae, *The American Automobile* (1965).

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The conversion included the addition of five stories, the reconfiguration of all fenestration, and the sheathing of the building in new concrete and stucco, the combination of which has rendered the building unrecognizable from its original form and plan.

The first level of the Van Ness Avenue elevation is devoted to retail sales, and is comprised of large display windows in aluminum framing, a central entryway, and red commercial awnings. The Sacramento Street elevation is largely the same, with modern commercial detailing and an underground garage entry. Additionally, the residential access door is in the center of the Sacramento Street elevation, recessed in an arched surround and embedded in oversized glass and metal framing. The sole additional ornamentation arises from scored concrete detailing along the first level that is suggestive of stonework.

The upper stories are characterized by stacked hexagonal bay windows, with nine bays on the Van Ness elevation and seven on the Sacramento Street elevation. All of the windows in the bays are one-over-one vertical-sliding aluminum frame. The uppermost story features balconets framed by a bell arch detail. The roof of the building is a modified mansard style and sheathed in standing seam metal.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 1776 Sacramento Street/1700 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and is not a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

Constructed in 1919, 1776 Sacramento Street (then 1700 Van Ness Avenue) was one of many automobile related commercial facilities constructed along Van Ness Avenue in the early years of the twentieth century. Following the dislocation of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Van Ness Avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed commercial corridor that was increasingly dominated by automobile sales, manufacturing, and repair. With California leading the country in automobile sales and ownership throughout the 1910s and 1920s, the state proved a ready market for increasingly standardized and reliable automobiles shipped largely from the middle-western industrial belt. Close to the urban core and the economic opportunities inherent to the city, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west's largest Auto Rows. Lined with showrooms and repair facilities, Van Ness Avenue became a nexus between the productive capacities of the automotive industry and the commercial marketing development spurring widespread auto sales and ownership. In many senses, the showrooms were a face for the increasingly powerful auto industry, and the array of buildings erected represented an evolving conception of the automobile's role in America.¹ The industry initially

¹ Peter J. Ling, *America and the Automobile: Technology, Reform, and Social Change*. (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990) 13, 96-97.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 4 of 7

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #15*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but soon scores of auto related businesses traveled steadily north, flanking the broad avenue from Market nearly to the Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops.

1700 Van Ness Avenue was constructed by the San Francisco based engineering and contracting firm of Macdonald and Kahn. Formed in 1911 and active across the city in the years following the earthquake, the firm acted alternately as architects, engineers, and contractors in a remarkably wide range of projects both in San Francisco and elsewhere in the state of California throughout the first half of the twentieth century. With a particular emphasis in reinforced concrete construction, the partnership undertook contracts for a strikingly diverse array of both prosaic and high profile ventures including construction of sewers, storm drains, concrete ships, speculative residential, industrial, and commercial properties. Displaying an adept technical and networking ability, the firm ultimately entered the upper echelon of the American civil engineering profession with their central participation in the construction of the Hoover Dam. As part of the Six Companies consortium that included Bechtel Corporation as well as other western construction giants, the firm of Macdonald and Kahn played a substantial role in the successful completion of the dam, as well as Grand Coulee Dam and subsequent World War II era defense related projects completed under the auspices of the Six Companies.² Individually, the engineers also displayed marked professional versatility, with Alan Macdonald hired in 1929 as the first General Manager for the as yet unconstructed Golden Gate Bridge.³

At the time of the 1919 construction of 1700 Van Ness Avenue, the firm was far less established, with few high profile contracts. In 1916, Macdonald and Kahn were commissioned by Zellerbach Paper Company to construct a six-story reinforced concrete factory and warehouse in North Beach, on the Embarcadero. Concurrently, the firm was developing pueblo-style single family residences in a speculative venture on Sea Cliff Avenue along San Francisco's coastline. The most high profile activities of the firm arose from Alan Macdonald's central participation in the 1918 development of America's first concrete freighter, aptly named Faith. Hired by a speculative firm named the San Francisco Ship Building Company, Macdonald designed the 5000 ton vessel in six months.⁴ The successful maiden voyage of the ship in the spring of 1918 garnered much praise, as the shortages of steel accompanying America's entry into World War I had spurred funding and political will for development of the technology. Following the launch, scores of contracts for concrete ships were let by the company, many of which were under the auspices of the United States government's Emergency Fleet activity.⁵

Felix Kahn's technical proficiency in building with concrete was paired with an intimate, albeit indirect, knowledge of designing for the auto industry. The same year that the firm was working along Van Ness Avenue, Felix Kahn's brother, the prominent industrial designer and architect Albert Kahn, was designing the enormous General Motors Building in Detroit, Michigan. A decade earlier Albert Kahn had designed both the Highland Park Ford Plant and the Packard Plant, providing a model for construction adopted by his brother in both the design and reinforced concrete application exhibited by both buildings.

² Joseph E. Stevens, *Hoover Dam: An American Adventure*. (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988) 40; Donald E. Wolf, *Big Dams and Other Dreams: The Six Companies Story*. (Norman Oklahoma: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1996) 32-33.

³ Louise Nelson Dyble, *Paying The Toll: Local Power, Regional Politics, and the Golden Gate Bridge*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) 48-50.

⁴ "Realty Sales Downtown Approximately Normal," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 8, 1916; "City's Growth Demands New Apartments and Homes," *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 20, 1917; "Concrete Ship to Slide into Water Today," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 14, 1918; Robert Eberhardt, "Concrete Shipbuilding in San Diego 1918-1920." *Journal of San Diego History*, Spring 1995, Volume 41, Number 2.

⁵ Russell J. Smith, *Influence of the Great War Upon Shipping*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1919) 217-243.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

Although designing and constructing a branch salesroom represented a far more modest endeavor than the design of revolutionary automobile plants such as Highland Park, the work undertaken by Macdonald and Kahn in San Francisco is representative of important strands of auto-related design. Building Permits and period photographs indicate that 1700 Van Ness Avenue was two stories and of reinforced concrete construction. With a broad and open plan, the building was situated on a prominent corner and endowed with ample light, a feature which was accentuated by well-placed and regular industrial windows. Additionally, the first level was defined by prominent floor to ceiling plate glass windows, beckoning those who passed and serving as a transparent foil for the solidity and glint of the cars within. The building was of a straightforward and functional aesthetic, in many senses similar to that of the elder Kahn's massive Highland Park. Importantly, 1700 Van Ness bore few of the architectural trappings of its westerly neighbor the Paige Auto building or the landmark Don Lee Cadillac building constructed several years later. This simplicity reflected the firm's industrial inclinations, and was mirrored in several other buildings the firm erected on Van Ness Avenue during the same time period (see DPR523 form for 1625 Van Ness Avenue and 1946 Van Ness Avenue). On a more fundamental level, the simplicity also clearly indicated the design relationship between the car and the factory, limiting embellishment in favor of transparent functionality. Such design conformed to the vanguard of architectural theory relating to auto sales. Although the matter received far less attention than the industrial design of factories, by the close of the 1910s architectural trade publications advocated open floor plans, ample light, and a vertical solution incorporating sales at the base and maintenance and repair above; a retinue of requirements elegantly and pragmatically addressed by Macdonald and Kahn.⁶

Upon completion, the building now known as 1776 Sacramento was occupied by Peacock Motor Sales Company and had a prominent Van Ness Avenue frontage. The distributorship carried Chandler Motor Cars, a medium-sized auto manufacturing firm in existence from the 1910s to the close of the 1920s, when it was bought by the Hupp Motor Company and discontinued. By 1929, the building was occupied by a used car dealership and by 1933 the building was occupied by a Chevrolet dealership. The rapid transition during this time period reflects the general consolidation that shaped the industry, as the mass production of firms such as Ford and Chevrolet supplanted smaller firms such as Chandler and Hupp Motors. Unlike many of the buildings constructed for auto use along the avenue, 1700 Van Ness Avenue remained in auto use for the greater part of the twentieth century, before being converted into residential use.⁷

Evaluation

While the automobile commissions undertaken by Macdonald and Kahn were relatively modest when compared to both their later work and the architectural precedents of major automobile plants such as Highland Park, their work was important in that it tangibly consolidated the efficiency and standardization practices learned in the production arm of the industry and channeled them to the sales and consumption sectors. Although the conception and construction of early regional Auto Rows has received far less attention and academic inquiry, these locales were a critical channel by which an increasingly mechanistic and consolidated auto industry engaged diverse and fickle consumers, a meeting point that was instrumental for the financial success of the industry. Understanding Macdonald and Kahn's design as an auto sales "factory," the building exists as a derivative of lessons embodied by the rise of "Fordism." The entire construction was predicated upon the solution of a single design problem: promoting, selling, and maintaining the automobile.

⁶ "An Automobile Sales building," *The American Architect*. (New York, Volume CXIV, No. 2228, September 4, 1918) 301-302.

⁷ "Display Ad: Chandler-Cleveland Motor Car Company," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 15, 1922.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

As engineers, Macdonald and Kahn appeared to press the functional efficacy of the building in a more consistent manner and at a greater scale than previous showroom designers, who were often hampered by limited space and accustomed to greater ornamentation. Even compared with similarly scaled construction from a mere decade earlier, such as that of the White Garage at the corner of Market Street and Van Ness Avenue constructed by the Beaux Arts trained George Adrian Applegarth, the building was a far more cohesive and effective portal for the cars within; with lighter farming members, greater light, and a more open plan. Equally striking is the replicative capacity of the firm, in the years 1919-1920, they constructed at least four massive auto buildings along Van Ness, each quite similar to the other and each representative of the standardization in building techniques that was accompanying the standardization in automobile manufacturing. Each was a purpose-built building for distinct clients, yet each could be replicated with ease.

Despite the fact that the building did embody these distinctive characteristics of industrial construction and melded them to the basic requirements and mandates of a regional showroom, this significance has been effaced by modern rehabilitation and the building cannot convey significance under either Criteria A (1) or Criteria C (3). Because only the most basic skeletal elements of the building remain, it is impossible to evaluate the building in relation to the development of Auto Row or within the overall portfolio of Macdonald and Kahn. With the inventive capacity displayed only a year before in the frenzied construction of the concrete freighter Faith, Macdonald proved remarkable facility in concrete engineering, a characteristic that was likely interpreted in the Auto Row construction. What direct effect these advances had, if any, cannot be conveyed by the building in its current form, however, and the building cannot be evaluated as a significant example of the firm's work. Although the building remained in auto use far longer than the majority of purpose-built auto buildings along the avenue, today it is entirely unrecognizable as a representative of its building type. Rather, the modern Neo-Eclectic construction of the building makes allusions to classic early twentieth century apartment construction and Second Empire detailing.

The potential significance of the building primarily arose from its association with the development of Auto Row (Criteria A and 1) and architectural and engineering themes (Criteria C and 3). The building does not appear to have any significance under Criteria B or D (2 or 4). The building does not convey any significant associations with any significant individuals in local, state, or national history (Criterion B or 2). The various auto firms that occupied the building were only small components of an increasingly vast industry supply chain that included manufacturers, suppliers, and dealers spreading across the country, and the business operations in the building are not individually significant within this context. Similarly, while in rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, the destruction of virtually all of the building's fabric precludes consideration under Criterion D (4).

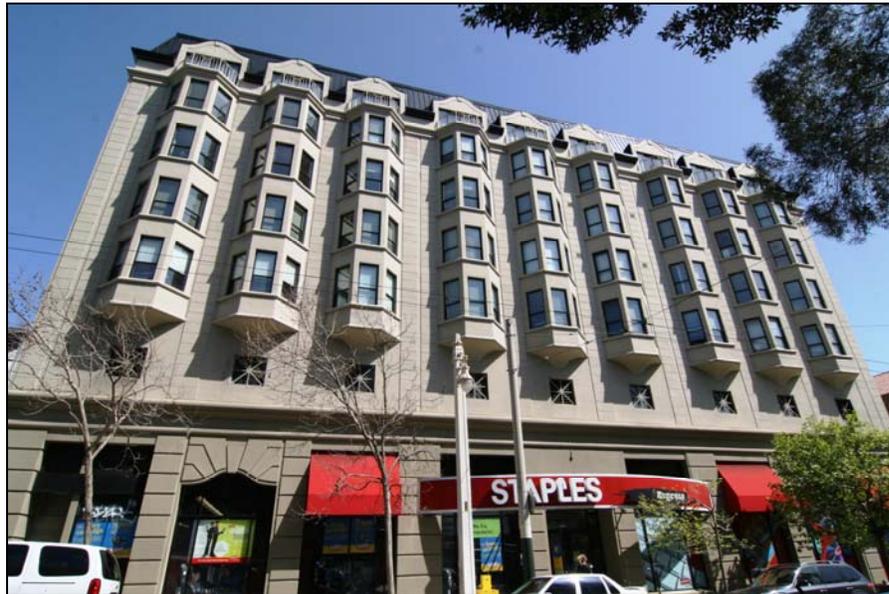
*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

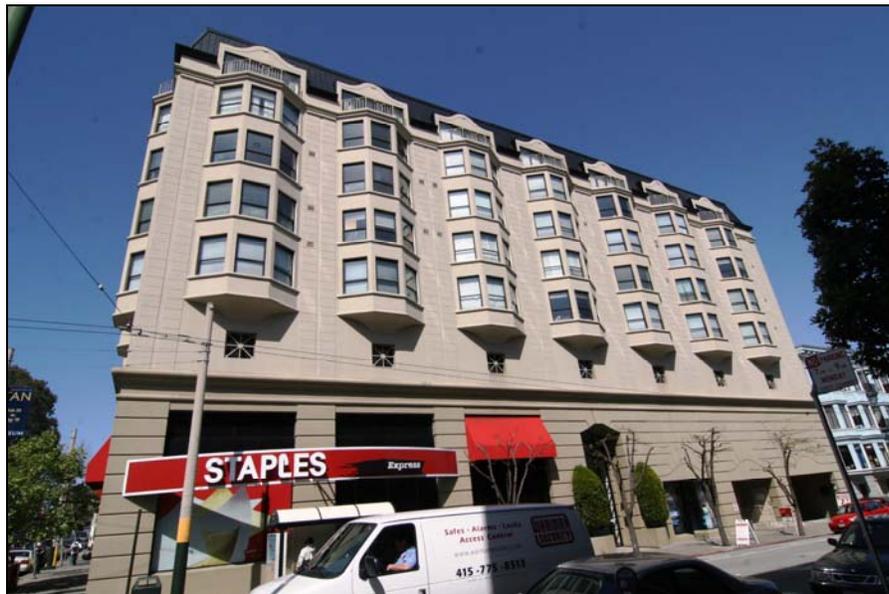
Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 1776 Sacramento Street, camera facing east, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 1776 Sacramento Street, camera facing north, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 6

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #16

P1. Other Identifier: 1730 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 1730 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0622-019

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1730 Van Ness Avenue is a rectangular single-story concrete commercial building embedded in the Van Ness Avenue block front between Sacramento Street and Clay Street. The building has a concrete foundation and a flat asphalt roof. Simple in massing and architectural form, the building is dominated by large fixed-glass commercial display windows, which surround an offset recessed entryway with a single glazed wood door fronted by a security gate (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6 (1-3 Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 1730 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northeast, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1919, San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits, County Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
American Buddhist Cultural SCT
1750 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94109

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 8, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #16

B1. Historic Name: varied, initially Reo Motor Car Company

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: auto showroom

B4. Present Use: religious/retail

*B5. Architectural Style: commercial with minimal classical ornamentation

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1919. In 1941, part of the building was converted into use as a bakery, with interior alterations and repainting of the exterior. In 1949 a new steel and glass storefront was added, and replaced again in 1957. In 1960 an aluminum and glass storefront was added, and in 1965 the façade was replastered. In 1989 the roof was replaced, the parapet repaired, and another storefront added (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Edward E. Young b. Builder: unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

1730 Van Ness Avenue was previously documented in a 1984 San Francisco Downtown Inventory undertaken by San Francisco Architectural Heritage and found to merit a level “C” (contextual importance) in their rating system. The building is also referenced in the City of San Francisco’s Van Ness Avenue Area Plan as a contributory building. According to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: “City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources,” neither of these ratings qualify as an adopted local register for the purposes of CEQA, and both require further consultation and review which is provided herein (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

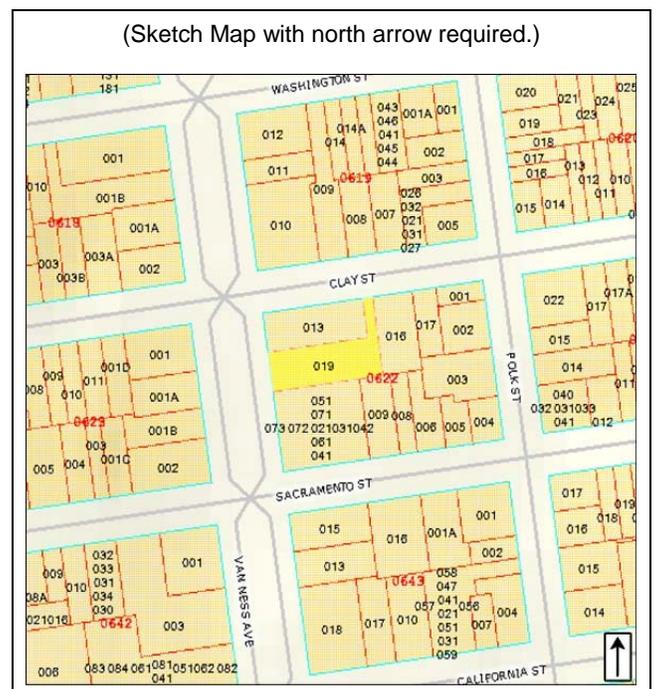
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*; Ashlee, *Traveling Through Time* (2003); Beasley and MacManus, *Men Money and Motors* (1929); Corbett, *Splendid Survivors* (1979).

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

While a portion of the windows on the northern half of the façade are framed in steel, the bulk is framed with aluminum and appears to be infill development reflecting new commercial mandates. Surrounding the window and entry insertions, scored concrete panels project from the bearing walls, providing modest variation to the façade. A screen lines the façade above the entry and display windows, mounted to the building with metal framing. The fixture likely covers a transom or ribbon window. Although it is slightly corroded, the building retains its original galvanized iron cornice, which is narrow and underscored by small dentils.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 1730 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and is not a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

Constructed in 1919, 1730 Van Ness Avenue was one of many automobile related commercial facilities built along Van Ness Avenue in the early years of the twentieth century. Following the dislocation of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Van Ness Avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed commercial corridor that was increasingly dominated by automobile sales, manufacturing, and repair. The nascent auto industry and its array of support sectors found an ideal home in the space afforded by the vacating retail sector along Van Ness Avenue. Close to the urban core, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west's largest Auto Rows. The industry initially appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but soon scores of auto related businesses steadily moved north, flanking the broad avenue from Market nearly to the Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops.

The building was designed by Edward E. Young, a relatively prominent San Francisco architect most noted for his residential and apartment commissions. Unlike many of the buildings constructed during the period on Auto Row, 1730 Van Ness was not commissioned by a specific auto industry client but was instead a speculative venture undertaken by the large San Francisco liquor concern of Julius Levin Company. The speculative nature of the construction attests to the economic might of the newly expanding Auto Row, as a variety of smaller support services and lower-tiered sales rooms sought prime locations within the burgeoning auto sector of the avenue. The building was a standard addition to San Francisco's established auto row, with an understated Neoclassical aesthetic that conformed to the prevailing commercial style of the time and accommodated the functional mandate of the automobile business. Composed solely of a simple sales room, the building was an inexpensive investment designed to capture revenue from the booming auto trade, which had escalated following the end of World War I. At the time of its 1919 construction, prominent showrooms were developing all around the building, with its large southerly neighbor 1700 Van Ness under construction, as well as the neighboring Paige building.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 4 of 6

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #16*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

Reo Motor Car Company, a Michigan firm founded by Ransom E. Olds, was an early occupant of the building. Olds was a prominent early executive in the auto industry who founded the Olds Motor Company, the precursor to Oldsmobile, before departing over differences over the company's direction.¹ While the Reo Motor Car Company remained successful throughout the 1910s and 1920s, producing the Reo Speedwagon and other cars and trucks, the company ceased producing cars by 1936, instead concentrating on trucks and military vehicles until the mid 1970s.² Building permits indicate that the building remained solely in auto use until 1941, when it was briefly converted into a bakery. During the 1930s a number of auto firms appear to have occupied by the building, with the small space serving as a used car showroom after 1930. Though part of the building was then converted into use by the Greenline Bakery in, this was relatively shortlived and was turned to office space by the close of the 1950s. The remainder of the building was occupied by automobile sales until the late 1970s when the entire building was converted for use as an office facility. As tenants have changed, storefront insertions have altered the first level of the building, largely effacing the evidence of its auto related form. The Van Ness Avenue elevation contains aluminum framed door and window insertions, which slightly depart from the original configuration.

Evaluation

As a modest and generalized automobile sales building, 1730 Van Ness Avenue does not demonstrate direct associations with significant themes of development in either the American auto industry or the development of the Van Ness Auto Row (Criteria A and 1). While the building housed a number of auto related functions, the property was a standardized speculative venture undertaken when Van Ness' Auto Row was well-established and the foundation of the American auto industry well-developed. Its occupants were not demonstrably important or influential in the success or development of the area. Although the building remained related to the San Francisco auto industry for a longer duration than most along Van Ness Avenue, this tenure holds no direct associations to significant local, state, or national events or developments. The various auto firms that occupied the building were only small components of an increasingly vast industry supply chain that included manufacturers, suppliers, and dealers and spreading across the country.

Similarly, the building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B and 2). Research in records related to this building do not indicate that any historically important people are directly associated with it. Further, the building does not demonstrate distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a well-established design sensibility that includes allusions to classical detailing and basic functional requirements (Criteria C and 3). While indicative of the urban development of San Francisco's Auto Row, the building is not an exemplar. The architect, Edward E. Young, was better known for his residential practice, and the building is not an important representative of his work, which includes the palazzo-style Francisco Club at Sutter Street and Mason Street, the Park Lane Apartments on Sacramento Street, as well as homes and apartments through Pacific Heights.³

¹ Norman Beasley and Theodore F. MacManus, *Men, Money, and Motors: The Drama of the Automobile*. (New York: Harper Brothers, 1929) 39-40.

² Laura Rose Ashlee, *Traveling Through Time: A Guide to Michigan's Historical Markers*. (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2005) 173-174.

³ Michael R. Corbett, *Splendid Survivors: San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage*. (San Francisco: The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage, 1979) 179, 226.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of commercial construction is otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

In addition to failing to meet any of the criteria for listing on the NRHP or the CRHR, the building displays a marked loss of integrity that would render it ineligible even if historic significance was present. This loss of integrity severs it from its potential association with its Auto Row related context. Years of commercial entryway insertions and reconfigurations have eroded the building's functional form. While the building does retain its basic original configuration and some features, including its cornice, these features do not impart any specific associations with Auto Row, nor are they in and of themselves significant.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #

HRI#

Trinomial

Page 6 of 6

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #16

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 1730 Van Ness Avenue, detail of restuccod façade, aluminum screen and original cornice, camera facing east, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 6

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #17

P1. Other Identifier: 1920 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 1920 Van Ness Avenue

City: San Francisco

Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0598-009B

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1920 Van Ness Avenue is a single-story rectangular brick building that was adjoined with its southerly neighbor (1906 Van Ness Avenue) to form a single restaurant building. Located in the center of the Van Ness block front between Washington Street and Jackson Street, the neighboring buildings are of the same size and massing and visually appear as a single unit (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6 (1-3 Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 1920 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing east, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1918, San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits, County Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Josef Betz
1906 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94109

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 8, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: none

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: auto sales

B4. Present Use: restaurant

*B5. Architectural Style: commercial with modern mural concealing any original features

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1918. In 1960 the building was merged with its southerly neighbor (1906 Van Ness Avenue) to form a single restaurant (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Rousseau and Rousseau b. Builder: unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a

Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

1920 Van Ness Avenue was previously documented in a 1989 reconnaissance survey undertaken by Anne Bloomfield, where the building was classified as “compatible with the area” but “not distinguished.”. The building has not been formally evaluated for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 1920 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*; Corbett, *Splendid Survivors* (1979); Rae, *The American Automobile* (1965); *The Architect and Engineer*.

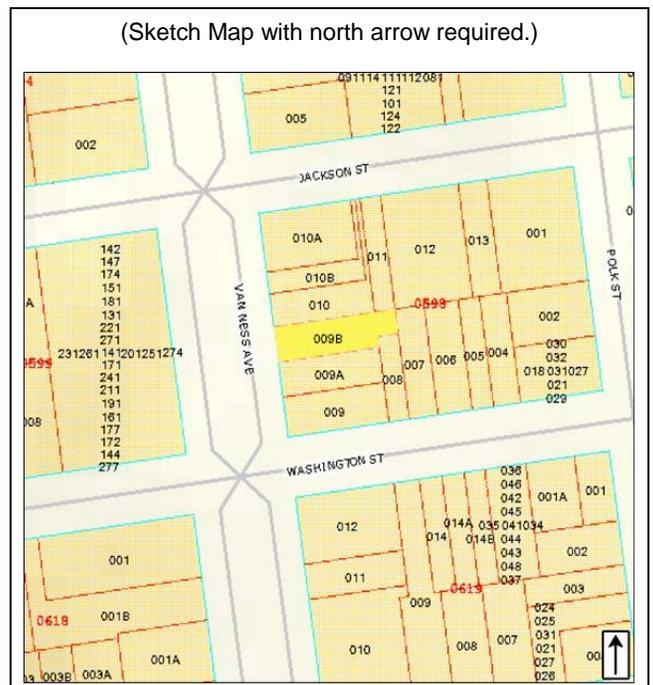
B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The Van Ness elevation is entirely covered in a mural, which depicts fanciful faux architectural features and revelers, ornamented with swags and a terminating balustrade. A neon projecting sign punctuates the center of façade, extending over the sidewalk.

The customer entrance is located on the northern reaches of the façade (1906 Van Ness). The recessed entrance is surrounded by an overarching canopy, wood paneling and stucco work, as well as a brick clad knee wall that forms a planter. Three windows underscored by similar brick clad planters appear to the north, obscured by foliage and covered in circular red canopies. A recessed pair of double doors appears at the northern elevation, serving as a service entry. Metal lanterns are mounted at regular intervals along the building, interspersed between the upper story “windows” of the mural.

The two buildings, constructed as simple auto salesrooms, have been thoroughly transformed by their consolidation, modern commercial infill, and grandiose mural detailing. While retaining the original massing, the buildings have been altered beyond recognition.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, “Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures,” which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and is not a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

1920 Van Ness Avenue was constructed in 1918 and was one of many automobile related commercial facilities built along Van Ness Avenue in the early years of the twentieth century. Following the dislocation of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Van Ness Avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed commercial corridor that was increasingly dominated by automobile sales, manufacturing, and repair. The nascent auto industry and its array of support sectors found an ideal home in the space afforded by the vacating retail sector along Van Ness Avenue, as traditional businesses flocked back to the newly rebuilt downtown in the years following the quake. Close to the urban core, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west’s largest Auto Rows. The industry initially appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but scores of auto related businesses steadily moved north, flanking the broad avenue from Market nearly to the Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops.

The building at 1920 Van Ness was designed by Rousseau and Rousseau, a father-son partnership most noted for their period revival “storybook” rowhouses in the Sunset District, as well as several other prominent downtown commissions including the 1914 Chancellor Hotel on Powell Street.¹ Active from the early twentieth century to the 1970s, the family firm designed thousands of buildings in and around the Bay area, reflecting the massive population growth that characterized the area and contributing to the building stock of both the city and its suburban environs.

¹ Michael R. Corbett, *Splendid Survivors*. (San Francisco: The Foundation for San Francisco’s Architectural Heritage, 1979) 162.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Unlike many of the more prominent buildings constructed during this period on Auto Row, 1920 Van Ness was not commissioned by a specific auto industry client but was instead a speculative venture undertaken by the Gerard Investment Company. The speculative nature of the construction attests to the economic might of the newly expanding Auto Row, as a variety of smaller support services and lower-tiered sales rooms sought prime locations within the burgeoning auto sector of the avenue. The brick building conformed to the prevailing commercial style of the time, with an understated aesthetic that accommodated the functional mandate of the automobile. Composed solely of a simple sales room, the building was an inexpensive investment designed to capture revenue from the booming auto trade, which had escalated following the end of World War I.

Hartmann Motor Company, a California Apperson distributor was the first automotive occupant. Apperson, based in Kokomo, Indiana, was formed by brothers Edgar and Elmer and claimed to have created the first American automobile, a one-cylinder car that made its debut in 1894. While this claim was disputed by rival firms, the brothers were one of the earliest entrants into the auto market. The partnership failed in the 1920s, however, as general consolidation shaped the industry and the mass production of firms such as Ford and Chevrolet supplanted smaller firms like Apperson.² A list compiled by the American Automobile Association in the late 1920s estimated that from 1900 onward more than 3000 makes of cars and trucks were produced by upward of 1500 identifiable companies. By the close of World War I many had shuttered, and by the 1930s most were gone.³ The massive attrition within the auto industry during this period reflected the creative and economic boom unleashed by the auto industry, as scores of engineers and entrepreneurs sought to dominate a finite market.

Building permits indicate that the building at 1920 Van Ness remained in auto use for about 25 years. By 1945, the building was converted as a restaurant, with accompanying interior and exterior alterations that included covering the masonry walls with sheet rock and extensive exterior storefront renovation. In 1960, the building was joined with its neighbor, 1906 Van Ness Avenue and the restaurant doubled in size. 1906 Van Ness Avenue had also been erected as an auto sales building. In the early 1920s, the building was occupied by the Leach Biltwell Motor Car Company, one of the few California based automobile manufacturers. The company was relatively shortlived, and only briefly successful with their model the six-cylinder Leach Six, which was reportedly popular with the Hollywood film set.⁴ Decades of use as a restaurant has effaced all evidence of its auto related form. All display windows, in particular, have been removed and a very prominent mural dominates the facade.

Evaluation

As a modest and generalized automobile sales building, 1920 Van Ness Avenue does not demonstrate direct associations with significant themes of development in both the American auto industry or the development of Van Ness' Auto Row (Criteria A and 1). While the building housed a number of auto related functions, the property was a standardized speculative venture undertaken when Van Ness' Auto Row was well-established and the foundation of the American auto industry well-developed.

Similarly, the building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B and 2). The various auto firms that occupied the building were only small components of an increasingly vast industry supply chain that included manufacturers, suppliers, and dealers and spreading across the country, and there

³ John B. Rae, *The American Automobile*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965) 9-10, 18.

⁴ The American Society of Mechanical Engineers. *The Engineering Index, 1921*. (New York: The American Society of Mechanical Engineers, 1921) 46.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

is no documentation that any person important in this field of endeavor was directly linked to the building. Further, the building does not demonstrate distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a well-established design sensibility that includes allusions to classical detailing and basic functional requirements (Criteria C and 3). While indicative of the urban development of San Francisco's Auto Row, the building is not an exemplar.

The architects, Rousseau and Rousseau, were better known for their residential practice, and the building is not an important representative of the firm's work. The commercial building was a modest endeavor, and is not significant within the firm's portfolio.⁵

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of commercial construction is otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

In addition to failing to meet any of the criteria for listing on the NRHP or the CRHR, the building displays a marked loss of integrity that further severs it from even a basic association with its Auto Row related context. With an entirely reconfigured entryway, a prominent mural, and the joining of two previously unrelated buildings (1906 Van Ness Avenue and 1920 Van Ness Avenue) the building retains little, if any, historic integrity relating to the Auto Row context.

⁵ Corbett, *Splendid Survivors*, 179, 226.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



**Photograph 2: 1920 Van Ness Avenue, detail of mural on façade,
camera facing east, 3/8/09**

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 6

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #18

P1. Other Identifier: 1930 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 1930 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0598-010

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1930 Van Ness Avenue is a single story concrete masonry commercial building located midway between Washington Street and Jackson Street. The building is rectangular in plan with a flat roof and a flush concrete foundation. The Van Ness façade of the building is sheathed in non-load bearing prefabricated yellow panels, creating a grid-like surround for the commercial display windows and offset recessed entry (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6 (1-3 Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 1930 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing east, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1922, San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits, County Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Joseph Betz
1906 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94109

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 8, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: none

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: auto sales

B4. Present Use: retail

*B5. Architectural Style: commercial

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1922. San Francisco Building Permits indicate that the storefront was reconfigured in 1935, 1943, 1959, and 1992 to accommodate new commercial usage. It appears that a new storefront has again been inserted within the last decade (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Samuel Lightner Hyman b. Builder: O.W. Britt

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a

Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 1930 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000) (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*; Rae, *The American Automobile* (1965); Corbett, *Splendid Survivors* (1979); Oakland Public Library Photograph Collection.

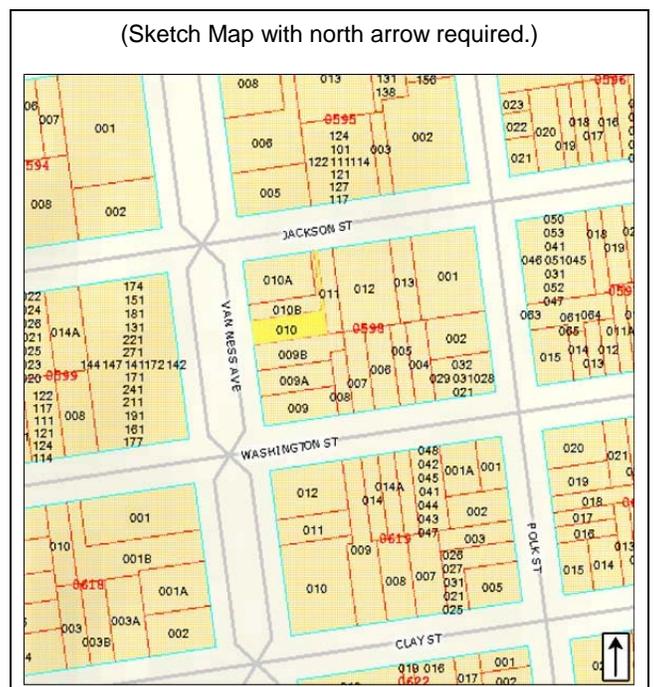
B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The storefront consists of a single large plate glass window affixed in an aluminum frame and an angular notched entryway. The entryway features double aluminum and glass doors surrounded by a glass sidelight and transom grid. Small lights are mounted on the upper portion of the façade, as is a single boxed metal sign. The entire entryway and paneling system is modern infill to the original configuration of the building. The southern and northern elevations are flush with the surrounding buildings.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and is not a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

1930 Van Ness Avenue was constructed in 1922 and was one of many automobile related commercial facilities built along Van Ness Avenue in the early years of the twentieth century. Following the dislocation of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Van Ness Avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed commercial corridor that was increasingly dominated by automobile sales, manufacturing, and repair. With the space afforded by the devastation of the disaster, the nascent auto industry and its array of support sectors found an ideal home along Van Ness Avenue. Close to the urban core, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west's largest Auto Rows. The industry initially appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but soon scores of auto related businesses steadily traveled north, flanking the broad avenue from Market nearly to the Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops.

Unlike many of the more prominent buildings constructed during the period on Auto Row, 1930 Van Ness was not commissioned by a specific auto industry client but instead appears to have been a speculative venture undertaken by property owner L.A. Myers and the architect of the building, Samuel Lightner Hyman. The Permit for the building indicates that it was intended for use as a generalized "sales" room. The speculative nature of the construction attests to the economic might of the expanding Auto Row, as a variety of smaller support services and lower-tiered sales rooms sought prime locations within the burgeoning auto sector of the avenue. The concrete building conformed to the prevailing commercial style of the time, with an understated Neoclassical aesthetic that accommodated the functional mandate of the automobile. Composed solely of a simple sales room, the building was an inexpensive investment designed to capture revenue from the booming auto trade, which had escalated following the end of World War I.

Until the mid-1930s, the building remained in auto use, occupied by the Higgins Company showroom. By 1935, however, Higgins had changed industries and the building was converted into a linoleum sales room for the J.E. Higgins Labor Company. The business evolved into the Higgins Carpet Company, and by 1938 was selling a wide range of home furnishings.¹ The conversion from automobile use was a natural offshoot of the changes shaping the auto industry during the period, which ushered in greater consolidation and forced many of the smaller firms and distributorships out of the industry. A list compiled by the American Automobile Association in the late 1920s estimated that from 1900 onward more than 3000 makes of cars and trucks were produced by upward of 1500

¹ San Francisco Department of Buildings, Building Permits.
DPR 523L (1/95)

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

identifiable companies. By the close of World War I many had shuttered, and by the 1930s most were gone.² The massive attrition within the auto industry during this period reflected the early creative and economic boom unleashed by the auto industry and the corresponding contraction as the industry matured and consolidated.

By 1942, the building was vacant. In 1943 it was converted to use by the Duchess Sandwich Company, a Bay Area business begun by Eugenia Duke to feed World War II soldiers stationed in the area. With similar sandwich “factories” in San Francisco and Oakland, the assembly line tactics of the business were well-suited to the open plan of the vacated showroom.³ After the war, the building reverted back to auto use, and was briefly used by Paramount Motor Company. Following this, the building was devoted to an array of commercial uses, including a laundromat and leather goods store, however it was never again used as an auto salesroom.⁴ Decades of use as a generic commercial building and alterations have obscured all evidence of its auto related form. All display windows, in particular, have been removed and the storefront configuration and sheathing is that of a modern commercial building.

Evaluation

As a modest and generalized automobile sales building, 1930 Van Ness Avenue does not demonstrate direct associations with significant themes of development in either the American auto industry or the development of Van Ness’ Auto Row (Criteria A and 1). While the building housed a number of auto related functions, the property was a standardized speculative venture undertaken when the Van Ness Auto Row was well-established and the foundation of the American auto industry well-developed.

Similarly, the building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B and 2). The various auto firms that occupied the building were only small components of an increasingly vast industry supply chain that included manufacturers, suppliers, and dealers and spreading across the country, and there is no documentation that any figures important in this endeavor were directly associated with the building. Further, the building does not demonstrate distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a well-established design sensibility that included allusions to classical detailing and basic functional requirements (Criteria C and 3). While indicative of the urban development of San Francisco’s Auto Row, the building is not an exemplar. The commercial building was a modest endeavor on the part of Samuel Lightner Hyman, whose later work with Abraham Appleton included a number of notable structures including the Crown Zellerbach Building, and cannot be considered an architecturally important representative of Hyman’s work.⁵

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of commercial construction is otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

² John B. Rae, *The American Automobile* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965) 18.

³ Harry Courtright, “Duchess Sandwich Co. [picture].” Oakland (Calif.) - History - Pictorial works, Oakland Public Library. Accessed online at <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/kt258023zk/?layout=metadata&brand=calisphere>, 4/20/09.

⁴ San Francisco Department of Buildings, Building Permits.

⁵ Michael R. Corbett, *Splendid Survivors*. (San Francisco: The Foundation For San Francisco’s Architectural Heritage, 1979) 217.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 5 of 6

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #18

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

In addition to failing to meet any of the criteria for listing on the NRHP or the CRHR, the building displays a marked loss of integrity that further severs it from even a basic association with its Auto Row related context. With an entirely reconfigured entryway, the building retains little, if any, historic integrity within the Auto Row context.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 1930 Van Ness Avenue, detail of replacement entry and façade, camera facing east, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 5

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #19

P1. Other Identifier: 1940 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 1940 Van Ness Avenue

City: San Francisco

Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0598-010B

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1940 Van Ness Avenue is a single-story wood-frame and concrete commercial building located midway between Washington Street and Jackson Street. Rectangular in plan, with a flat roof and flush concrete foundation, the building features an understated façade with very little ornamentation. The concrete walls are smooth and finished in plaster, terminating with a partially deteriorated cornice featuring a simple dentil band (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6 (1-3 Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 1940 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing east, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1921, San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Michael A. and Steven Honnert
1200 Redwood Way
Millbrae, CA 94030-1053

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 8, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: none

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: auto sales

B4. Present Use: retail

*B5. Architectural Style: commercial with minimal classical ornamentation

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1921. Aside from a storefront alteration in 1953, there have been no major alterations or additions (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Samuel Lightner Hyman b. Builder: O.W. Britt

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a

Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 1940 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000). The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and is not a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*; United States Federal Census 1930; Corbett *Splendid Survivors* (1979); Rae, *The American Automobile* (1965); *San Francisco Business*.

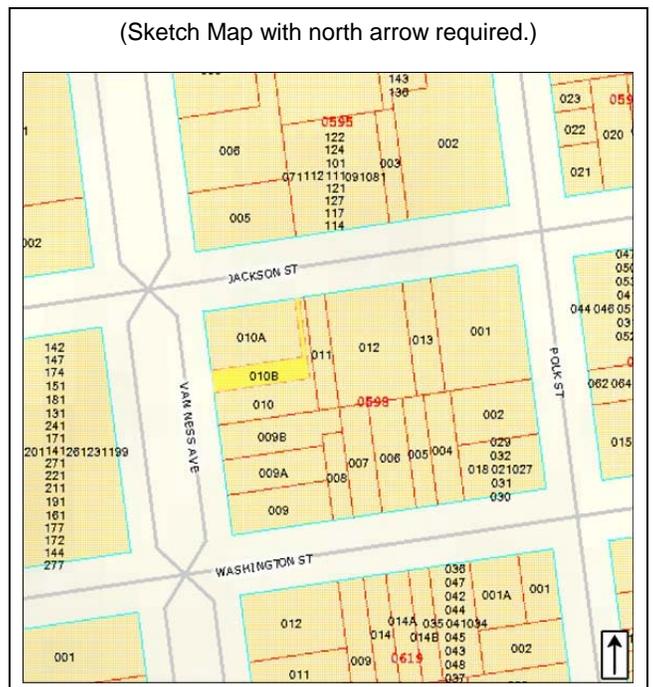
B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The entryway is recessed, with an offset doorway consisting of two glazed wood doors topped by a hopper-style wood frame transom. Three large fixed wood frame plate glass windows fill one side of the doorway, and a single rectangular sidelight fills the other. A brick skirt and knee wall fills the entryway, creating a modest planter which is filled with shrubbery. A large vertically striped canvas awning fills the façade above the entryway, mounted to the building on modestly projecting metal framing.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Historic Context

1940 Van Ness Avenue was constructed in 1921 and was one of many automobile related commercial facilities built along Van Ness Avenue in the early years of the twentieth century. Following the dislocation of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Van Ness Avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed commercial corridor that was increasingly dominated by automobile sales, manufacturing, and repair. With the space afforded by the devastation of the disaster, the nascent auto industry and its array of support sectors found an ideal home along Van Ness Avenue. Close to the urban core, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west's largest Auto Rows. The industry initially appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but soon scores of auto related businesses steadily traveled north, flanking the broad avenue from Market nearly to the Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops.

Unlike many of the more prominent buildings constructed during the period on Auto Row, 1940 Van Ness was not commissioned by a specific auto industry client but instead appears to have been a speculative venture undertaken by property owner L.A. Myers and the architect of the building, Samuel Lightner Hyman (also see 1930 Van Ness Avenue for another Hyman Property, Map Reference #18). The permit for the building only indicates that it was intended for uses as a "store." The speculative nature of the construction attests to the economic might of the expanding Auto Row, as a variety of smaller support services and lower-tiered sales rooms sought prime locations within the burgeoning auto sector of the avenue. The concrete building conformed to the prevailing commercial style of the time, with a simple plan and understated aesthetic that accommodated the functional mandate of the automobile. Composed solely of a simple sales room, the building was an inexpensive investment designed to capture revenue from the booming auto trade, which had escalated following the end of World War I. In keeping with this economic growth, the building was intended to hold a second story addition, which was never added.

During the 1920s, the building housed an auto accessories distributor, T.S. Esrey.¹ By the 1930s, the building was occupied by a piano shop, and after 1940, the building was vacant. In the early 1950s, the building was converted for use by an interior decorating firm, Al Honnert & Sons, who own and continue to occupy the building to the present. The transition in use required a new storefront, however changes to the building were minimal.² The early conversion from automobile use was a natural offshoot of the changes shaping the auto industry during the period, which ushered in greater consolidation and forced many of the smaller firms and distributorships out of the industry. A list compiled by the American Automobile Association in the late 1920s estimated that from 1900 onward more than 3000 makes of cars and trucks were produced by upward of 1500 identifiable companies. By the close of World

¹ Ancestry.com. *1930 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 2002. Original data: United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1930. T626, 2,667 rolls; San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. *San Francisco Business*. (San Francisco: San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, 1926) 20.

² San Francisco Department of Buildings, Building Permits.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

War I many had shuttered, and by the 1930s most were gone.³ The massive attrition within the auto industry during this period reflected the creative and economic boom unleashed by the early auto industry and the corresponding decline in diversity as the market matured and consolidated. As scores of distributorships, used car dealers, accessory dealers, and service providers crowded the Row, much of the building stock associated with the industry's development was incorporated for other commercial use.

Evaluation

As a modest and generalized automobile sales building, 1940 Van Ness Avenue does not demonstrate direct associations with significant themes of development in either the American auto industry or the development of Van Ness' Auto Row (Criteria A and 1). While the building housed a number of auto related functions, the property was a standardized speculative venture undertaken when the Van Ness Auto Row was well-established and the foundation of the American auto industry well-developed.

Similarly, the building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B and 2). The various auto firms that occupied the building were only small components of an increasingly vast industry supply chain that included manufacturers, suppliers, and dealers and spreading across the country, and there is no documentation that any persons important in this field of endeavor had direct associations with the building. Further, the building does not demonstrate distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a well-established design sensibility that included allusions to classical detailing and basic functional requirements (Criteria C and 3). While indicative of the urban development of San Francisco's Auto Row, the building is not an exemplar. The commercial building was a modest endeavor on the part of Samuel Lightner Hyman, whose later work with Abraham Appleton included a number of notable structures including the Crown Zellerbach Building, and cannot be considered an architecturally important representative of Hyman's work.⁴

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of commercial construction is otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

In addition to failing to meet any of the criteria for listing on the NRHP or the CRHR, the building displays a marked loss of integrity that further severs it from even a basic association with its Auto Row related context. Although the building retains greater integrity than the majority of its cohorts (see DPR523 form for 1930 Van Ness Avenue) the reconfiguration of the storefront in the early 1950s severed the building from associations within its auto related context.

³ John B. Rae, *The American Automobile*, 18.

⁴ Michael R. Corbett, *Splendid Survivors*. (San Francisco: The Foundation For San Francisco's Architectural Heritage, 1979) 217.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #

HRI#

Trinomial

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #19

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 1940 Van Ness Avenue, detail of deteriorated facade, camera facing east, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 1940 Van Ness Avenue, rear of building with filled in garage door, camera facing northwest, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 3S

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 14

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #20

P1. Other Identifier: 1946 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

***a. County:** San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

***b. USGS 7.5' Quad:** San Francisco North, Calif. **Date:** 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 1946 Van Ness Avenue

City: San Francisco

Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0598-010A

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)
1946 Van Ness Avenue is a rectangular three-story reinforced concrete building located on the southeastern corner of Van Ness Avenue and Jackson Street. The building has a flush foundation and a flat roof with a parapet. The massing is generally of two parts, with an imposing grid of windows atop an over-scale concrete base housing prominent display windows and an array of street-level entrances. The masonry portions of the base have been subtly scored to resemble stone block, and the upper stories have a lighter aesthetic, with slender piers and spandrels. The upper portions have a polychrome color scheme, with irregular tones of brick, red, and taupe (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP7 (3+ Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 1946 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing southeast, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1920, San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits, County Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
McAllister Management
Pacific Laurel LLC
1 Post Street #800
San Francisco, CA 94104-5212

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 8, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: California Oakland Motor Company

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: auto sales

B4. Present Use: vacant

*B5. Architectural Style: commercial with industrial overtones

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1920. In 1941, the building was converted for use as a bakery and the original Van Ness entry doors and window surrounds were altered (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Macdonald and Kahn Engineers b. Builder: Macdonald and Kahn Engineers

*B10. Significance: Theme: Architectural development of Auto Row Area: San Francisco
Period of Significance: 1920 Property Type: Commercial Applicable Criteria: A (1) and C(3)

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 1946 Van Ness Avenue appears eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and local designation under Criterion A (Criterion 1) for its local significance in the physical and social development of San Francisco's Auto Row. Additionally, the building appears eligible for listing in the NRHP and the CRHR under Criterion C (Criterion 3), as a locally significant architectural representative of urban automobile related development (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

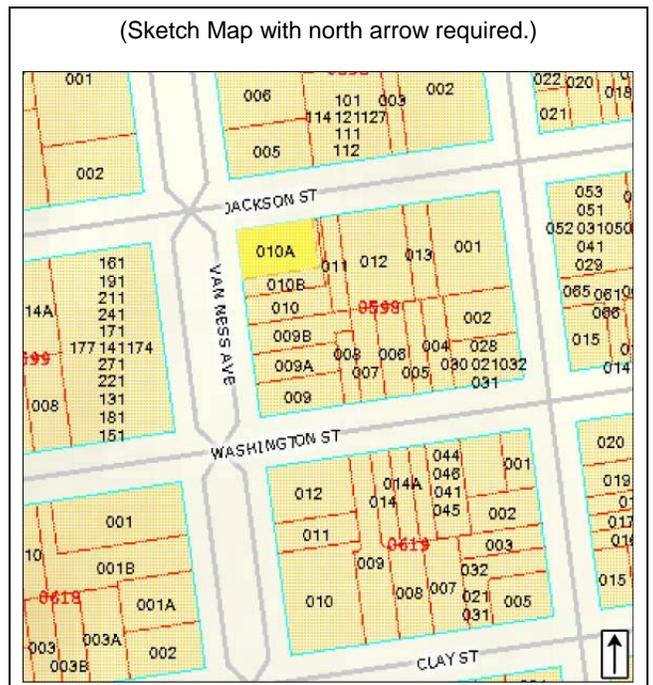
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco. *San Francisco Chronicle*; *Oakland Tribune*; *The San Francisco Examiner*; *The Commercial Vehicle*; *Motor West*; Ling, *America and the Automobile* (1990); Stevens, *Hoover Dam* (1988); Bucci, *Albert Kahn Wolf, Big Dams and Other Dreams* (1996); Dyble, *Paying The Toll* (2009); *Journal of San Diego History*; Smith, *Influence of the Great War Upon Shipping* (1919); *The American Architect*; Rae, *The American Automobile* (1965); Bradley, *The Works* (1999)

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



(This space reserved for official comments.)

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The building is currently vacant and the Van Ness Avenue elevation is shrouded in mature foliage. The entryway is centered upon the façade, and has been boarded over with plywood and painted white. Fixed steel frame commercial windows flank the doorway, divided into four parts by simple steel mullions. The doorway entablature is simple, with a bowed lintel and subtle rope molding featuring several plaster male figures, all of which have been broken but for one. A large double-faced sign is affixed to the building above the doorway, advertising the previous tenant, Ahren's Bakery. The upper two stories of the Van Ness Avenue elevation are divided into five bays, separated by slender tapered masonry columns which project from the building. Each bay contains a masonry framed grid of nine windows, each of which is a nine-light casement framed in steel. A narrow concrete cornice caps the building, projecting below a simple parapet. A single metal conduit projects from one of the windows and runs the height of the building to the roof.

The Jackson Street elevation is similar to that of Van Ness Avenue, with the upper two stories featuring eight of the same bays. The northeast corner of the building differs slightly, housing the elevator bulkhead and containing solid masonry walls punctuated only by two small nine-light steel frame casement windows. The first floor of the building is slightly irregular, with a number of insertions reflecting the automobile related history of the building. The commercial window treatment of the Van Ness Avenue elevation wraps partially around the Jackson elevation, with eight steel frame plate glass window insertions. Further eastward, two courses of smaller windows with concrete sills line the building, some of which have been bricked in and painted or filled in with plywood. Two garage door entries appear on the Jackson Street elevation, one of which leads directly to the elevator shaft. Both doors are original wood, with fixed glass panes reminiscent of those filling the façade. A single nine-light glazed wood door stands between the two garage doors.

The eastern elevation fronts a narrow alley. The eastern elevation is of exposed brick, with a rough concrete framing grid. Two rows of twenty-four light casement windows line the southeast corner, with six-light central hinged awning panes. Several of the central panes have been replaced with modern infill. The parapet features a painted billboard for Ahren's Bakery and a single metal pipe projects from the building, running to the roof.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has also been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and appears to be a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

Constructed in 1920, 1946 Van Ness Avenue reflects the meteoric rise of San Francisco's Auto Row in the early years of the twentieth century. The building was one of many automobile related facilities to appear in San Francisco between 1908 and the late 1930s, as rampant market growth in the automobile industry produced a strikingly dense and diverse urban building stock that centered upon Van Ness Avenue. This urban development required an array of buildings, from grand showrooms to humble garages, however the hierarchical diversity was bound by a singular association with the dissemination of the automobile. Accommodating the particular marketing and social mandates of the fledgling industry, the buildings of Auto Row reflected the work of an eclectic array of both prominent and

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*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

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B10. Significance: (Continued)

obscure architects, some steeped in the Beaux-Arts Classicism of the nineteenth century and some at the vanguard of twentieth century industrial design. The buildings of the Row cogently expressed the constantly evolving aesthetic and social role of the automobile in America, with 1946 Van Ness Avenue as an intriguing exemplar.

Unlike many of the high-profile showrooms along the avenue, such as the Don Lee Building or the Paige Auto Building, the industrial simplicity of 1946 Van Ness Avenue bore little of the classical detailing of the traditional early twentieth century form. With its orderly grid, massive scale, and straightforward function, the building stood as a veritable factory in the city. Designed and erected by industrial engineers Macdonald and Kahn, who were better known for their reinforced concrete bridge spans, towering dams, and tankers; the building's sophisticated industrial treatment was an emphatic affirmation of the revolutionary cultural effect of the automobile. Requiring new social, economic, and structural models of operation, the rapid development of the car created an unprecedented opportunity for the melding of architecture and industry in the public realm. 1946 Van Ness Avenue is a sophisticated representation of this fusion.

The opportunity for the intensive development of Van Ness Avenue as an Auto Row largely arose from the destruction of the 1906 earthquake and fire. Following the disaster, the avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed and rapidly developing commercial corridor. Although much of the southern reaches of the avenue lay in ruins following the four day inferno, in comparison to the ravaged Market Street corridor Van Ness emerged relatively intact. Much of the western side of the avenue and the upper portions of the thoroughfare near present-day Fort Mason and the Aquatic Park remained untouched by the fire, as the road's wide expanse had served as one of the city's primary fire breaks. In the months following the earthquake, the area was the center of a speculative boom, as businesses sought temporary quarters within easy reach of downtown and commercial interests sought profits from a frenzy of leasing activity.¹

Between 1906 and 1909, a large number of residents and business decamped for the undamaged stretches of Van Ness Avenue. Along with Fillmore Street to the west, Van Ness became San Francisco's premier commercial and economic hub, supplanting the devastated areas of downtown. Only weeks after the earthquake, the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted that Van Ness was, "now a livelier avenue than ever before in its history," and extolled the rapid construction of numerous temporary buildings and requisition of damaged mansions for commerce. Even at this early date, a slew of the city's preeminent commercial establishments were opening doors on Van Ness, including the famed Emporium department store, as well as City of Paris, and the White House.² Rather than erecting new quarters, many of the stores occupied abandoned mansions, with the City of Paris filling the Hobart Mansion, a commodious Queen Anne located on the prominent corner of Van Ness and Washington Street.³

Despite the widespread rapidity of redevelopment, the emergence of Van Ness Avenue as a central economic and social hub was short-lived. Much of the commercial development along the avenue was considered a temporary expedient, and as conditions in the traditional business and retail core of the city improved, many of the businesses flooded back to newly constructed or repaired quarters.⁴ The illustrious City of Paris, with its silk finery and French wines, departed from the Hobart mansion in 1909, returning to its repaired Union Square Beaux Arts building. The local press commented on the exodus, noting that "although for a time it was believed the retail district would remain

¹ "Speculation Stops in Buying Real Property," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 27, 1909.

² "Retailers Leasing on Van Ness Avenue," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 6, 1906.

³ Online Archive of California Photograph Collection, Bancroft Library Photograph Collection "Temp Quarters, Hobart Res. - Van Ness and Washington. City of Paris Dry Goods Company," 1906.

⁴ "Expansion of Retail Business an Example of City's Enterprise," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 17, 1909.

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permanently in the Western Addition,” the force of the “Downtown Movement” proved too great.⁵ In several short years, therefore, the identity of Van Ness Avenue was dramatically uprooted again, leaving the broad avenue in flux. “What Van Ness may become in the future can probably not be imagined,” wrote the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1909, echoing a widespread sentiment, “it has been deserted by retail trade and will not regain any of it in the near future.”⁶

Despite this dour prognosis, while the avenue was being abandoned by traditional residential and commercial interests, it increasingly came to be defined by a burgeoning sector in both the economy and psyche of America: the automobile. The nascent auto industry and its array of support sectors including sales, repair, and parts manufacturing found an ideal home in the space afforded by the vacating retail sector along Van Ness. Close to the urban core and flanking the city’s broadest avenue, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west’s largest and most diverse “Auto Rows.” The industry first appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but soon scores of auto related businesses traveled steadily north, flanking the broad avenue from Market nearly to the Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops.

Emerging as a captivating modern marvel in the close of the nineteenth century, the automobile quickly became a potent symbol of the democratizing capability of industrial development in the twentieth century. In its earliest years, auto excursions were the domain of only the most privileged; monarchs in Europe or American leaders such as Theodore Roosevelt, but by the second decade of the twentieth century, cotton farmers in the San Joaquin Valley were driving the machines across their fields. In 1900, the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted with pride that there were, “fully fifty of the machines in and about the city,” and just eleven years later, the city was awash in automobiles, with an official count conducted along Van Ness Avenue documenting the passage of nearly 2500 cars over the course of only several hours.⁷ The rampant growth in automobile use in San Francisco mirrored trends across the country. Although only one percent of the population owned a car in 1910, by 1930 the number had grown to a full sixty percent, with cities like San Francisco acting as critical sales outlets for trade in the west. Along with New York, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles, San Francisco proved one of the most prominent distribution centers for the growing auto industry.⁸

With California leading the country in automobile sales and ownership throughout the 1910s and 1920s, the state proved a ready market for the increasingly standardized and reliable automobiles shipped largely from the middle-western industrial belt. The exponentially growing consumer market was accompanied by an equally explosive rise in the number of automobile manufacturing, sales, and service firms. A list compiled by the American Automobile Association in the late 1920s estimated that from 1900 onward more than 3000 makes of cars and trucks were produced by upward of 1500 identifiable companies. By the close of World War I many had shuttered, and by the 1930s most were gone, pushed out of a maturing industry increasingly defined by consolidation and mass production.⁹ As an early Auto Row, Van Ness Avenue housed hundreds of these firms throughout the 1910s and 1920s, with Hudsons and Hupmobiles, Cole Aeros and Cadillacs filling glassy showrooms. As a burgeoning sales corridor, the avenue became a nexus between the productive capacities of the automotive industry and the American

⁵ “Expansion of Retail Business an Example of City’s Enterprise,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 17, 1909.

⁶ “The Future of Van Ness Avenue,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 30, 1909.

⁷ “Outlook for the Autos,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 7, 1900.

⁸ Sally H. Clarke, *Trust and Power: Consumers, the Modern Corporation, and the Making of the United States Automobile Market* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3.

⁹ John B. Rae, *The American Automobile*, 18.

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B10. Significance: (Continued)

consumer. In many senses, the showrooms were a face for the increasingly powerful auto industry, and the array of buildings erected represented an evolving conception of the automobile's central role in the city, state, and nation.¹⁰

This evolution occurred rapidly. Although Auto Row developed in the wake of the 1906 upheaval, the city's first automobile club had moved to Van Ness Avenue and Golden Gate Avenue in 1900, converting the city's oldest library, the Mercantile Library, into an auto showroom. The press noted that the "ancient and modern tomes and the bookworms will make way for the new fangled vehicle as meekly as the horses are expected to disappear from the stables."¹¹ This forecast proved prescient, and within several years Van Ness was home to a remarkably diversified array of auto salesrooms, repair shops, and assembly rooms. Initially, many of the shops and display rooms were housed in small wood frame buildings, however as the clout of the industry grew, and the importance of branding escalated in a competitive market, larger auto palaces quickly sprung up along the avenue.

Throughout the 1910s, 1920s, and to a lesser degree the 1930s, large corner lots along the avenue were developed as automobile showrooms and smaller frontages in between were filled with modest repair shops and used car sales facilities. Undeveloped lots doubled as open air car lots, with bright banners and signs. At the eastern corner of Van Ness and Market Street, the White Garage boasted an auto show room, supplied auto and motorcycle parts, and offered repairs. The intersection of Van Ness Avenue and O'Farrell was an anchor for the district, with the Weeks and Day designed Don Lee Building on the northeast corner; the Earl C. Anthony Packard Showroom, designed by Bernard Maybeck in 1926, on the northwest corner; and a 1937 Art Moderne Chevrolet showroom designed by John E. Dinwiddie filling the southwest corner. At the southwest corner of Sacramento Street and Van Ness, the Paige Motor Car Company housed Max Arnold's "high grade automobiles," with the building doubling in size to accommodate increased business in 1924. Numerous other auto shops lined the street, specializing in everything from upholstery to wood working for the ornate fleet of new autos flooding the growing California market. As the wares within the showrooms evolved, so too did the architectural styling of their surrounds and the Van Ness corridor became defined by the breakneck commercial developments of the industry. The three decades were characterized by remarkably different architectural forms, from simple brick garages to classical pilasters and sweeping Art Moderne curves. Beginning in the 1920s, bright neon signs filled the streetscape, with rooftop billboards and bright signs framing the buildings.

With the mass market for cars only newly established and shrouded in a modern mystique, this industry radiated an aura of excitement and grandeur that has largely faded today. In the 1920s, celebrations such as "Open Roads Week," drew thousands to Van Ness Avenue, drawn by festivities marking "the call of the open road." The Nash dealer filled his showroom at Van Ness Avenue and California Street with hundreds of pine and redwood trees brought from Mendocino County, transforming it into a rustic campsite with trails and tents. At the Willys Overland Pacific Company, a miner cooking flapjacks over a fire "lent a touch of reality," to the auto affair.¹² This breed of theatrical showmanship reflected the immense cultural importance that the automobile had attained in only two decades. Far more than a simple mode of transport, the car had come to represent a host of modern aspirations and cultural desires. This "epitome of possessions," had a profound impact upon development both in the Bay area and

¹⁰ Peter J. Ling, *America and the Automobile: Technology, Reform, and Social Change*. (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990) 13, 96-97.

¹¹ "To Shelter Automobiles," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 31, 1900.

¹² "Open Road Week Draws Crowd To Row," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 26, 1921.

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #20*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

the state and country as a whole.¹³ As the “open roads” celebrated by the early industry ceded to dense networks of automotive-based settlement, the auto became central in conceptions of twentieth century life. Throughout this transition, the buildings on Van Ness Avenue became a veritable stage-set for the advancement of the automobile.

Macdonald and Kahn’s work reflects significant attributes of this overarching context. Formed in 1911 and active across the city in the years following the earthquake, the firm acted alternately as architects, engineers, and contractors in a remarkably wide range of projects both in San Francisco and elsewhere in the state of California throughout the first half of the twentieth century. The partnership undertook contracts for a strikingly diverse array of both prosaic and high profile ventures including construction of sewers, storm drains, bridges, and concrete ships; as well as more standard speculative residential, industrial, and commercial properties. While striking in its breadth, this professional diversity was bound by an unparalleled understanding of the potentiality of reinforced concrete construction. Both Kahn and Macdonald were noted innovators in the burgeoning field of reinforced concrete, and, perhaps more than any other western firm, extended these innovations with rapid surety to a broad swath of modern construction outlets.¹⁴

Along with this adept technical background, the two displayed a powerful networking ability that ultimately propelled the firm to the upper echelon of the American civil engineering profession with their central participation in the construction of the Hoover Dam. As part of the Six Companies consortium that included Bechtel Corporation and other western construction giants, the firm played a substantial role in the successful completion of the dam, as well as the completion of the Grand Coulee Dam and subsequent World War II era defense related projects spearheaded by the Six Companies.¹⁵ Individually, the engineers also displayed marked professional versatility, with Alan Macdonald hired in 1929 as the first General Manager for the as yet unconstructed Golden Gate Bridge. In this capacity he was an influential, albeit controversial, figure in the contracting and early construction of the seminal bridge span.¹⁶

At the time of the 1920 construction of 1625 Van Ness Avenue, the firm was far less established, with few high profile contracts. A few years earlier, Macdonald and Kahn were commissioned by Zellerbach Paper Company to construct a six-story reinforced concrete factory and warehouse in North Beach, on the Embarcadero. During the same period, the firm was developing pueblo-style single family residences in a speculative venture on Sea Cliff Avenue along San Francisco’s coastline. The firm’s most high-profile activities arose from their central participation in the 1918 development of America’s first concrete freighter, aptly named Faith. Hired by a speculative concern named the San Francisco Ship Building Company, the engineers designed the 5000 ton vessel in six months.¹⁷ The successful maiden voyage of the ship in the spring of 1918 garnered much praise. With shortages of steel

¹³ Henri Lefebvre introduced the conception of the “epitome of possessions,” in his seminal work *Everyday Life in the Modern World*. The conception is also referenced in: Clay McShane, *Down The Asphalt Path: The Automobile and the American City*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994) 126-148.

¹⁴ “Felix Kahn, S.F. Builder Dies at 76,” *San Francisco Examiner*, June 6, 1958

¹⁵ Joseph E. Stevens, *Hoover Dam: An American Adventure*. (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988) 40; Donald E. Wolf, *Big Dams and Other Dreams: The Six Companies Story*. (Norman Oklahoma: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1996) 32-33.

¹⁶ Louise Nelson Dyble, *Paying The Toll: Local Power, Regional Politics, and the Golden Gate Bridge*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) 48-50.

¹⁷ “Realty Sales Downtown Approximately Normal.” *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 8, 1916; “City’s Growth Demands New Apartments and Homes.” *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 20, 1917; “Concrete Ship to Slide into Water Today.” *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 14, 1918; Eberhardt, Robert, “Concrete Shipbuilding in San Diego 1918-1920.” *Journal of San Diego History*, Spring 1995, Volume 41, Number 2.

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B10. Significance: (Continued)

accompanying America's entry into World War I, political will and funding for development of the technology was high and following the launch scores of contracts for concrete ships were undertaken by the company.¹⁸

With such marked professional breadth, it appears that the young firm was actively testing the physical and social boundaries of reinforced concrete construction. On several levels, construction projects in and around Auto Row were a logical extension for the firm within this broad repertoire. In the late 1910s development along the row was booming, with prominent architects, auto companies, and businessmen increasingly attracted to the dense two-mile urban auto enclave. Since 1913 auto sales rooms and auto repair shops had dominated the avenue, however by 1920 the development had reached a fevered pitch. As speculative businessmen, contractors, and engineers, the opportunities inherent in such growth and mass popularity were apparent to Macdonald and Kahn. In 1920 alone the firm constructed at least four buildings along the row, all far larger in scale than those from the preceding decade and all reflective of an increasingly perfected conception of the requirements of auto sales.

Additionally, Felix Kahn's technical proficiency in building with reinforced concrete was paired with an intimate, albeit indirect, knowledge of designing for the auto industry. The same year that the firm was working along Van Ness Avenue, Felix Kahn's brother, prominent industrial designer Albert Kahn, was designing the enormous General Motors Building in Detroit, Michigan. A decade earlier Albert had designed both the Highland Park Ford Plant and the Packard Plant, providing an aesthetic and functional model for construction that was clearly adopted by his brother's firm in much of their Van Ness Avenue construction. Like Macdonald and Kahn, Albert Kahn Associates Inc. Architects and Engineers of Detroit was a firm that blurred the boundaries between architecture and industry. Ultimately, this skill lent itself well to the particular mandates of auto related architecture, which centered upon a sophisticated understanding of how the building's form aided the technological development of the auto product within.¹⁹

Although designing and constructing a branch salesroom represented a far more modest endeavor than the design of revolutionary automobile plants such as Highland Park, the work undertaken by Macdonald and Kahn in San Francisco was representative of important strands of auto-related design. With a broad and open plan, the building was endowed with ample light, a feature which was accentuated by well-placed industrial windows and numerous skylights. The first level was defined by prominent floor to ceiling plate glass windows, beckoning those who passed and serving as a transparent foil for the solidity and alluring glint of the cars within. The upper levels were divided effectively into functional sections, with secondary garage entrances funneling vehicles to the various service sections.

Importantly, 1946 Van Ness bore few of the architectural trappings of many of its neighbors, including the Paige Auto building or the landmark Don Lee Cadillac building constructed several years later. The building was of a straightforward and functional aesthetic, in many senses similar to that of the elder Kahn's massive Highland Park. This simplicity reflected the firm's industrial inclinations, and was mirrored in several other buildings the firm erected on Van Ness Avenue during the same time period (see DPR523 form for 1625 Van Ness Avenue and 1700 Van Ness Avenue). On a more fundamental level, the simplicity also clearly indicated the design relationship between the car and the factory, limiting embellishment in favor of transparent functionality. Such design conformed to the vanguard of architectural theory relating to auto sales. Although the matter received far less attention than the industrial design of factories, by the close of the 1910s architectural trade publications advocated open floor plans, ample light, and a

¹⁸ Russell J. Smith, *Influence of the Great War Upon Shipping*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1919) 217-243.

¹⁹ Federico Bucci, *Albert Kahn: Architect of Ford*. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002) 27-58.

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B10. Significance: (Continued)

vertical solution incorporating sales at the base and maintenance and repair above; a retinue of requirements elegantly and pragmatically addressed by Macdonald and Kahn.²⁰

Upon completion, the building was occupied by the Oakland Motor Car Company. The company had roots dating to the nineteenth century, and was initially founded as the Pontiac Buggy Company in 1893. In 1907, founder Edward M. Murphy realized the ascendancy of the motor car, and converted his buggy works to the Oakland Motor Car Company. By 1909, General Motors owned a 50 percent interest in the company, however it continued to be run under its own name until 1932.²¹ At the time of the building's construction, the firm was undergoing rapid growth, with western sales of coupes, roadsters, touring, sports, and sedan cars mandating an increased commercial presence.²² The building was lauded, "a magnificent new addition to Auto Row," and considered a reflection of the "growth and expansion," of the western reach of the company. Only two years later, the company established a manufacturing plant for the western region in the Bay area, with the San Francisco retail salesroom the primary distribution point.²³ By decade's end, however, this production boom had ceded to pressures in the market, as standardization, consolidation, and the economic stagnation of the Depression transformed the industry.

After the 1930s the building never again returned to auto related use. This abandonment reflected general trends along Van Ness Avenue, as the rampant growth of Auto Row, and the entire industry, was dramatically undercut by the economic turmoil of the period. In 1929, the American auto industry produced a record 5,337,087 cars, a volume of production that would not return for over two decades. By 1932, that number had shrunk to only a little over 1,000,000 cars. This dramatic decline in production had a crippling ripple effect across the country, as thousands of dealers, repair shops, and parts manufacturers found themselves awash in competition with little accompanying demand.²⁴ Along Auto Row, this dramatic upheaval held serious physical and economic effects. With much of the two mile stretch filled with vying auto companies and dealers, many within the industry closed their doors and dropped their leases. Building permits from the era indicate that a number of auto buildings stood vacant, others were transformed to bakeries and taverns, laundry facilities, and warehouses. 1946 Van Ness reflected this decline, as its plate glass storefront and mammoth industrial spaces were incorporated for use by Ahrens Bakery, a tenant which remained in the building for the better part of the century. Although most of the major dealers weathered the downturn, the diversity and dynamism of the 1920s Row faded with the onset of the Depression, in large part never to return. As famous concerns folded across the country, including once unassailable competitors Franklin, Pierce-Arrow, Peerless, and Stutz, the dense network of accompanying showrooms were suddenly cast as archaic components of an insecure industry.²⁵

Evaluation

Within the historic context of the physical and social development of San Francisco's Auto Row, 1946 Van Ness Avenue is a significant representative of the important cultural impact that the development of the auto industry had

²⁰ "An Automobile Sales building," *The American Architect*. (New York, Volume CXIV, No. 2228, September 4, 1918) 301-302.

²¹ Theodore F. MacManus and Norman Beasley, *Men, Money, and Motors: The Drama of the Automobile* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1929) 107-108

²² "Display Ad 89: Announcing the New Oakland 6-44," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 12, 1922.

²³ "Direct Branch Opens Here," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 19, 1922; "California Auto Plant Swamped With New Orders," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 29, 1930.

²⁴ Rae, *The American Automobile*, 105.

²⁵ Rae, *The American Automobile*, 110.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 10 of 14

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #20*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

on San Francisco and appears eligible under NRHP and CRHR Criteria A and 1. Erected in 1920 at the height of a building boom that was transforming the avenue into a functionally cohesive and architecturally diverse sales corridor, the massive commission expressed the increasing economic importance of the industry for the city as well as the increasingly vaunted status of the automobile. Filling a prime lot once occupied by some of the most illustrious denizens of San Francisco, the development indicated the rapid transition of Van Ness Avenue into a major Auto Row. This transition was part of a larger national movement, as the automobile gained in popularity across the country and profoundly altered the state of modern American life.

In addition to its significant associations with cultural developments of the industry, the building also appears eligible for listing in the NRHP and CRHR under Criteria C and 3 as both a representative of significant architectural design features and the work of a master. Although the conception and construction of regional Auto Rows has received far less attention and academic inquiry than that relating to centralized auto manufacturing plants like Ford's Highland Park, these local sales outlets were critical facets of the industry. As the central point of contact between the customer and the manufacturer, purpose-built auto showrooms had a complex mandate. In many senses, showrooms had to both functionally accommodate and, equally important, sell the car. Architectural publications in the 1910s and 1920s routinely expressed the multi-dimensional importance of the showroom, citing the need for a complex balance between modern functionality and architectural cohesiveness. A 1918 article in *The American Architect* encapsulates both the insecurities and opportunities inherent in showroom design, stating that "the design of small automobile sales buildings [was] a matter of increasing importance requiring special features."²⁶ This critical attention resulted in a host of architectural expressions, from Beaux Arts classicism to exotic Orientalism, and, later, exuberant Moderne curves.

Within this milieu, 1946 Van Ness Avenue was a significant adaptation, in that, unlike many of its neighbors, it's design did not borrow from any ornamental architectural tradition but instead appeared to evolve directly from the factory floor. Understanding Macdonald and Kahn's design as an auto sales "factory," the building is an embodied of lessons learned during the rise of Fordism. The entire construction was predicated upon the solution of a single design problem: promoting, selling, and maintaining the automobile. The building was an honest solution to this design problem and reflected a growing stylistic appreciation of the industrial form. In its design the building truthfully expressed this functional identity, with little cloaking ornamentation. This transparency of purpose paired with a prominent commercial identity was a bold innovation along an Auto Row often characterized by ornate design and rich ornamentation.²⁷

While the automobile commissions undertaken by Macdonald and Kahn were relatively modest when compared to both their later work and the architectural precedents of major automobile plants such as Highland Park, they were important in that they tangibly consolidated the efficiency and standardization practices learned in the production arm of the industry and channeled them to the sales and consumption sectors. As engineers, Macdonald and Kahn pressed the functional efficacy of the building in a more consistent manner and at a greater scale than previous showroom designers, who were often hampered by limited space and accustomed to greater ornamentation. Even compared with similarly scaled construction from a mere decade earlier, such as that of the White Garage at the corner of Market Street and Van Ness Avenue constructed by the Beaux Arts trained George Adrian Applegarth, the

²⁶ "An Automobile Sales Building," *The American Architect*, Volume CXIV, Number 2228, September 4, 1918, (301-302).

²⁷ Betsy Hunter Bradley, *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) 201-224.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

building was a far more cohesive and effective portal for the cars within; with lighter framing members, greater light, and a more open plan.

Equally striking is the replicative capacity of the firm, in the years 1919-1920, they constructed at least four massive auto buildings along Van Ness, each quite similar to the other and each representative of the standardization in building techniques that was accompanying the standardization in automobile manufacturing. Each was a purpose-built building for distinct clients, yet each could be replicated with ease. Of these, 1946 Van Ness was perhaps the most advanced representative of industrial design principles, and remains as the sole intact specimen.

1946 Van Ness Avenue stands as an exemplar of the design accomplishments of Van Ness' Auto Row. The building generally retains integrity, with few physical alterations. The building has integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and stands largely as it did upon construction. Unlike the vast majority of buildings along Auto Row, the building has had no major storefront alterations, and the basic open form of the storefront and accompanying service spaces remains intact. This integrity is critical, in that the storefront was perhaps the most vital and recognizable facet of Auto Row design. As a portal to the wares within, the storefronts of Auto Row were of the utmost importance to both marketer and consumer.

While this evaluation recognizes the significance of 1946 Van Ness Avenue under Criterion A (1) and Criterion C (3), the building does not meet any of the other criteria for listing. It is not associated with any specific individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criterion B or 2) and the physical aspects of the property is not likely to be a principal source of information important for historical understanding (Criterion D or 4).

CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #

HRI#

Trinomial

Page 12 of 14

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #20

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 1946 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing south, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 1946 Van Ness Avenue, detail of window and spandrels, 3/8/09

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 4: 1946 Van Ness Avenue, garage door on northern elevation, 3/8/09



Photograph 5: 1946 Van Ness Avenue, steel frame display window on Van Ness Avenue, 3/8/09

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 6: 1946 Van Ness Avenue, industrial windows on rear elevation, camera facing west, 3/8/09



Photograph 7: 1946 Van Ness Avenue, entry, camera facing southeast, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 9

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #21

P1. Other Identifier: 2001 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 2001 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0594-002

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 2001 Van Ness Avenue is a three-story reinforced concrete building located on the northwestern corner of Van Ness Avenue and Jackson Street. Standing on a hill that rises to the west, the building is constructed into the slope, with the Van Ness street level tapering into the hillside (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP7 (3+ Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 2001 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northwest, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1920 with 1972 addition. San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits, County Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
The Astorian Family Trust
2001 Van Ness Avenue, #409
San Francisco, CA 94109

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 8, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name:

B2. Common Name:

B3. Original Use: auto sales/showroom

B4. Present Use: retail / office

*B5. Architectural Style: commercial

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1920. In 1972 the upper stories were reconfigured and the height of the building was extended. Several eras of new storefront configurations have altered the building, occurring in 1963, 1979, 1981, 1983, 1991, and 1998 (San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Macdonald and Kahn Engineers b. Builder: Macdonald and Kahn Engineers

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

2001 Van Ness Avenue was previously evaluated on a DPR 523 form in 2006 as part of a report entitled "Cultural Resources Study of the 2001 Van Ness Avenue Project, Singular Wireless Site No. SNFCCAA060, 2001 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, San Francisco County, California." The evaluator found the building ineligible for listing in the NRHP or the CRHR. The evaluation does not appear to have State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurrence and is not listed in the Historic Property Data File for San Francisco County (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

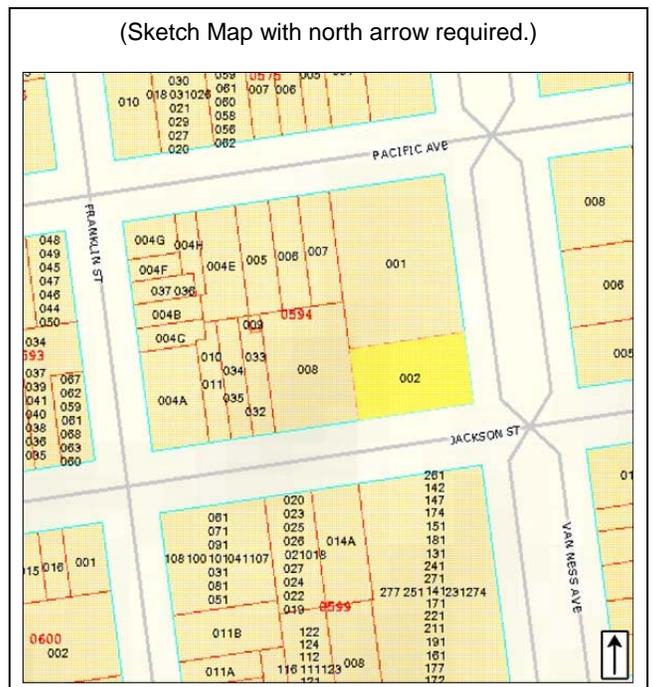
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco. *San Francisco Chronicle*; *Oakland Tribune*; *The San Francisco Examiner*; *The Commercial Vehicle*; *Motor West*; *Ling, America and the Automobile* (1990); *Stevens, Hoover Dam* (1988); *Bucci, Albert Kahn Wolf, Big Dams and Other Dreams* (1996); *Dyble, Paying The Toll* (2009); *Journal of San Diego History*; *Smith, Influence of the Great War Upon Shipping* (1919); *The American Architect*; *Rae, The American Automobile* (1965).

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



(This space reserved for official comments.)

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The building was constructed as a two-story automobile sales and repair building in 1920, however subsequent alterations have massively reconfigured the building. A vertical addition and successive eras of major storefront alterations have rendered the building virtually unrecognizable from its original form.

The Van Ness Avenue elevation is divided into three bays, all of which are expressed throughout the full height of the building. The ground floor is divided into three recessed storefronts, all serving different businesses. The configurations reflect the individual design intent of each business, however each storefront is generally composed of glass and aluminum entry and window fixtures, with some stone and tile veneer. An array of modern aluminum signage is affixed to the building, framing each entryway. The upper stories of the Van Ness Avenue elevation feature a simple architectural treatment, with smooth concrete walls and regularly placed modern window insertions. On the second story, each bay holds two large rectangular fixed windows, framed in narrow aluminum glazing bars. On the third story, each bay holds a four-light ribbon window, framed in aluminum and composed of tilting-awning panes. The roofline is flush, with a slightly recessed seamed metal parapet.

The Jackson Street elevation is largely identical to that of Van Ness Avenue, although the elevation does not contain intensive retail insertions in the first level because of the sloping grade. In the upper levels, the elevation is divided into four bays that are the same as those on Van Ness. Near the southeast corner, there is a single garage entry as well as several metal service doors. At the far southeast edge of the building, there is a recessed commercial entry with an awning. Like the Van Ness elevation, the roofline is untreated, with only the slightly recessed seamed parapet.

Although the majority of the building's northern elevation is obscured by its northerly neighbor, several recessed insertions with small balconies line the upper course of the building, an alteration spurred by the conversion of the building's garage space to office use.

A large steel frame billboard perches prominently atop the building.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

The 2006 evaluation left some data gaps; including information relating to the architect, and the general Auto Row related historic context, that this DPR 523 fills. For reference, the 2006 DPR 523 form is included with this evaluation. This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 2001 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000) (see continuation sheet).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and is not a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Historic Context

Constructed in 1920, 2001 Van Ness Avenue was one of many automobile related commercial facilities built along the avenue in the early years of the twentieth century. Following the dislocation of the 1906 earthquake and fire, Van Ness Avenue transformed from a largely residential thoroughfare to a mixed commercial corridor dominated by automobile sales, manufacturing, and repair. With California leading the country in automobile sales and ownership throughout the 1910s and 1920s, the state proved a ready market for the increasingly standardized and reliable automobiles shipped largely from the middle-western industrial belt. Close to the urban core and the economic opportunities inherent to the city, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west's largest Auto Rows. In many senses, the showrooms were a face for the increasingly powerful auto industry, and the array of buildings erected represented an evolving conception of the automobile's role in America.¹ The industry initially appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but soon scores of auto related businesses traveled steadily north, flanking the broad avenue from Market nearly to the Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops.

2001 Van Ness Avenue was constructed by the San Francisco based engineering and contracting firm of Macdonald and Kahn. Formed in 1911 and active across the city in the years following the earthquake, the firm acted alternately as architects, engineers, and contractors in a remarkably wide range of projects both in San Francisco and elsewhere in the state of California throughout the first half of the twentieth century. With a particular emphasis in reinforced concrete construction, the partnership undertook contracts for a strikingly diverse array of both prosaic and high profile ventures including construction of sewers, storm drains, concrete ships, speculative residential, industrial, and commercial properties. Displaying an adept technical and networking ability, the firm ultimately entered the upper echelon of the American civil engineering profession with their central participation in the construction of the Hoover Dam. As part of the Six Companies consortium that included Bechtel Corporation as well as other western construction giants, the firm of Macdonald and Kahn played a substantial role in the successful completion of the dam, as well as the Grand Coulee Dam and subsequent World War II era defense related projects completed under the auspices of the Six Companies.² Individually, the engineers also displayed marked professional versatility, with Alan Macdonald hired in 1929 as the first General Manager for the as yet unconstructed Golden Gate Bridge.³

At the time of the 1920 construction of 2001 Van Ness Avenue, the firm was far less established, with few high profile contracts. In 1916, Macdonald and Kahn were commissioned by Zellerbach Paper Company to construct a six-story reinforced concrete factory and warehouse in North Beach, on the Embarcadero. Concurrently, the firm was developing pueblo-style single family residences in a speculative venture on Sea Cliff Avenue along San Francisco's coastline. The most high profile activities of the firm arose from their central participation in the 1918 development of America's first concrete freighter, aptly named Faith. Hired by a speculative firm named the San Francisco Ship Building Company, the partners designed the 5000 ton vessel in six months.⁴ The successful maiden

¹ Ling, Peter J. *America and the Automobile: Technology, Reform, and Social Change*. (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990) 13, 96-97.

² Stevens, Joseph E. *Hoover Dam: An American Adventure*. (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988) 40; Wolf, Donald E. *Big Dams and Other Dreams: The Six Companies Story*. (Norman Oklahoma: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1996) 32-33.

³ Dyble, Louise Nelson. *Paying The Toll: Local Power, Regional Politics, and the Golden Gate Bridge*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) 48-50.

⁴ "Realty Sales Downtown Approximately Normal." *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 8, 1916; "City's Growth Demands New Apartments and Homes." *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 20, 1917; "Concrete Ship to Slide into Water Today." *San DPR 523L (1/95)*

CONTINUATION SHEET

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #21*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

voyage of the ship in the spring of 1918 garnered much praise, as the shortages of steel accompanying America's entry into World War I had spurred funding and political will for development of the technology. Following the launch, scores of contracts for concrete ships were let by the company, many of which were under the auspices of the United States government's Emergency Fleet activity.⁵

Additionally, Felix Kahn's technical proficiency in building with concrete was paired with an intimate, albeit indirect, knowledge of designing for the auto industry. The same year that the firm was working along Van Ness Avenue, Felix Kahn's brother, the prominent industrial designer and architect Albert Kahn, was designing the enormous General Motors Building in Detroit, Michigan. A decade earlier Albert Kahn had designed both the Highland Park Ford Plant and the Packard Plant, providing a model for construction adopted by his brother in both the design and reinforced concrete application exhibited by both buildings. Like Macdonald and Kahn, Albert Kahn Associates Inc. Architects and Engineers of Detroit was a firm that blurred the boundaries between design and construction. Ultimately, this skill lent itself well to the particular mandates of auto related architecture, which centered upon a sophisticated understanding of how the building worked in conjunction with the technological development of the auto product within.⁶

Although designing and constructing a branch salesroom represented a far more modest endeavor than the design of revolutionary automobile plants such as Highland Park, the work undertaken by Macdonald and Kahn in San Francisco is representative of important strands of auto-related design. Building Permits and period photographs indicate that 2001 Van Ness Avenue was two stories and of reinforced concrete construction. With a broad and open plan, the building was situated on a prominent corner and endowed with ample light, a feature which was accentuated by well-placed and regular industrial windows. Additionally, the first level was defined by prominent floor to ceiling plate glass windows, beckoning those who passed and serving as a transparent foil for the solidity and enticing glint of the cars within. The building was of a straightforward and functional aesthetic, in many senses similar to that of the elder Kahn's massive Highland Park. Importantly, 2001 Van Ness bore few of the architectural trappings of many of the row's more prominent building's including the Paige Auto building or the landmark Don Lee Cadillac building constructed several years later. This simplicity reflected the firm's industrial inclinations, and was mirrored in several other buildings erected by Macdonald and Kahn on Van Ness Avenue during the same time period (see DPR523 form for 1625 Van Ness Avenue and 1946 Van Ness Avenue).

On a more fundamental level, the simplicity also clearly indicated the design relationship between the car and the factory, limiting embellishment in favor of transparent functionality. Such design conformed to the vanguard of architectural theory relating to auto sales. Although the matter received far less attention than the industrial design of factories, by the close of the 1910s architectural trade publications advocated open floor plans, ample light, and a vertical solution incorporating sales at the base and maintenance and repair above; a retinue of requirements elegantly and pragmatically addressed by Macdonald and Kahn.⁷

Upon completion, the building was occupied by the Walter M. Murphy Company. Differing from a traditional distributorship, the Walter M. Murphy Company provided custom body work and coaches for the chassis of a number of automobiles, including Buick, Cadillac, Ford, Lincoln, and Hudson. With a plant in Pasadena, the company

Francisco Chronicle, March 14, 1918; Eberhardt, Robert, "Concrete Shipbuilding in San Diego 1918-1920." *Journal of San Diego History*, Spring 1995, Volume 41, Number 2.

⁵ Smith, Russell J. *Influence of the Great War Upon Shipping*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1919) 217-243.

⁶ Bucci, Federico. *Albert Kahn: Architect of Ford*. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002) 27-58.

⁷ "An Automobile Sales building." *The American Architect*. (New York, Volume CXIV, No. 2228, September 4, 1918) 301-302.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

developed intricate and ornate interiors for the basic frames produced at the factories. An early ally and investor in the Ford Company, Murphy's business was predicated upon an understanding of the increasing sophistication of the American consumer. By 1920, when the company was formed, automobiles had evolved from the rudimentary "horseless carriage" to an intricate and highly specialized consumer item that was driven by aesthetics as well as function. Catering to the upper class, Murphy provided value added service that augmented the allure and glamour of the auto for those with means.⁸

Demand for luxury bodywork waned in the early years of the Depression, and by 1932 the Walter M. Murphy Company dissolved amidst financial upheaval. The lucrative niche established by Murphy was never revived, as car manufacturers incorporated tiered bodywork into the design of their own automobiles. The Murphy Company vacated 2001 Van Ness even before the company's demise, and by 1926 the building held the Edward Lowe Motors Company, a Lincoln Dealership. Ownership appears to have changed hands several times, and by 1936 the salesroom was owned by an S. Somers. In the closing years of the 1930s, the function of the building transitioned from auto related use to more generalized commercial functions. In 1938, it was filled with a furniture store, beginning decades of widely ranging commercial utilization that included use by the California Department of Highways, an auction gallery, a health club, medical offices, generic retail and fast food service, and furniture rental. As Van Ness Avenue evolved from an urban Auto Row to a diverse commercial and residential thoroughfare, the building maintained viability through constant transformation to accommodate a staggering array of commercial breadth.

Evaluation

While the automobile commissions undertaken by Macdonald and Kahn were relatively modest when compared to both their later work and the architectural precedents of major automobile plants such as Highland Park, their work was important in that it tangibly consolidated the efficiency and standardization practices learned in the production arm of the industry and channeled them to the sales and consumption sectors. Although the conception and construction of early regional Auto Rows has received far less attention and academic inquiry, these locales were a critical channel by which an increasingly mechanistic and consolidated auto industry engaged diverse and fickle consumers, a meeting point that was instrumental for the financial success of the industry. Understanding Macdonald and Kahn's design as an auto sales "factory," the building exists as a derivative of lessons embodied by the rise of "Fordism." The entire construction was predicated upon the solution of a single design problem: promoting, selling, and maintaining the automobile.

As engineers, Macdonald and Kahn appeared to press the functional efficacy of the building in a more consistent manner and at a greater scale than previous showroom designers, who were often hampered by limited space and accustomed to greater ornamentation. Even compared with similarly scaled construction from a mere decade earlier, such as that of the White Garage at the corner of Market Street and Van Ness Avenue constructed by the Beaux Arts trained George Adrian Applegarth, the building was a far more cohesive and effective portal for the cars within; with lighter framing members, greater light, and a more open plan. Equally striking is the replicative capacity of the firm, in the years 1919-1920, they constructed at least four massive auto buildings along Van Ness, each quite similar to the other and each representative of the standardization in building techniques that was accompanying the standardization in automobile manufacturing. Each was a purpose-built building for distinct clients, yet each could be replicated with ease.

⁸ "Murphy Opens Coach Office." *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 10, 1921; "Lincoln Display Well Received." *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 15, 1921; <http://www.coachbuilt.com/bui/m/murphy/murphy.htm>, an online essay relating the chronology of the Walter M. Murphy Company with ephemera, accessed 4/15/2009.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Despite the fact that the building did embody these distinctive characteristics of industrial construction and melded them to the basic requirements and mandates of a regional showroom, this significance has been effaced by modern rehabilitation and the building cannot convey significance under either Criteria A (1) or Criteria C (3). Because only the most basic skeletal elements of the building remain, it is impossible to evaluate the building in relation to the development of Auto Row or within the overall portfolio of Macdonald and Kahn. With the inventive capacity displayed only a year before in the frenzied construction of the concrete freighter Faith, Macdonald proved remarkable facility in concrete engineering, a characteristic that was likely interpreted in the Auto Row construction. What direct effect these advances had, if any, cannot be conveyed by the building in its current form, however, and the building cannot be evaluated as a significant example of the firm's work.

The potential significance of the building primarily arose from its association with the development of Auto Row (Criteria A and 1) and architectural and engineering themes (Criteria C and 3). The building does not appear to have any significance under Criteria B or D (2 or 4). The building does not convey any significant associations with any significant individuals in local, state, or national history (Criterion B or 2). The various auto firms that occupied the building were only small components of an increasingly vast industry supply chain that included manufacturers, suppliers, and dealers spreading across the country, and the business operations in the building are not individually significant within this context. Similarly, while in rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, the destruction of virtually all of the building's fabric precludes consideration under Criterion D (4).

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 2001 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing west, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 2001 Van Ness Avenue, storefront detail, camera facing northwest, 3/8/09

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 4: 2001 Van Ness Avenue, Jackson Street elevation, camera facing northeast, 3/8/09



Photograph 5: 2001 Van Ness Avenue, northern elevation, camera facing south, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #: P-38-4491
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
NRHP Status Code: _____
Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

Page 1 of 3

*Resource Name or #: First Republic Bank Building

P1. Other Identifier:

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North

c. Address: 2001 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco

Zip: 94109

d. UTM: N/A (550940/E 4183260/N)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate): The property is located at the corner of Van Ness Avenue and Pacific Street, APN. 0594-002.

*P3a. **Description:** The concrete or masonry two-plus story, rectangular commercial building was constructed in 1920, according to San Francisco City and County Tax Assessor records. The building may have been influenced by the popular Classical Revival style of architecture, although in the past two decades the building has undergone extensive remodeling of its interior and exterior. The building sits on an 11,038 square foot sloping lot, having 13 rooms and 5 bathrooms. Character defining features of the building include its flat roof flashed with a ribbed metal edging; smooth concrete wall surfaces; banks of modern rectangular divided light pop-out windows set horizontally below the roofline along the primary façade of the building; large modern plate glass rectangular windows, with divisions at the tops of each window, set vertically in the center of the building; and modern storefronts, including First Republic Bank, Subway, Karate One, financial, real estate, and dental offices. Atop the building's roof is a large bill board.

*P3b. **Resource Attributes:** HP6 3 story commercial building.

*P4. **Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District

P5. Photograph or Drawing (Photograph required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: Looking at the building from across Van Ness Avenue.

*P6. **Date Constructed/Age:** 1920 Historic
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps; San Francisco Assessors Office records.

*P7. **Owner and Address:** Astorian Family Trust, 2001 Van Ness Avenue, Ste. 409, San Francisco, CA 94109.

P8. Recorded by: Dana E. Supernowicz, Historic Resource Associates, 2001 Sheffield Drive, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

*P9. **Date Recorded:** June 2006

*P10. **Type of Survey:** Architectural Architectural Cellular Project
Describe: Cellular Project Study

*P11. **Report Citation:** Cultural Resources Study of the 2001 Van Ness Avenue Project, Cingular Wireless Site No. SNFCCAA060, 2001 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, San Francisco County, California 94109. Prepared for Archaeological Resources Technology (ART), 135 Valencia Street, Unit A408, San Francisco CA 94103. Prepared by Historic Resource Associates, 2001 Sheffield Drive, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762. June 2006.

*Attachments: Building, Structure, and Object Record; Location Map

DEC 27 2006

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Page 2 of 3

*Resource Name or #: First Republic Bank Building

NRHP Status Code: 6Y2

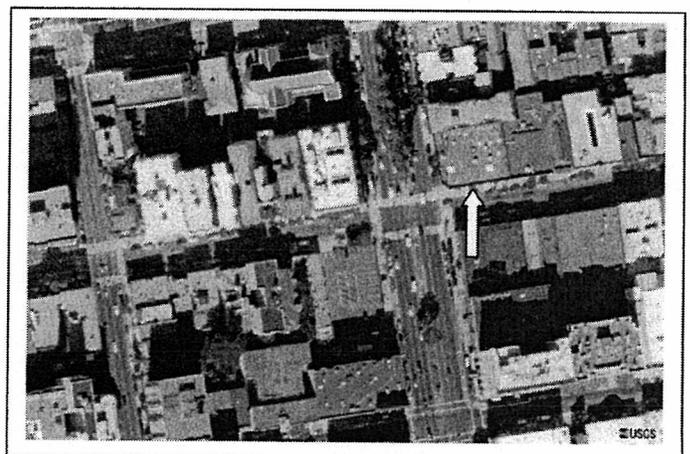
- B1. **Historic Name:** Undetermined
B2. **Common Name:** Undetermined
B3. **Original Use:** Commercial B4. **Present Use:** Commercial, Professional, and Retail Stores
*B5. **Architectural Style:** Classical Revival
*B6. **Construction History:** The building was constructed in 1920, and since its construction both the exterior and interior have been extensively remodeled. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for 1913-revised October 1950 indicates that the two-story commercial building was constructed in 1920 of fireproof, reinforced concrete with a mezzanine facing Van Ness Avenue. There was a restaurant next door at 2025 Van Ness in 1950.
*B7. **Moved?** No Yes Unknown **Date:** N/A **Original Location:**
*B8. **Related Features:** Modern infill, one to five-story commercial buildings dating from the 1910s through the 1950s.
B9a. **Architect:** Undetermined **B9b. Builder:** Undetermined
*B10. **Significance: Theme:** Van Ness Avenue **Area:** San Francisco/Civic Center Neighborhood
Period of Significance: 1915-1920 **Property Type:** Commercial Masonry Building **Applicable Criteria:** A, B & C

The subject property is not listed on any federal, state, or local historic registers. The building at 2001 Van Ness Avenue reflects the city's architectural taste following the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906 in regards to the use of concrete masonry fireproof construction in commercial buildings.

The building appears to have been dramatically altered in the past two decades, which may have included the conversion of a large portion of the building to a bank. Consequently, the property lacks integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. The building does appear to be associated with an event of significance, namely the commercial development of Van Ness Avenue. The building does not appear to be associated with a person or persons of significance. Unfortunately, because of the building's diminished integrity, it does not appear to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, B, or C. In addition, the building does not appear to be located within a potential NRHP district.

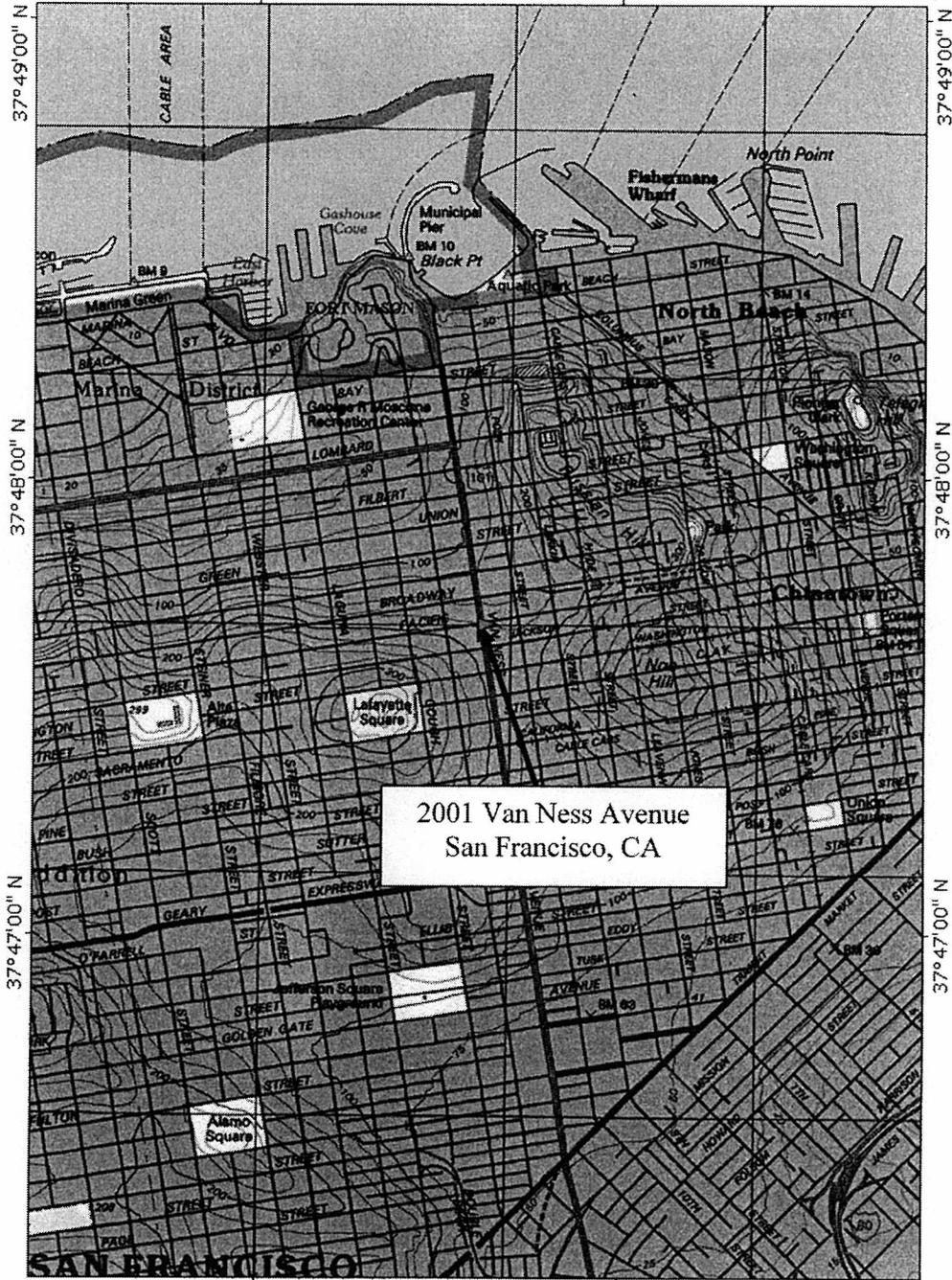
- B11. **Additional Resource Attributes:** N/A
B12. **References:** McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990); David Gebhard, et al. The Guide to Architecture in San Francisco and Northern California. Salt Lake City: Gibbs, Smith Publishers, 1976, revised 1985; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, San Francisco 1913-1950; R. L. Polk & Company. Directory of the City of San Francisco 1919-1927. R. L. Polk, Company, San Francisco, CA.
B13. **Remarks:** N/A
B14. **Evaluator:** Dana E. Supernowicz, Historic Resource Associates, 2001 Sheffield Drive, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762
Date of Evaluation: June 2006

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH 2004



(This space reserved for official comments.)

TOPOI map printed on 05/02/06 from "California.tpo" and "Untitled.tpg"
122°26'00" W WGS84 122°25'00" W



TN* / MN
15°

122°26'00" W WGS84 122°25'00" W
0 5 1 MILE
0 1000 FEET 0 500 1000 METERS

Map created with TOPOI® ©2003 National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com/topo)

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 6

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #22

P1. Other Identifier: 2027 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 2017 Van Ness Avenue

City: San Francisco

Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0594-001

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 2027 Van Ness Avenue is a two-part building located at the southwest corner of Van Ness Avenue and Pacific Avenue. The original portion of the building dates to 1936, and is a single story wood-frame stucco building that was constructed as a grocery store fronting Van Ness Avenue. A 1980 two-story office and retail addition is set back on the large lot, extending northward from the rear of the original building. A large parking lot fills the remainder of the lot, in the "L" between the two buildings (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6 (1-3 Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 2027 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing southwest, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1936, San Francisco Department of Buildings

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Timothy and Linda Falvey
2144 Lake Street
San Francisco, CA 94121-1212

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: Safeway Store

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: grocery store

B4. Present Use: drug store

*B5. Architectural Style: commercial with minimal Art Deco ornamentation

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1936. An office addition was built in 1976 to the northwest of the building. This addition appears to have been demolished and replaced with a two-story office addition in 1980 (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Douglas Dacre Stone b. Builder: M. Fisher & Son

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 2027 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000) (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

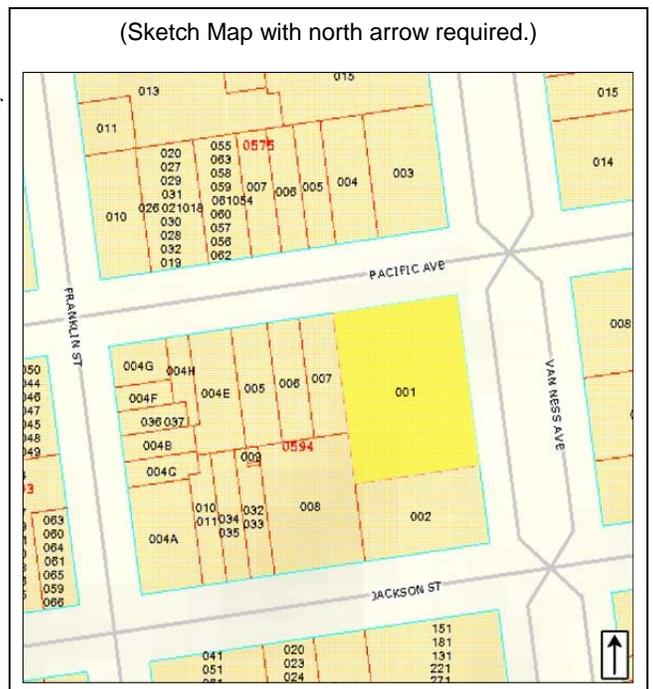
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*; *San Francisco Exposition and Bay Counties Telephone Directory, August 1938*; Blackford, *A History of Small Business in America* (2003); San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The 1936 building has a flush foundation and flat roof and is rectangular in plan. The Van Ness elevation is simple, with a large aluminum framed fixed glass display window flanked by lightly scored pilasters and reeded molding. A large sign is affixed prominently over the display window, advertising the current pharmacy tenant. The roofline is simple, with three horizontal bands projecting from the smooth façade, creating a subtle and understated terminus.

The entryway fills the northeast corner of the building, facing the parking lot. The doorway is accessed by a concrete stoop with metal handrails, and consists of double glass doors embedded in uninterrupted sidelights and a transom. Scored pilasters and reeded molding matching that of the Van Ness elevation frames the entryway. A single additional display window appears further west on the northern elevation, otherwise the wall has no other fenestration. Similar to the Van Ness elevation, prominent modern signage is affixed to the north side. Horizontal banding frames the roofline, with additional bands crowning the doorway.

The two story 1980 addition extends from the northwest corner of the building, with the first floor largely filled by retail and the second office space. A balcony runs along the second story, accessing the offices within. The roof is flat and the building is sheathed in stucco, with a boxy horizontally articulated appearance.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

Constructed in 1936 for the Safeway grocery store chain, the modest building was one of many built in the Bay Area in the latter part of the 1930s. A 1938 San Francisco telephone directory lists over one hundred of the stores in the city, with 2027 Van Ness identified as Store #1340.¹ The spread of the stores across the city, and throughout the Bay Area, reflects the massive consolidation of the grocery industry in the early part of the twentieth century, as local grocers ceded to large retail supply chains. In 1900 only 21 grocery chains existed in the country, by 1929 there were 807, collectively operating 54,000 individual stores. Safeway was one of the largest of these chains, operating over 3,000 stores in 1931. The factors driving the rise of chain retailing were many, however improvements in transportation infrastructure, increasingly standardized business practices and supply chains, and a declining emphasis on personal service in favor of lower costs contributed to the trade's dramatic consolidation.²

The store's prominent location along Van Ness Avenue, on a large lot located at the southwestern corner of Pacific Avenue, reflected the modest construction realm of Depression Era San Francisco. Throughout the 1920s, most major corner lots were filled with grandiose auto showrooms, including 2027's southerly neighbor 2001 Van Ness. With a major decline in auto related activity and construction in the 1930s, the commercial corridor of Van Ness was open to a range of lower-tier businesses including the grocer. This transition served to steadily erode the cohesion of Van Ness' Auto Row. While prominent dealers would remain along Van Ness Avenue, the economic tumult of the 1930s ushered in a decline from which Auto Row never recovered.

¹ The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company. *San Francisco Exposition and Bay Counties Telephone Directory, August 1938.*

² Mansel G. Blackford, *A History of Small Business In America.* (North Carolina: UNC Press, 2003) 109.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

2027 Van Ness Avenue was occupied by Safeway until 1950. Following World War II, the significant commercial consolidation of Safeway's early development was furthered with the development of even larger stores that centralized the operations of neighborhood grocery stores into larger shopping centers. Smaller buildings like 2027 Van Ness ceded to larger stores, frequently in suburban areas and surrounded by immense parking lots. Comparing the size and scale of earlier Safeway stores with those of the 1950s, such as a prominent example built at Marina Boulevard and Buchanan Street in 1953, it is clear that the immense floor plans and scale of the later models increasingly relayed the progression from small grocer to today's "super store."³

The building at 2027 Van Ness housed the Hippopotamus Hamburger Restaurant from the 1950s to the 1980s. This dining mecca for burger aficionados became a San Francisco cultural touchstone in its own right. During this time, the exterior of the building was altered with the addition of Googie elements including a prominent undulating barrel arch canopy.⁴ By 1987, the building was vacant, and was subsequently utilized for a variety of chain retail purposes.

Evaluation

As a modest commercial building, one of many built for use as a Safeway store in the 1930s, 2027 Van Ness Avenue does not convey direct or important associations with significant themes of commercial development at the state, local, or national level (Criteria A and 1). The store was one of thousands across the western United States, and is not a significant representative of either the retailers' ascendancy to prominence or the general consolidation of the grocery trade in California or the nation. Rather, the simple structure is a basic representative of a long term trend that has shaped commercial grocery store chains in the United States and is not specifically or individually important within this context.

The building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B and 2). The building was only a small component of an increasingly vast grocery supply chain that sprawled across the western region and the country and there is no evidence of association with a specific historically significant individual within this context. Similarly, in its later use as a common, albeit popular, restaurant, the building does not demonstrate any significant associations with any specific historically important people.

The building does not demonstrate distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a basic design sensibility that includes allusions to the Art Deco form (Criteria C and 3). The architect, Douglas Dacre Stone, designed far more prominent buildings, including the Mary Bowles Building in Oakland. The simple design and construction of 2027 Van Ness Avenue was not a significant representative of the architect's work. In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of commercial construction is otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

³ San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection. "Safeway grocery store on Marina Boulevard, between Laguna and Buchanan streets," [graphic], June 25, 1959, Photo ID Number: AAC-7001, Folder: S.F. Businesses-Groceries-Safeway Stores.

⁴ San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection. "Hippopotamus restaurant and bar, Pacific and Van Ness" [graphic], August 11, 1964, Photo ID Number: AAB-2685, Folder: S.F. Restaurants-Hippopotamus.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

In addition to failing to meet any of the criteria for listing on the NRHP or the CRHR, the building displays a marked loss of integrity that would render it ineligible even if historic significance was present. This loss of integrity severs it from its potential further removes its potential association within the commercial context. Years of commercial entryway insertions and reconfigurations at the ground level have eroded the building's original form. The form and layout of the property were changed extensively in the 1970s by the large perpendicular addition. While the building does retain its original massing and some of its Art Deco elements, new aluminum and glass entry largely diminish the integrity of the building and it is not clear if all of the Art Deco ornamentation is original or modern infill.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 207 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing southwest, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 207 Van Ness Avenue, addition, camera facing west, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 6

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #23

P1. Other Identifier: 2400 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 2400 Van Ness Avenue

City: San Francisco

Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0547-007

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 2400 Van Ness Avenue is a rectangular wood-frame apartment building sheathed in stucco. With four stories and a basement that serves as an entryway, the building fills the northeast corner of Van Ness Avenue and Green Street. The Van Ness elevation is narrow, with three bays and a central recessed entryway. The entry level is painted brick, with pairs of windows featuring concrete sills and brick keystones flanking the Van Ness doorway (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP3 (Multiple Family Property)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 2400 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northeast, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1907, San Francisco Department of Buildings

***P7. Owner and Address:**
REF SF Properties LLC
2400 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94109-1874

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: The Loring

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: apartment house

B4. Present Use: apartment house

*B5. Architectural Style: original ornamentation has been stripped and replaced with minimal Moderne ornamentation

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1907. In 1948, the cornice and ornamental wood trims were removed and the exterior was covered in stucco (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Edward E. Young b. Builder: Matthew A. Little

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 2400 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

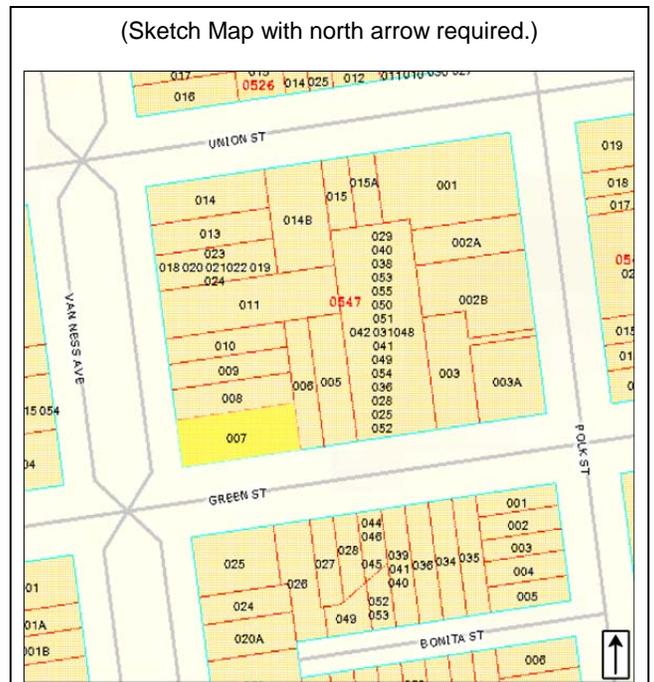
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*; *San Francisco Examiner*; Corbett, *Splendid Survivors* (1979); United States Federal Census 1920, 1930.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The windows on the first level are filled in on both the Van Ness and Green Street elevations. The entryway is framed in scored stucco and is accessed by a green granite stoop, leading to a glazed wood door framed in glass block sidelights. The upper portions of the façade are partially obscured by foliage, however each bay of the first level features a pair of wood frame double-hung windows. On the second through the fourth story, two flanking bays feature stacked hexagonal bay windows and the central bay is flat and covered with a fire escape. The bay windows are all wood frame double-hung. The central bay features pairs of double-hung wood frame windows, with simple slightly projecting surrounds. The building's cornice has been removed, however a scored parapet rises from the fourth story.

The Green street elevation largely mirrors the Van Ness Avenue elevation, although the span is far longer. The elevation is divided into two mirroring parts, divided by a recessed light court that is spanned by the added scored roof detailing. Each half of the elevation features four bays. The two outside bays are configured with the same stacked hexagonal bay windows as the Van Ness elevation, and the two interior bays feature the same pairs of double-hung windows. All of the windows are wood frame. The entry/basement level is brick, with several filled in windows with concrete sills. The light court features a basement entryway that is accessed by descending stairs and a metal glazed door. Pairs of wood frame double hung windows line the first through the fourth floors in the light court.

Although the building retains many of its original materials and basic configuration, a 1948 renovation re-sided the building in stucco and removed much of its original architectural fabric including the cornice and ornamental wood trim. The resulting streamlined "Moderne" appearance differs markedly from the original 1907 construction depicted in historic photographs.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Historic Context

This four-story apartment building was one of many erected in the massive rebuilding campaign following the earthquake and fire when it was completed in 1907. The fire, and accompanying demolitions intended to check its path, had destroyed virtually all buildings along the eastern flank of Van Ness Avenue, between Market Street and Filbert Street. The apartment served to meet the extreme demand for housing in the devastated city, and was advertised as an "elegant and convenient" solution for the urban middle class. With 28 apartments, the building was larger than many of the surviving row houses along the western flank of the road, and occupied a prominent spot at the busy street corner.¹

The building was designed by Edward Eyestone Young, a prominent architect throughout the reconstruction period who was particularly noted for his residential commissions. In a San Francisco based career spanning 30 years, Young designed nearly 600 residential buildings and several clubs, hotels, and commercial buildings. With commissions including the palazzo-style Francisca Club at Sutter Street and Mason Street, the Park Lane Apartments on Sacramento Street, as well as hundreds of homes and apartments throughout Pacific Heights, Young's rich career

¹ "Apartment House on Green and Van Ness," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 28, 1907; "Van Ness Avenue Apartments to be Equipped with Marshall & Stearns Company's Patented Wall Beds," *San Francisco Examiner*, February 17, 1907.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

reflected the enormous opportunities inherent in San Francisco's earthquake recovery and subsequent early twentieth century redevelopment.²

Even though the 1907 construction of the apartment building was obviously part of post-earthquake redevelopment, the Van Ness location of the prominent residential building was in many senses a holdover from pre-disaster conceptions of the avenue. Like much of the Western Addition prior to 1906, Van Ness Avenue was principally an upper-middle class residential neighborhood. A number of stately mansions and flats lined the avenue and the thoroughfare served as a showcase for the city's considerable wealth. This elite residential composition differed somewhat in the southern portions of the avenue adjoining Market Street, as commercial and civic interests flowed north from Market Street.³ This residential and light commercial composition of was abruptly undercut by the destruction of the 1906 earthquake, however. Both the fire's destruction and the subsequent exodus of displaced businesses moving from the decimated center of the city to relatively unscathed areas along Van Ness Avenue profoundly altered the character of the avenue. The demographic change wrought by the earthquake was acknowledged almost immediately, with the *San Francisco Chronicle* musing as early as May 1906 that Van Ness Avenue, "will never again be the exclusive residential thoroughfare," of the city.⁴ Thus, while this Van Ness apartment promised upper middle class amenities and residential solidity, its prominent corner lot location was slightly out of step with the commercial boom unleashed on the avenue as the corridor changed from a quiet residential street to a major commercial thoroughfare and Auto Row. Indeed, ten years later Young designed an auto showroom only blocks away from 2400 Van Ness Avenue (see DPR523 form for 1730 Van Ness Avenue).

Evaluation

As a standard early twentieth century apartment building, one of many built in the wake of the 1906 disaster in San Francisco, 2400 Van Ness Avenue does not have distinctive or important associations with themes of urban recovery and residential development at the local, state, or national level (Criteria A and 1). The building was one of thousands erected across the city during this period, and is not an illustrative representative of residential construction, urban residential conditions, or San Francisco redevelopment. Rather, the building is a basic and unremarkable example of typical post-disaster development patterns.

The building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B and 2). The apartment was constructed for a middle-class market and was advertised as a modern building designed for the new urban family. The 1910, 1920, and 1930 censuses attest to the solidly middle class nature of the tenants, with the building occupied by clerks, engineers, salesman, merchants, administrators, reporters, and teachers. The census shows that renters were almost entirely American born, with many born in California. Further, each census period reflects an almost complete turnover in tenants. With very few names repeating throughout the period, it would appear that the apartment was a relatively short term solution for mobile urban dwellers, who went on to purchase or rent elsewhere. There is no indication in the record that any of these individuals were historically significant.⁵

The building does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a basic residential design sensibility (Criteria C and 3). The architect, Edward E. Young, designed far

² Michael R. Corbett, *Splendid Survivors: San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage*. (San Francisco: The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage, 1979) 179, 226.

³ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco, 1899.

⁴ "Business Following Banks Downtown," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 27, 1906.

⁵ United States Census Records for the City of San Francisco 1910, 1920, 1930. Accessed at www.ancestry.com, 4/13/2009.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

more noteworthy residential and public buildings, most notably the Francisco Club. He also designed a number of more noteworthy apartments throughout the 1910s and 1920s in Pacific Heights, including an imposing brick clad apartment at 1896 Pacific Avenue. The design and construction of 2400 Van Ness Avenue is not a significant representative of the architect's work, nor is it a good example of its general stylistic or construction type.

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of residential construction is common and otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

In addition to failing to meet any of the criteria for listing on the NRHP or the CRHR, the building displays a marked loss of integrity. The building was entirely stripped of all of its original ornamentation in 1948, including the cornice and wood trim. These attributes were hallmarks of the period's architectural aesthetic, and their loss has diminished the building's ability to convey any significance in relation to the post-earthquake development of San Francisco, or to a specific style or period of construction.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 2400 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing north, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 2400 Van Ness Avenue, entry detail, camera facing east, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6L

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 5

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #24

P1. Other Identifier: 2418 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 2418 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0547-008

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 2418 Van Ness Avenue is a four-story wood frame residential building located between Green Street and Union Street. The building has a flat asphalt roof and a flush concrete foundation. The building's walls are flush with its northern and southern neighbors, with only the Van Ness Avenue elevation exposed. The first level of the building is clad in painted brick, with an offset Romanesque arch framing a recessed entryway (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP3 (Multiple Family Property)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



***P5b. Description of Photo:** (View, date, accession #) 2418 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northeast, green building in center, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1909, San Francisco Department of Buildings

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Henriette Autard, Conservator Debra Dolch
167 S. Park Street
San Francisco, CA 94107-1808

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: none

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: apartment house

B4. Present Use: apartment house

*B5. Architectural Style: Romanesque, other defining details have been stripped from the building

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1909. In 1924, the wood (rustic) siding was covered in stucco and it appears that wood trim and other details may have been removed (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Theodore W. Lenzen b. Builder: S.B. Kress

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 2418 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*; *San Jose Daily Mercury*; United States Federal Census Records.

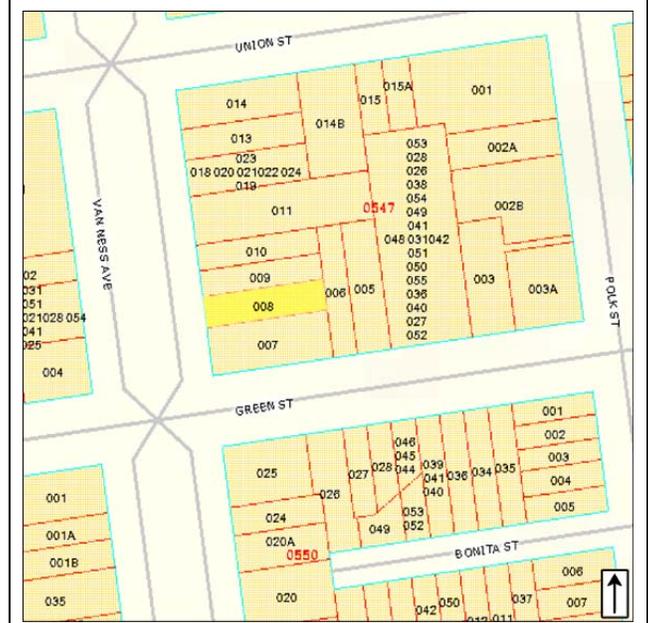
B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The entryway features a light stone veneer surrounding the doorway, with a paneled wood ceiling and paneled upper walls. The glazed wood door contains scroll tracery, a design which continues in the prominent transom and sidelights. Three wood frame double-hung windows line the first level, and a notched basement entry fills the southern corner of the building, fronted by a metal security gate.

The second through the fourth stories of the building are sheathed in stucco and project over the first level, decoratively supported by simple wood brackets. Two bays of stacked hexagonal bay windows line the façade, with an iron fire escape running down the center. The windows in the bay are all wood frame one-over-one double-hung with narrow sills and understated framing. A moderately projecting cornice crowns the building, supported by simple rectangular wood modillions found in pairs at either edge and singly in the center. A fanciful bell-curved parapet, with stepped molding rises above the cornice. The feature does not appear to be original to the building.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Historic Context

This four-story apartment building was constructed in 1909, one of many erected in the massive rebuilding campaign following the earthquake and fire in 1906. The fire, and accompanying demolitions intended to check its path, destroyed virtually all buildings along the eastern flank of Van Ness Avenue, between Market Street and Filbert Street. The widespread development of apartments served to meet the extreme demand for housing in the devastated city, and were advertised as modern and economical solutions for the urban middle class. Designed to house 11 families, the building was an average addition to the area, filling a long narrow lot and maximizing residential space.¹

The building was designed by Theodore W. Lenzen, a San Jose architect who relocated to San Francisco following the 1906 earthquake. In San Jose, Lenzen had practiced with his father, architect Jacob Lenzen. The pair designed the prominent Hotel Vendome, the San Jose Hall of Records, and Agnews State Hospital in Santa Clara.² Although Lenzen operated a private practice in San Francisco until his death in 1930, it does not appear that he designed any major buildings during the period and there is little documentation relating to his firm.

Even though the 1909 construction of the apartment building was obviously part of post-earthquake redevelopment, the Van Ness location of the modest residential building was in many senses a holdover from pre-disaster conceptions of the avenue. Like much of the Western Addition prior to 1906, Van Ness Avenue was principally an upper-middle class residential neighborhood. A number of stately mansions and flats lined the avenue and the thoroughfare served as a showcase for the city's considerable wealth. This elite residential composition differed somewhat in the southern portions of the avenue adjoining Market Street, as commercial and civic interests flowed north from Market Street. This residential and light commercial composition was abruptly undercut by the destruction of the 1906 earthquake, however. Both the fire's destruction and the subsequent exodus of displaced businesses moving from the decimated center of the city to relatively unscathed areas along Van Ness Avenue profoundly altered the character of the avenue. The demographic change wrought by the earthquake was acknowledged almost immediately, with the *San Francisco Chronicle* musing as early as May 1906 that Van Ness Avenue, "will never again be the exclusive residential thoroughfare," of the city.³ Thus, while this Van Ness apartment promised upper middle class amenities and residential solidity, its location was slightly out of step with the

¹ San Francisco Department of Buildings, Building Permits.

² "Men We All Know: Biographical Sketches of Well-Known San Joseans," *San Jose Daily Mercury*, January 1, 1892.

³ "Business Following Banks Downtown," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 27, 1906.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

commercial boom unleashed on the avenue as the corridor changed from a quiet residential street to a major commercial thoroughfare and Auto Row.

Evaluation

As a standard early twentieth century apartment building, one of many built in the wake of the 1906 disaster in San Francisco, 2418 Van Ness Avenue does not have distinct and important associations with the theme of urban recovery and residential development at the local, state, or national level (Criteria A and 1). The building was one of thousands erected across the city during the period, and is not an illustrative representative of residential construction, urban residential conditions, or San Francisco redevelopment. Rather, the building is a basic and unremarkable example of typical post-disaster development patterns.

The building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B and 2). The apartment was constructed for a middle-class market and was advertised as a modern building designed for the new urban family. The 1910, 1920, and 1930 censuses attest to the solidly middle class nature of the tenants, with the building occupied by clerks, interior decorators, merchants, and bookkeepers. The census also shows a renting pool that was almost entirely American born, with some born in California. Additionally, each census period reflects an almost complete turnover in tenants. With very few names repeating throughout the period, it would appear that the apartment was a relatively short term solution for mobile urban dwellers, who went on to purchase or rent elsewhere. There is no indication in the record that any of these individuals were historically significant.⁴

The building does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a basic residential design sensibility that does not reflect the work of a master (Criteria C and 3). Theodore W. Lenzen had previously designed far more noteworthy residential and public buildings in partnership with his father in San Jose, and the modest design and construction of 2418 Van Ness Avenue is not a significant representative of the architect's work, nor is it a good example of its general stylistic or construction type.

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of residential construction is common and otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

Although the building fails to meet any of the criteria for listing, it does retain integrity to the construction period.

⁴ United States Federal Census for San Francisco 1910, 1920, 1930, accessed at www.ancestry.com, 3/25/09.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



**Photograph 2: 2418 Van Ness Avenue, entry detail,
camera facing east, 3/8/09**

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6L

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 6

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #25

P1. Other Identifier: 2420-2424 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 2420-2424 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0547-009

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)
2420-2424 Van Ness Avenue is a three-story wood frame residential building located between Green Street and Union Street. The building has a flat asphalt roof and a flush concrete foundation. The building's walls are flush with its northern and southern neighbors, with only the Van Ness Avenue elevation exposed. The building is sheathed in wood lap siding, with carved wood moldings and ornamentation (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP3 (Multiple Family Property)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 2420-2424 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing east, building in center, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:**

Historic Prehistoric Both

1914, San Francisco Department of Buildings

***P7. Owner and Address:**

Radjev Holding LLC

Sawsan Holding LLC

17 Rockridge Road

Hillsborough, CA 94010-6927

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)

Polly S. Allen

JRP Historical Consulting LLC

1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110

Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**

March, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)

Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: Autard French Laundry

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: laundry and boarding house

B4. Present Use: apartments

*B5. Architectural Style: Flats with Baroque Revival and Secessionist elements

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1914 as a single story building. Two additional stories were added at some point before 1920. In 1958 the original laundry storefront was altered. Again, in 1977 the ground floor was converted into restaurant use, likely changing much of the original configuration (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Oliver Everett b. Builder: illegible on permit

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a

Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

2420-2424 is referenced in the City of San Francisco's Van Ness Avenue Area Plan as a contributory building. According to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: "City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources," this rating does not qualify as an adopted local register for the purposes of CEQA, and requires further consultation and review which is provided herein. This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 2418 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco. *San Francisco Chronicle; The Architect and Engineer*; United States Federal Census 1920, 1930.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The storefront elevation has been substantially altered by modern commercial insertions. The building has two entrances, one for residential access and the other for a ground floor restaurant. The restaurant entry consists of two glazed wood doors and a bay window with a flower box, both of which feature arched glazing bars. Overarching wood molding around the doorway and bay window is suggestive of a dome and projecting columns with carved capitals, lending the modern commercial entry a prominent appearance on the building. In contrast, the residential entry is understated, with a recessed glazed door with a simple transom and sidelights. The floor of the entryway is tile and the walls are clad in a light stone veneer.

The second and third stories of the building are divided into two bays, both of which feature stacked hexagonal bay windows separated by foliated friezes. All of the windows are of equal size and are replacement vinyl double-hung, substituting the original wood frame windows. The bay windows terminate in a decorative molded hood, with a foliated medallion and semicircular scrollwork. Stacked molded coils flank the length of the stacked bay windows, and also appear horizontally across the terminating window. An iron fire escape fills the area between the bays. A heavily-scaled cornice crowns the building, projecting with the line of the bay windows and underscored by simple dentils and modillions.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA.

Historic Context

The original iteration of this building was a one story wood frame laundry built in 1914, with small ancillary buildings to the rear housing washing and drying rooms. At some point between 1914 and 1920, two more stories were added and the rear washing facilities updated. The development of the three-story building was part of the massive rebuilding campaign following the 1906 earthquake and fire. The fire, and accompanying demolitions intended to check its path, destroyed virtually all buildings along the eastern flank of Van Ness Avenue between Market Street and Filbert Street and widespread apartment and boarding house development sought to meet the extreme demand for housing in the devastated city. The building was constructed as a boarding house and laundry and was owned and operated by Eugene Autard and Lucie Autard. Their daughter, Henrietta was listed as living at 2418 Van Ness as late as 2002. The development signaled the growing commercial connectivity of upper Van Ness.¹ With the Van Ness Avenue municipal rail line completed in 1914 and the Panama Pacific Exposition developed only slightly northwest, the upper reaches of the avenue were a locus for redevelopment throughout the period.

This redevelopment differed substantially from the character of Van Ness prior to the earthquake and fire. Like much of the Western Addition prior to 1906, Van Ness Avenue was principally an upper-middle class residential neighborhood. A number of stately mansions and flats lined the avenue and the thoroughfare served as a showcase for the city's considerable wealth. This elite residential composition differed somewhat in the southern portions of

¹ San Francisco Department of Buildings, Building Permits
DPR 523L (1/95)

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

the avenue adjoining Market Street, as commercial and civic interests flowed north from Market Street.² This residential and light commercial composition of Van Ness was abruptly undercut by the earthquake, however. Both the fire's destruction and the subsequent exodus of displaced businesses moving from the decimated center of the city to relatively unscathed areas along Van Ness Avenue profoundly altered the character of the avenue. The demographic change wrought by the earthquake was acknowledged almost immediately, with the *San Francisco Chronicle* musing as early as May 1906 that Van Ness Avenue, "will never again be the exclusive residential thoroughfare," of the city.³ The laundry and boarding house at 2420-2424 Van Ness Avenue reflected this transition, as temporary residents, business activities, and increasing infrastructural links served to alter the avenue's social and commercial identity.

The building was designed by Oliver Everett, a San Francisco based architect with a practice that largely predated the earthquake. Throughout his career, the architect was primarily engaged in residential construction, much like that of 2420-2424 Van Ness Avenue. As early as 1896, he was commissioned to build several flats and a store on Haight Street, a common urban building type he replicated with ease in later years.⁴ Trade publications allude to his early membership in the San Francisco Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, where he served as its longtime Secretary.⁵ While he remained in practice after the earthquake, it appears that he increasingly transitioned from architecture to politics. He was active in the Socialist party throughout the 1890s, serving as secretary of the state party. This activity culminated in a run for City Treasurer in 1913, where he lost by a very wide margin to victor John E. McDougald.⁶ Material relating to his political inclinations is far more prevalent than that relating to his architecture, and it does not appear that the flats he erected across the city were major architectural contributions to San Francisco.

The boarding house was commissioned by Eugene Autard, the proprietor of a laundry known as Autard French Laundry and the City of Paris French Laundry. Appearing in the 1900 United States Census as a boarder on Steiner Street with a listed occupation of laundry-man, by 1910 Autard owned several adjacent lots on Van Ness Avenue. He and his wife Lucie operated the laundry until the mid-1920s, when the laundry business was leased to tenant operators. The residential portions of the building remain in use to the present, alternately referred to as a boarding house, hotel, and apartment in permit records. In 1976, the laundry was closed and the ground floor began to function as a restaurant.⁷

Evaluation

As a standard early twentieth century residential building, one of many built in the wake of the 1906 disaster in San Francisco, 2420-2424 Van Ness Avenue does not have distinct or important associations with the theme of urban recovery and residential development at the local, state, or national level (Criteria A and 1). The building was one of thousands erected across the city during this period, and is not an illustrative representative of residential construction, urban residential conditions, or San Francisco redevelopment. Rather, the building is a basic and unremarkable example of typical post-disaster development patterns.

² Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco. 1899.

³ "Business Following Banks Downtown," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 27, 1906.

⁴ "City Real Estate and Buildings," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 6, 1896.

⁵ "Mr. George Alexander Wright AIA," *The Architect and Engineer*, Volume LII, Number 3, March 1918, 89.

⁶ "Full Returns Prove Six to be Elected," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 2, 1913; "Candidates in Hurricane Finish," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 26, 1913; "Socialist Labor Party," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 13, 1898.

⁷ San Francisco Department of Buildings, Building Permits.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

The building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B or 2). The Autards – Eugene, Lucie, and their children do not appear to have made historically significant contributions to either the laundry or boarding house business. The boarding house was constructed for a transient urban market and the boarders that filled the building in the 1920 and 1930 censuses were often either working in the laundry below or families whose wage earner was in a white color profession such as clerks and sales. Particularly in the 1920 census, a number of the boarders were of French origin, likely reflecting Autard’s background and social connections. The census also shows a transient renting pool, with no names but the Autard’s repeating throughout the period. It would appear that the boarding house was a relatively short term solution for mobile urban dwellers, who went on to purchase or rent elsewhere. There is no indication in the record that any of these individuals were historically significant.⁸

The building is not the work of a master and does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction (Criteria C and 3). While the building is of a pleasant and ornamental design, it does not reflect any significant innovation in architectural treatment and is very similar to buildings erected across the city in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The architect, Oliver Everett, is not a noteworthy figure and appears to have created a solid practice predicated upon the development of residential flats. By the time of 2420-2424 Van Ness’ construction, the architect appears to have had only limited interest in his practice, with no other documented commissions during the early 1910s. The design and construction of the building is not a significant representative of the architect’s work, nor is it a good example of its general stylistic or construction type.

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of residential construction is common and otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

In addition to failing to meet any of the criteria for listing on the NRHP or the CRHR, the building displays some loss of integrity. The architectural cohesion of the building is disrupted by a jarring restaurant insertion at the ground level. The interaction of decorative embellishments were important indicators of the architectural intent of the building, and this muddled—if fanciful—storefront insertion has diminished the building’s ability to convey any significance in relation to the post-earthquake residential development of San Francisco. This storefront, in combination with other modern additions including vinyl windows, substantially decreases the building’s integrity.

⁸ United States Federal Census 1920, 1930, accessed at www.ancestry.com, 3/28/09.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 2420-2424 Van Ness Avenue, entry detail,
camera facing southeast, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 2420-2424 Van Ness Avenue, stacked bay detail,
camera facing east, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 5

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #26

P1. Other Identifier: 2430 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

***a. County:** San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

***b. USGS 7.5' Quad:** San Francisco North, Calif. **Date:** 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 2430 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0547-010

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 2430 Van Ness Avenue is a three-story wood frame residential building located between Green Street and Union Street. The building has a flat asphalt roof and a flush concrete foundation. The building's walls are flush with its northern and southern neighbors, with only the Van Ness Avenue elevation exposed. The ground floor of the building is clad in painted brick, with a centered paneled rolling garage door. Two courses of vertically stacked bricks form a simple lintel above the door (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP3 (Multiple Family Property)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 2430 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northeast, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both 1925, San Francisco Department of Buildings

***P7. Owner and Address:** Kelly Carroll
602 Chiquita Avenue #2
Mountain View, CA 94041-1790

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)

Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:** March 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe) Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: none

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: apartment house

B4. Present Use: apartment house

*B5. Architectural Style: flats with minimal Romanesque and Classical detailing

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1925. There have been no major alterations, however it is apparent from photographs that the parapet was removed recently (circa 1990). In addition, the garage door has been replaced (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: W. H. Armitage b. Builder: unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 2430 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*; United States Federal Census, 1930; *San Francisco Exposition and Bay Counties Telephone Directory, August 1938.*

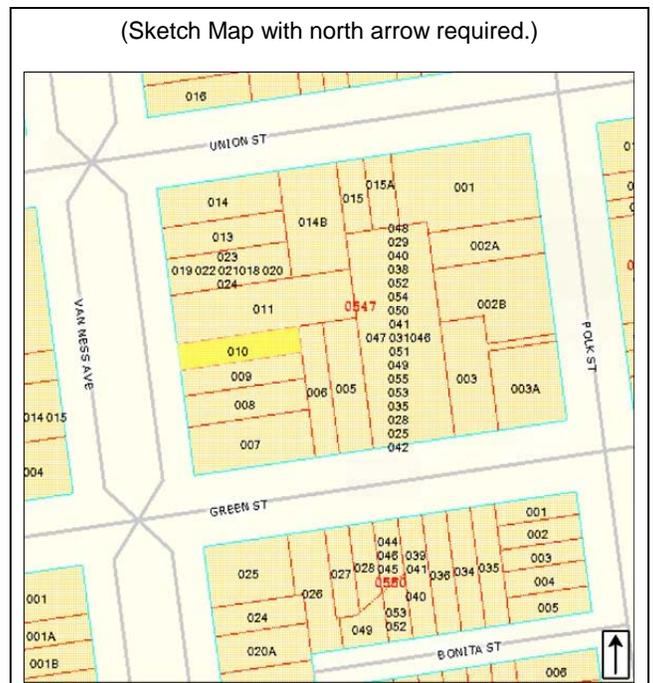
B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

A single metal door with a security grate stands to the south of the garage door, and the primary entrance stands to the north. An arched doorway with hood molding and a prominent decorative keystone surrounds the doorway, which is recessed and accessed by several stone steps. A metal security gate covers the entryway, and the wood door is flanked by pilasters. The metal security doors are not original to the building.

The second and third stories are clad in stucco, and project slightly over the first story. A decorative stringcourse separates the first level from the upper levels, with a narrow frieze crowned with oculus molding and coiled swags. The second and third stories are dominated by stacked hexagonal bay windows, with wide central windows flanked by two narrower windows. On the second level, all of the windows are one-over-one double-hung. On the third level the central windows are fixed with swinging casement windows on either side and single fixed casement windows above all three. All of the windows on the building have original wood framing. Although the bay windows feature few decorative embellishments, a decorative lintel with a key stone appears above the windows on the second level. The building is crowned with a simple cornice with rectangular modillions.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Historic Context

This two-story apartment building was infill development in a block that was filled with residential construction dating from the years immediately following the 1906 earthquake. Located between a laundry and boardinghouse and a 21 unit apartment building, this diminutive building was designed to hold only four apartments. Its design, which included a ground floor automobile garage, reflected the time that had elapsed since the construction of its neighbors, as the automobile had taken hold both in the city of San Francisco and the country and altered residential design mandates.

The building was designed by William H. Armitage, an English born architect who arrived in San Francisco in 1883, after practicing in England, New York, and Denver. Armitage was credited with a number of commercial and residential structures in the 1880s and 1890s, including the Romanesque Farmer's Bank of Fresno and other smaller residential and commercial construction in San Francisco.¹ By 1892 he was designing buildings in the Western Addition, including a two-story flat at Buchanan Street and O'Farrell and a three-story flat on Jones. A year later he designed four two-story flats at the northwest corner of 23rd Street and Hampshire Street, which remain one of the few extant examples of his work.² In 1900, he designed eight identical flats, located on Eugenia Avenue, however there is little reference to his commissions after 1900.³ Much of his work appears to have been in the burn zone of 1906, and little of the residential construction remains.

¹ "Banks of Fresno, California," [photograph], c. 1916-1928, accessed online through University of California at <http://content.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/kt5m3nc72g/?layout=metadata&brand=calisphere>, 4/12/2009.

² "House and Lot: Business Moving Along Steadily," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 26, 1892;"House and Lot: the Banks and the Realty Market," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 6, 1893.

³ "Real Estate Transaction Two," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 10, 1900.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

The building was owned by John L. Roderick and by 1930, four families rented flats in the building. With one of the families from Ireland, one from Poland, and two natives of California, the tenants reflected the diverse population of the city, and were primarily engaged in white collar pursuits that included sales, accounting, teaching, and music. By 1938, none of the original tenants appear in the city telephone directory.⁴ In 1952, then owner Albert Carr sought to add an additional story and enlarge the building to accommodate additional tenants, however the permit was cancelled. The Carr's appear to have owned the building until the 1980s, and it has always remained in rental use.

Evaluation

As a modest early twentieth century apartment building, 2430 Van Ness Avenue does not have distinct or important associations with the theme of urban recovery and residential development at the local, state, or national level (Criteria A and 1). The building was one of thousands erected across the city during the period, and is not an illustrative representative of residential construction, urban residential conditions, or San Francisco redevelopment. Rather, the building is a basic and unremarkable example of typical post-disaster development patterns.

Similarly, the building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B and 2). The apartment was constructed for a middle-class market and was advertised as a modern building designed for the new urban family. The 1930 census attests to the solidly middle class nature of the tenants, with the building occupied by salesman and teachers. The census also shows a typically diverse rental pool, with native California's and immigrants. Additionally, each census period reflects an almost complete turnover in tenants. With very few names repeating throughout the period, it would appear that the apartment was a relatively short term solution for mobile urban dwellers, who went on to purchase or rent elsewhere. There is no indication in the record that any of these individuals were historically significant.

The building does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a basic residential design sensibility (Criteria C and 3). The architect, W.H. Armitage, devoted an entire career to residential flat design, and the modest building, fit into a narrow sliver of a vacant lot, is not noteworthy in design or construction, nor is it the work of a master. The architect was not a notable San Francisco figure, and within the context of what little of his work remains (flats at 23rd street and Hampshire Street) this 1925 construction does not appear to be a significant example. Rather, the commission appears straightforward and commonplace, a small commission undertaken in the closing years of a steady residentially driven career.

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of residential construction is common and otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

Although the building fails to meet any of the criteria for listing on the NRHP or the CRHR, the building does generally retain integrity to its historic period. With no apparent alterations to its original form and detailing, the building remains largely as it was constructed.

⁴ United States Federal Census, 1930, accessed at www.ancestry.com, 4/12/2009; *San Francisco Exposition and Bay Counties Telephone Directory, August 1938*. The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company; United States Federal Census 1930, accessed at www.ancestry.com, 4/2/09.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



**Photograph 2: 2430 Van Ness Avenue, entry detail,
camera facing east, 3/8/09**



**Photograph 3: 2430 Van Ness Avenue,
detail of stacked bays, camera facing east, 3/8/09**

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 6

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #27

P1. Other Identifier: 2501 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 2501 Van Ness Avenue

City: San Francisco

Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0527-009

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 2501 Van Ness Avenue is a three-story wood frame residential and commercial building located on the northwest corner of Van Ness Avenue and Union Street. The building has a flat roof and a flush foundation and is primarily clad in stucco except for the first level, which contains a number of modern materials including brick veneer and composite wood siding associated with commercial insertions (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP3 (Multiple Family Property)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 2501 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northwest, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1906, San Francisco Department of Buildings

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Monfredini Investments LLC
477 Forbes Avenue
S. San Francisco, CA 94080-2017

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:** March 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

Although the building was constructed shortly before the earthquake of 1906, all of the architectural detailing was stripped from the building in the mid-twentieth century, including the windows and framing, cornice, and molding, and the building was resided in stucco. The modern appearance departs widely from the original built form, however the general footprint remains the same.

The first level of the building is devoted to commercial retail use, with a convenience store on the Van Ness elevation and a small barber shop insertion on the Union Street elevation. The commercial entry on the Van Ness elevation consists of a single centered glazed wood door that is recessed and surrounded by aluminum framed fixed display windows and a brick veneer wall. A canvas canopy affixed to the building with aluminum framing runs the course of the entryway, topped by a neon boxed sign. The area above the canopy and behind the neon sign is sheathed in vertical groove composite wood siding. The architectural treatment of the building on the first level of the Union Street elevation is largely the same, with the brick veneer wrapping partially around the building and the remainder clad in stucco and the vertical groove composite wood. The small barber shop insertion fills the western corner of the building, consisting of a recessed doorway and display window in metal framing.

The second and third stories of both elevations are similar, with smooth stucco walls punctuated by regularly placed flat and bay windows. The Van Ness elevation is two bays wide, with the second story consisting of sliding aluminum windows and the third story consisting of three-part hexagonal bay windows with aluminum framing in both sliding and double-hung configurations. The Union Street elevation is five bays wide with two hexagonal bay windows on the third story and the remainder of the windows flush. All of the windows on this elevation are replacements with aluminum framing, some of which are double-hung and some of which are sliding. An iron fire escape projects from the union Street elevation. Although the cornice of the building was removed, the building terminates with two layers of molded banding, suggestive of a “Moderne” style and lending some architectural detailing to an otherwise stripped building. The top southeast corner of the building holds a large sign advertising a motel on Union Street, with bright flashing bulbs in the form of an arrow that dominates the immediate skyline in the evening.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Historic Context

2501 Van Ness Avenue was built as a two-story residential flats building in 1906, immediately before the April earthquake and fire. The construction was a common representative of the nineteenth century architectural character of upper Van Ness Avenue, which prior to the earthquake was a residential neighborhood. With a number of stately mansions and flats lining the avenue, the thoroughfare served as a showcase for the city’s considerable wealth. This elite residential composition differed somewhat in the southern portions of the avenue adjoining Market Street, as commercial and civic interests flowed north from Market Street, however the avenue was largely a quiet residential thoroughfare devoid of major commercial development.

Although it is not clear who commissioned the building or who its architect was, the plan of the building was representative of prevailing forms of construction in the area. Scores of flats were built along Van Ness Avenue from the 1870s onward, typically with stacked bays and varying degrees of eclectic ornamentation. Construction reports in the area’s newspapers made no mention of this specific building, and it appears not to have been a noteworthy addition to the avenue. Speculative construction was rampant during the period, as developers sought to satisfy the

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

mass market for rental units, and the building was a minimal addition to this growing building stock.¹ Only months after the construction of the building, the earthquake and fire, as well as the accompanying demolition intended to check its path, destroyed virtually all buildings along the eastern flank of Van Ness Avenue, extending from Market Street to Filbert Street. Photographs taken immediately after the disaster from Union Street south depict a neighborhood in ruins, with only isolated buildings remaining.² Standing on the western side of Van Ness, 2501 survived the catastrophe. Surviving the earthquake with only slight slippage from the foundation, the wood-frame building emerged from the disaster requiring only slight structural repairs. This resiliency was common, with well-made wood frame buildings often surviving better than their masonry counterparts because their inherent flexibility was able to withstand the shocks. The ensuing fire, however, claimed many of the wooden buildings, as was the case along much of Van Ness Avenue.³

By 1913, the building was again surrounded by scores of flats and apartments. In addition to new residential construction, however, much of the post-earthquake construction was commercial in character. Van Ness Avenue was at the center of a speculative boom, as businesses established temporary quarters and commercial interests sought profits from a frenzy of leasing activity.⁴ Between 1906 and 1909, a large number of residents and business moved to Van Ness Avenue. Along with Fillmore Street immediately to the west, Van Ness became San Francisco's premier commercial and economic hub, supplanting the devastated areas of downtown. Only weeks after the earthquake, the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted that Van Ness was, "now a livelier avenue than ever before in its history," and extolled the rapid construction of numerous temporary buildings and requisition of damaged mansions for commerce. The demographic change wrought by the earthquake was acknowledged almost immediately, with the *San Francisco Chronicle* musing as early as May 1906 that Van Ness Avenue, "will never again be the exclusive residential thoroughfare," of the city.⁵

Responding to the increasingly commercial character of the avenue, the building was raised in 1923 to accommodate a first level store. The comingling of commercial and residential in relatively small flats became more common in the early years of the twentieth century, with many previously residential buildings adapted for this more lucrative and diverse function. Although early permits simply refer to the building as a store, by 1938 it was occupied as a Safeway Store, one of many in the city. A 1938 San Francisco telephone directory lists over one hundred stores in the city, with 2501 Van Ness identified as Store #1010.⁶ The spread of the chain grocer across the city, and throughout the Bay Area, reflected the massive consolidation of the retail industry in the early part of the twentieth century, as local grocers ceded to large retail supply chains. In 1900 only 21 grocery chains existed in the country, by 1929 there were 807, collectively operating 54,000 individual stores. Safeway was one of the largest of these chains, operating over 3,000 stores in 1931. The factors driving the rise of chain retailing were many, however improvements in transportation infrastructure, increasingly standardized business practices and supply chains, and a declining emphasis on personal service in favor of lower costs contributed to the trade's dramatic consolidation.⁷

¹ Anne Bloomfield, "The Real Estate Associates: A Land and Housing Developer of the 1870s in San Francisco," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. XXVII (1978), 13.

² San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection "Van Ness Avenue south of Union Street," April 1906 [graphic], Photo ID Number: AAC-3624, Folder: S.F. Earthquakes-1906-Streets-Van Ness Avenue.

³ Stephen Tobriner, *Bracing For Disaster: Earthquake-Resistant Architecture and Engineering in San Francisco, 1838-1933*. (Berkeley, California: Heyday Books, 2006) 169-170.

⁴ "Speculation Stops in Buying Real Property," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 27, 1909.

⁵ "Business Following Banks Downtown," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 27, 1906.

⁶ The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, *San Francisco Exposition and Bay Counties Telephone Directory, August 1938*.

⁷ Mansel G. Blackford, *A History of Small Business In America*. (North Carolina: UNC Press, 2003) 109.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Following World War II, the significant commercial consolidation of Safeway's early development was furthered with the erection of even larger stores that centralized the operations of neighborhood grocery stores into larger shopping centers. Stores like 2501 Van Ness Avenue, which in many ways mirrored the traditional neighborhood grocer, ceded to larger stores frequently located in suburban areas and surrounded by immense parking lots. Comparing the size and scale of earlier Safeway stores with those of the 1950s, including a prominent example located at Marina Boulevard and Buchanan Street built in 1953, it is clear that the immense floor plans and scale of the later models increasingly relayed the progression from small grocer to today's "super store."⁸ By 1946, the store was vacant, and in the same year became a delicatessen. It continues to operate as a neighborhood store to the present.

Evaluation

As a standard early twentieth century apartment building, and as a mixed use commercial property, 2501 Van Ness Avenue does not have direct associations with significant themes of urban development at the local, state, or national level (Criteria A and 1). The building was one of thousands erected across the city in the period, and is not illustrative of significant themes in residential construction, urban residential conditions, or San Francisco redevelopment. Rather, the building is a basic representative of general city development patterns. Its partial transition to retail functions is also a typical theme in mixed neighborhoods like Van Ness Avenue, and is not a significant representative of commercial development in the city.

Similarly, the building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B and 2). The apartment was constructed for a middle-class market, with census records attesting to professional, white-collar class of residents in the building and the surrounding neighborhood. The census shows a renting pool that was largely American born, with many born in California.

Further, each census period reflects an almost complete turnover in tenants. With very few names repeating throughout the period, it would appear that the apartment was a relatively short term solution for mobile urban dwellers, who went on to purchase or rent elsewhere.

The building does not demonstrate distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a basic residential design sensibility (Criteria C and 3). The architect is unknown, however the construction is a common place example of traditional middle-income residential development. Neither its general stylistic design nor its construction are significant within its historic period.

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of residential construction is common and otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

In addition to not meeting any of the criteria for listing on the NRHP or the CRHR, the building displays an almost total loss of integrity within its historic context. The building was raised a level and entirely stripped of all of its original ornamentation, including the cornice and wood trim and molding. These attributes were hallmarks of the period's architectural design, and their loss has diminished the building's ability to convey any significance in relation to the pre-earthquake residential development in San Francisco.

⁸ San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection. "Safeway grocery store on Marina Boulevard, between Laguna and Buchanan streets," [graphic], June 25, 1959, Photo ID Number: AAC-7001, Folder: S.F. Businesses-Groceries-Safeway Stores.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 2501 Van Ness Avenue, storefront detail, camera facing northwest, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 2501 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northeast, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 6

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #28

P1. Other Identifier: 2509-2515 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

***a. County:** San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

***b. USGS 7.5' Quad:** San Francisco North, Calif. **Date:** 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 2509-2515 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0527-008

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 2509-2515 Van Ness Avenue is a three story residential and commercial building located between Union and Filbert Street. The building has a flat roof and a flush foundation and is primarily clad in stucco except for the first level, which contains tile work associated with a modern commercial insertion. Although the building was constructed several years before the earthquake of 1906, much of the architectural detailing was stripped from the building in the mid-twentieth century, including the window surrounds and decorative molding, and the building was re-sided in stucco (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP3 (Multiple Family Property)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 2509-2515 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northwest, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:**
 Historic Prehistoric Both
1902. San Francisco Department of Buildings

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Monfredini Investments LLC
477 Forbes Avenue
S. San Francisco, CA 94080-2017

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: none

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: apartment house

B4. Present Use: apartment house

*B5. Architectural Style: Flats with minimal classical ornamentation, most elements have been stripped

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1902. In 1945 the first level was remodeled for use as a store. In 1955, the storefront was again remodeled to accommodate a tavern (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: unknown b. Builder: unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

2509-2515 Van Ness Avenue is referenced in the City of San Francisco’s Van Ness Avenue Area Plan as a contributory building. According to San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 16: “City and County of San Francisco Planning Department CEQA Review Procedures for Historic Resources,” this rating does not qualify as an adopted local register for the purposes of CEQA, and requires further consultation and review which is provided herein (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

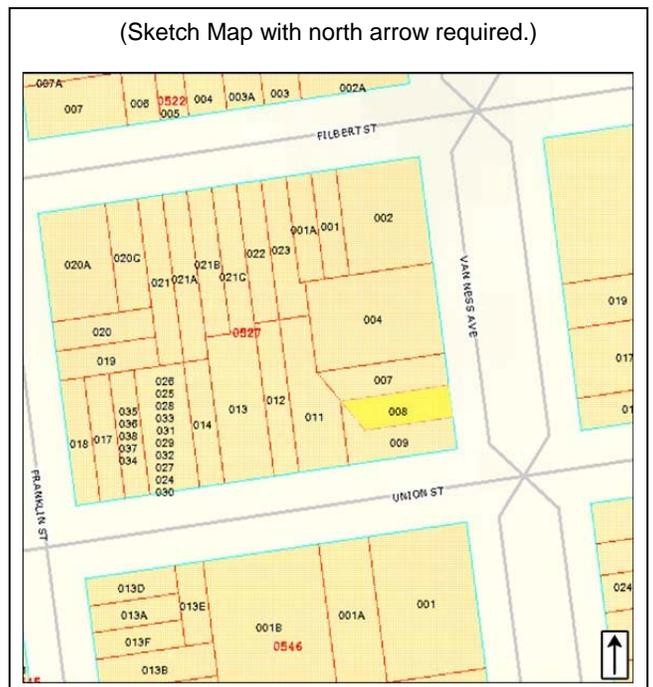
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection; San Francisco Planning Department, Van Ness Avenue Area Plan; *San Francisco Chronicle*; Bloomfield, *The Real Estate Associates* (1978); Tobriner, *Bracing For Disaster* (2006); United States Census 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



(This space reserved for official comments.)

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The modern appearance departs substantially from the original built form, however the general massing and some ornamentation remains intact.

The first level of the building has a commercial entry and a separate residential entry, both of which are protected by metal security gates. The commercial entryway is clad in ceramic tile and has three tinted windows separated by molded wood glazing bars. Three vertical groove wood panels crown the windows and an offset recessed commercial doorway sits directly to the north, immediately adjacent to the separate residential doorway. A black rolling canvas awning runs the length of the building over the commercial entry area.

The second and third stories are divided into two bays, featuring stacked bay windows. One of the bays is hexagonal with three double-hung windows and the other is circular with only two double-hung windows. While both bay windows have had all original ornamentation removed, both retain the original wood framing for the windows and surrounds. A prominent cornice crowns the building, underscored by egg and dart molding and dentils.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 2509-2515 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA (see continuation sheet).

Historic Context

2509-2515 Van Ness Avenue was designed as a three-story residential flats building in 1902 for John H. and Ellen Boardman. A native of New York, John Boardman was born in 1847 and was a merchant in the coffee trade. The apartment building was one of two constructed for the family, with the second standing directly north (see DPR523 form for 2517-2521). While the family remained in one of the flats until the mid 1910s, it appears that Boardman was killed by an automobile on Van Ness Avenue in 1916.¹ During the 1910s and 1920s, several large families rented the remainder of the flats, many of whom had servants or boarders, and all of whom were engaged in various professional trades including sales, teaching, and accounting.²

The construction was a common representative of the architectural character of upper Van Ness Avenue, which prior to the earthquake was a predominately residential neighborhood. With a number of stately mansions and flats lining the avenue, the thoroughfare served as a showcase for the city's considerable wealth. This elite residential composition differed somewhat in the southern portions of the avenue adjoining Market Street, as commercial and civic interests moved north from Market Street, however the avenue was largely a quiet residential thoroughfare devoid of major commercial development.

¹ "Retired Merchant is Knocked Down By Car," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 24, 1916.

² United States Census, 1910, 1920, 1930. Accessed at www.ancestry.com, April 17, 2009.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Although it is not clear who designed the building, its plan was representative of prevailing forms of construction in the area. Scores of flats were built along Van Ness Avenue from the 1870s onward, typically with stacked bays and varying degrees of eclectic ornamentation. Construction reports in the area's newspapers made no mention of this specific buildings, and it does not appear to have been a noteworthy addition to the avenue. Speculative construction was rampant during the period, as developers and property owners sought to satisfy the mass market for rental units, and the building was a minimal addition to this growing building stock.³

Surviving the earthquake with only slight slippage from the foundation, the wood-frame building emerged from the disaster requiring only slight structural repairs. This resiliency was common, with well-made wood frame buildings often surviving better than their masonry counterparts because their inherent flexibility was able to withstand the shocks. The ensuing fire, however, claimed many of the wooden buildings, as was the case along much of Van Ness Avenue.⁴ Photographs taken immediately after the disaster from Union Street south depict a neighborhood in ruins, with only isolated buildings remaining.⁵

Although many of the residences in the surrounding blocks were destroyed by the 1906 earthquake and fire, by 1913 the building was again surrounded by scores of flats and apartments. In addition to the rebuilt residential structures, the area took on a more commercial tone. Van Ness Avenue was at the center of a speculative boom, as businesses established temporary quarters and commercial interests sought profits from a frenzy of leasing activity.⁶ Between 1906 and 1909, a large number of residents and business moved to Van Ness Avenue and it, along with Fillmore Street to the west, became San Francisco's premier commercial and economic hub, supplanting the devastated areas of downtown. Only weeks after the earthquake, the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted that Van Ness was, "now a livelier avenue than ever before in its history," and extolled the rapid construction of numerous temporary buildings and requisition of damaged mansions for commerce. The demographic change wrought by the earthquake was acknowledged almost immediately, with the *San Francisco Chronicle* musing as early as May 1906 that Van Ness Avenue, "will never again be the exclusive residential thoroughfare," of the city.⁷

Responding to the increasingly commercial character of the avenue, the building was altered in 1945 to accommodate a first level store. The comingling of commercial and residential in relatively small flats became more common in the early and middle years of the twentieth century, with many previously residential buildings adapted for this more lucrative and diverse function. Although early permits simply refer to the building as a store, by 1938 it was occupied by the Drawing Room Restaurant and by the late 1960s it was a tavern, a use which the vacant storefront still reflects today.

³ Anne Bloomfield, "The Real Estate Associates: A Land and Housing Developer of the 1870s in San Francisco," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. XXVII (1978), 13.

⁴ Stephen Tobriner, *Bracing For Disaster: Earthquake-Resistant Architecture and Engineering in San Francisco, 1838-1933*. (Berkeley, California: Heyday Books, 2006) 169-170.

⁵ San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection "Van Ness Avenue south of Union Street," April 1906 [graphic], Photo ID Number: AAC-3624, Folder: S.F. Earthquakes-1906-Streets-Van Ness Avenue.

⁶ "Speculation Stops in Buying Real Property," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 27, 1909.

⁷ "Business Following Banks Downtown," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 27, 1906.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Evaluation

As a standard early twentieth century apartment building, 2509-2515 Van Ness Avenue does not have direct or important associations with themes of urban residential development at the local, state, or national level (Criteria A and 1). The building was one of thousands erected across the city in the period, and is not an illustrative representative of residential construction, urban residential conditions, or San Francisco development. Rather, the building is a basic representative of general city development patterns. Its partial transition to retail functions is also a typical theme in mixed neighborhoods like Van Ness Avenue, and is not a significant representative of commercial development in the city.

Similarly, the building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B and 2). The apartment was constructed for a middle-class market, with census records attesting to professional, white-collar class of residents in the building and the surrounding neighborhood. The census shows a renting pool that was largely American born, with many born in California. Further, each census period reflects an almost complete turnover in tenants. With very few names repeating throughout the period, it would appear that the apartment was a relatively short term solution for mobile urban dwellers, who went on to purchase or rent elsewhere.⁸

The building does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a basic residential design sensibility that does not appear to be the work of a master (Criteria C and 3). The architect is unknown, however the construction is a common place example of traditional middle-income residential development. Although it, and its mirroring neighbor, reflect an ornate design sensibility with fanciful moldings, prominent bay windows, and a pleasant angled cornice, these design elements were some of the most prevalent features of the building stock from the period and do not constitute significant design adaptation or development.

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of residential construction is common and otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

In addition to its lack of significance, the building displays a marked loss of integrity. In the mid-twentieth century, the building was entirely stripped of much of its original ornamentation and resided in modern stucco. These design attributes were hallmarks of the period's architectural design, and their loss has diminished the building's ability to convey any significance in relation to the pre-earthquake residential development in San Francisco, or to a specific style or period of construction.

⁸ United States Federal Census, 1910, 1920, 1930, accessed at www.ancestry.com, 4/12/09.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



**Photograph 2: 2509-2515 Van Ness Avenue, storefront detail,
camera facing southwest, 3/8/09**

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6L

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 6

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #29

P1. Other Identifier: 2517-2521 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 2517-2521 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0527-007

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 2517-2521 Van Ness Avenue is a three and one-half story wood frame residential and commercial building located between Union Street and Filbert Street. The building has a raised brick foundation and a steeply pitched roof with two prominent Flemish dormer windows. A small modern penthouse addition appears on the rooftop, as does a terrace with a wood pergola (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP3 (Multiple Family Property)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 2517-2521 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing northwest, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1902, San Francisco Department of Buildings and Assessors Records

***P7. Owner and Address:**
Jospeh G. Daley Living Trust
2519 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94109

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: none

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: apartment house

B4. Present Use: apartment house

*B5. Architectural Style: Flats with eclectic classical ornamentation and Flemish dormers

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The building was constructed in 1902. In 1979 the first level was remodeled for use as a commercial space. At some point a rooftop addition and rooftop deck was constructed, however this information was not relayed by a building permit search (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: unknown b. Builder: unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a

Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 2517-2521 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

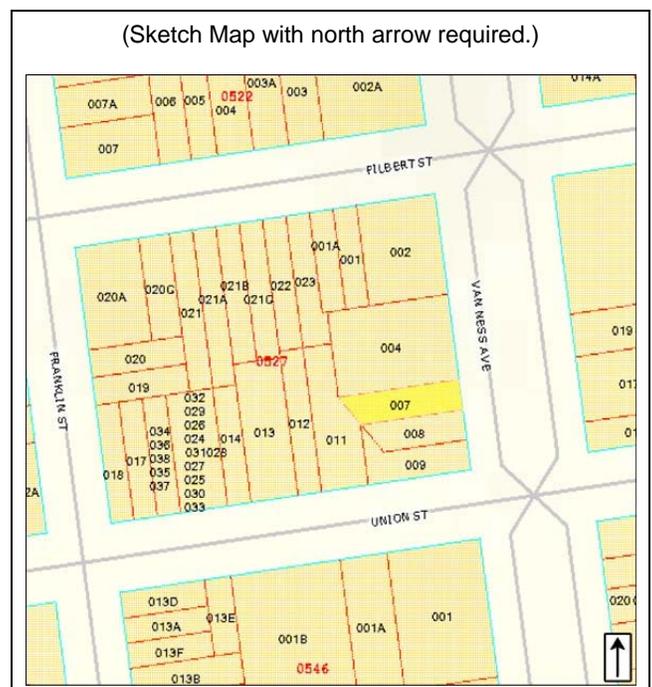
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection; San Francisco Planning Department, Van Ness Avenue Area Plan; *San Francisco Chronicle*; Bloomfield, *The Real Estate Associates* (1978); Tobriner, *Bracing For Disaster* (2006); United States Census 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

Above its low brick base, the building is sheathed in wood lap siding. The full height of the building is divided into two bays, with varying decorative embellishments.

The street level consists of a rounded tripartite bay window and a recessed entryway accessed by a brick stairwell. The bay window is subtle, bowing from the building at a gentle angle, and is framed by brackets and ornamental swags. The three windows, with the center one slightly larger, are wood frame double-hung one-over-one. The entryway is situated directly north, and is flanked by pairs of squat Ionic columns. Egg and dart molding and a single bracket frame the entire entryway, and a modern canvas canopy with an aluminum frame projects onto the sidewalk. Three glazed wood doors with scroll pediment molding and single glass panels line the entryway atop the steps, each accessing a different level of the building. Above each door is a single plate transom and the central doorway is framed by decorative brackets bearing brass globes.

The second and third stories are also divided into two bays, one of which features a hexagonal stacked bay window and the other a circular stacked bay window. The tripartite window configuration is all double-hung and framed in wood. A heavy bracketed cornice crowns the building, underscored by prominent dentils. Above the cornice, two exuberant Flemish dormers rise, partially obscured by a modern rooftop deck insertion, which covers much of the building's roof. Additionally, a small penthouse insertion extends from the otherwise steeply pitched hipped roof. The penthouse addition and decking is very prominent when viewed from the north along Van Ness, however it is largely obscured when viewing the building head-on. Several modern aluminum frame window insertions punctuating the secondary northern elevation are also evident from Van Ness Avenue.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Historic Context

2517-2521 Van Ness Avenue was designed in 1902 as a residential flats building for John H. and Ellen Boardman. A native of New York, John Boardman was born in 1847 and was a merchant in the coffee trade. The apartment building was one of two constructed for the family, with the second standing directly south (see DPR523 form for 2509-2515). 2517-2521 was the more ornate of the two, perhaps reflecting the fact that the family resided in it, renting out only part. While the family remained in one of the flats until the mid 1910s, it appears that Boardman was killed by an automobile on Van Ness Avenue in 1916.¹ During the 1910s and 1920s, several large families rented the remainder of the flats, many of whom had servants or boarders, and all of whom were engaged in various professional trades including sales, teaching, and accounting.²

The construction was a common, if exuberant, representative of the architectural character of upper Van Ness Avenue, which prior to the earthquake was a predominately residential neighborhood. With a number of stately mansions and flats lining the avenue, the thoroughfare served as a showcase for the city's considerable wealth. This elite residential composition differed somewhat in the southern portions of the avenue adjoining Market Street, as commercial and civic interests extended north from Market Street, however the avenue was largely a quiet residential thoroughfare devoid of major commercial development.³

¹ "Retired Merchant is Knocked Down By Car," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 24, 1916.

² United States Federal Census 1910, 1920, 1930. Accessed at www.ancestry.com, April 14, 2009.

³ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of San Francisco, 1899.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 4 of 6

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Map Reference #29*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen*Date: March 2009 Continuation Update**B10. Significance:** (Continued)

Although it is not clear who designed the building, its plan was representative of prevailing forms of construction in the area. Scores of flats were built along Van Ness Avenue from the 1870s onward, typically with stacked bays and varying degrees of eclectic ornamentation. Construction reports in the area's newspapers made no mention of this specific building, and it does not appear to have been a noteworthy addition to the avenue. Speculative construction was rampant during the period, as developers and property owners sought to satisfy the mass market for rental units, and the building was likely a standard addition to this growing building stock.⁴

Surviving the earthquake with only slight slippage from the foundation, the wood-frame building emerged from the disaster requiring only slight structural repairs. This resiliency was common, with well-made wood frame buildings often surviving better than their masonry counterparts because their inherent flexibility was able to withstand the shocks. The ensuing fire, however, claimed many of the wooden buildings, as was the case along much of Van Ness Avenue.⁵ Photographs taken immediately after the disaster from Union Street south depict a neighborhood in ruins, with only isolated buildings remaining.⁶

By 1913 the building was again surrounded by scores of flats and apartments. In addition to new residential construction, the avenue took on an increasingly commercial tone. Between 1906 and 1909, a large number of residents and business moved to Van Ness Avenue. The avenue was at the center of a speculative boom, as businesses established temporary quarters and commercial interests sought profits from a frenzy of leasing activity.⁷ Along with Fillmore Street to the west, Van Ness became San Francisco's premier commercial and economic hub, supplanting the devastated areas of downtown. Only weeks after the earthquake, the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted that Van Ness was, "now a livelier avenue than ever before in its history," and extolled the rapid construction of numerous temporary buildings and requisition of damaged mansions for commerce. The demographic change wrought by the earthquake was acknowledged almost immediately, with the *San Francisco Chronicle* musing as early as May 1906 that Van Ness Avenue, "will never again be the exclusive residential thoroughfare," of the city.⁸

Although the building was surrounded by an increasingly commercial corridor, it remained in purely residential use through the 1970s. While its neighbor, and near twin, 2509-2515 was converted into a tavern and altered, the residential stability of 2517-2521 precluded major alteration to the ornamentation of the building and most of its original features remain intact. In 1979, however, the first floor was converted to commercial use, which slightly altered its original features at the ground level.

⁴ Anne Bloomfield, "The Real Estate Associates: A Land and Housing Developer of the 1870s in San Francisco," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. XXVII (1978), 13.

⁵ Stephen Tobriner, *Bracing For Disaster: Earthquake-Resistant Architecture and Engineering in San Francisco, 1838-1933*. (Berkeley, California: Heyday Books, 2006) 169-170.

⁶ San Francisco Public Library Historical Photograph Collection "Van Ness Avenue south of Union Street," April 1906 [graphic], Photo ID Number: AAC-3624, Folder: S.F. Earthquakes-1906-Streets-Van Ness Avenue.

⁷ "Speculation Stops in Buying Real Property," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 27, 1909.

⁸ "Business Following Banks Downtown," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 27, 1906.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Evaluation

As a standard early twentieth century apartment building, 2517-2521 Van Ness Avenue does not demonstrate direct or important associations themes of urban development at the local, state, or national level (Criteria A and 1). The building was one of thousands erected across the city in the period, and is not an illustrative representative of residential construction, urban residential conditions, or San Francisco development. Rather, the building is a basic representative of general city development patterns. Its partial transition to retail functions is also a typical theme in mixed neighborhoods like Van Ness Avenue, and is not a significant representative of commercial development in the city.

Similarly, the building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B and 2). The apartment was constructed for a middle-class market, with census records attesting to professional, white-collar class of residents in the building and the surrounding neighborhood. The census depicts a renting pool that was largely American born, with many born in California. Further, each census period reflects an almost complete turnover in tenants. With very few names repeating throughout the period, it would appear that the apartment was a relatively short term solution for mobile urban dwellers, who went on to purchase or rent elsewhere.

The building does not demonstrate distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a basic residential design sensibility that does not appear to be the work of a master (Criteria C and 3). The architect is unknown, however the construction is a common place example of traditional middle-income residential development. Although it, and its mirroring neighbor, reflect an ornate design sensibility with fanciful moldings, prominent bay windows, and a pleasant angled cornice, these design elements were some of the most prevalent features of the building stock from the period and do not constitute significant design adaptation or development. When compared to other buildings of the period, even the copious ornamentation displayed by the building is relatively common, and is not an exemplar.

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of residential construction is common and otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

In addition to its lack of significance, the building displays some loss of integrity. Although much of the ornamentation remains, a rooftop alteration juts prominently from the attic, dwarfing the Flemish gables and altering the balance of the building. In addition, there are several modern window insertions lining the building on the secondary northern elevation.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

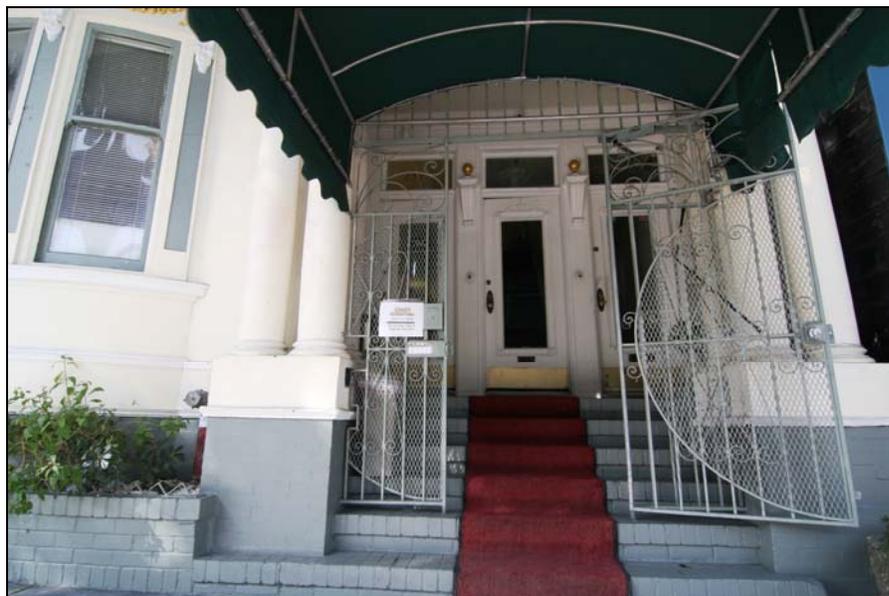
Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 2517-2521 Van Ness Avenue, rooftop addition, camera facing southwest, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 2517-2521 Van Ness Avenue, entry detail, camera facing west, 3/8/09

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 7

*Resource Name or #: Map Reference #30

P1. Other Identifier: 2525-2545 Van Ness Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Francisco North, Calif. Date: 1956, photorevised 1968

c. Address: 2525-2545 Van Ness Avenue City: San Francisco Zip: 94109

d. UTM: Zone: 10 ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:

Block and Lot Number: 0527-004

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 2525-2545 Van Ness Avenue is a two-story reinforced concrete commercial building that has a rectangular plan with a narrow rectangular rear addition. The building is located between Union Street and Filbert Street, with commercial frontage facing Van Ness Avenue. Constructed with a modest International Style aesthetic, the Van Ness elevation of the building features a vertically articulated projecting concrete grid, framing horizontally expressed bands of steel frame windows (see continuation sheet).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6 (1-3 Story Commercial Building)

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) 2525-2545 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing west, 3/8/09.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
1942 (1952 and 1965 additions)
San Francisco Department of Buildings

***P7. Owner and Address:**
2525 Van Ness LLC
2525 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94109-1688

***P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)
Polly S. Allen
JRP Historical Consulting LLC
1490 Drew Avenue Suite 110
Davis, CA 95618

***P9. Date Recorded:**
March, 2009

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") JRP Historical Consulting, LLC, "Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Study," 2009.

***Attachments:** NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

B1. Historic Name: none

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: auto sales

B4. Present Use: commercial / office

*B5. Architectural Style: commercial with minimal International Style features

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations) The lot was constructed in stages, with several smaller buildings small car lot buildings erected in the 1940s, and the large building erected in 1952. In 1965, a two story rear addition was completed. In 1962, a major storefront alteration changed the street level of the building, accommodating a transition for use by a laundering facility (source: San Francisco Department of Buildings).

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: unknown b. Builder: Unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme: n/a Area: n/a
Period of Significance: n/a Property Type: n/a Applicable Criteria: n/a

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This intensive survey and evaluation finds that 2525-2545 Van Ness Avenue does not appear eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or local designation because it lacks significance and integrity. This evaluation is consistent with San Francisco Preservation Bulletin 5, "Landmark and Historic District Designation Procedures," which directs that historic properties be evaluated for local designation using the California OHP Recordation Manual (as per San Francisco Landmarks Board Resolution No. 527, June 7, 2000).

The building has been evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA (see continuation sheet).

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) n/a

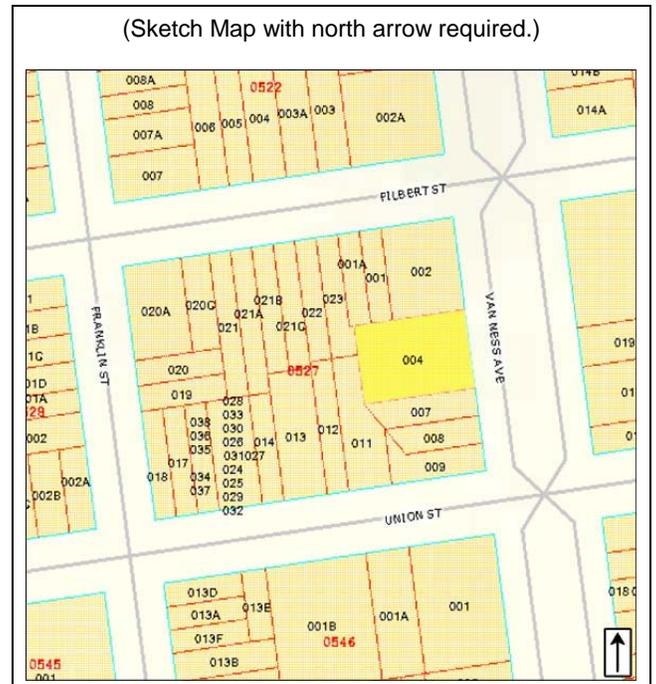
B12. References: San Francisco Department of Buildings Building Permits; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco; *San Francisco Chronicle*.

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Meta Bunse and Polly S. Allen

*Date of Evaluation: April 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March, 2009

Continuation

Update

***P3a. Description:** (Continued)

The concrete foundation is flush, and a flat roof projects slightly over the building, with a simple concrete overhang over the second-story windows.

Substantial modern commercial insertions including aluminum framed doors and windows have substantially altered the first story of the building. Three entryways line the building, accessing the stairway to second story offices and two street front businesses. The business entries are flanked by aluminum-framed advertising canopies, interrupting the verticality of the concrete piers. At the northern edge of the Van Ness elevation, an auto entrance punctuates the first story, leading to a parking lot in the rear. The second-story of the building is more intact, and contains a simple row of steel frame fixed windows with small tilting awning windows along the bottom.

The northern elevation is far simpler than that of Van Ness Avenue, with none of the International Style detailing. The unarticulated concrete walls are punctuated by irregularly placed pairs of steel frame fixed windows, underscored by the same tilting units. A small metal balcony projects from one of the windows. Additionally, prominent venting equipment associated with the laundromat occupying the building runs the height of the building.

The rear addition is two-stories, with carports occupying the first level and offices or residences filling the second. The simple wing is sheathed in composite wood siding and has regularly placed fixed steel frame windows underscored by steel frame tilting awning windows.

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Historic Context

The site history of 2525-2545 Van Ness Avenue reflects the growing mixed commercial nature of upper Van Ness Avenue. Like much of the Western Addition before the earthquake and fire of 1906, Van Ness Avenue was principally an upper-middle class residential neighborhood. A number of stately mansions and flats lined the avenue and the thoroughfare served as a showcase for the city's considerable wealth. This elite residential composition differed somewhat in the southern portions of the avenue adjoining Market Street, where commercial and civic uses extended north from Market Street, but the general tenor of this part of Van Ness was highly residential, with a few local small retail storefronts.¹

The residential composition and light commercial nature of Van Ness was abruptly changed by the destruction of the 1906 earthquake. Both the fire's destruction and the subsequent exodus of displaced businesses moving from the decimated center of the city to relatively unscathed areas along Van Ness Avenue profoundly altered its character. The demographic change wrought by the earthquake was acknowledged early, with the *San Francisco Chronicle* musing as early as May 1906 that Van Ness Avenue, "will never again be the exclusive residential thoroughfare," of the city.²

¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of San Francisco, 1899.

² "Business Following Banks Downtown," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 27, 1906.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

Although the general character of the avenue changed in the years following the earthquake, this particular lot remained in residential use at least through 1920 because Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps depict a large nine-flat apartment building on the site as early as 1913. In 1920, the building was destroyed by fire, after which the lot appears to have remained vacant. In the 1930s, advertisers Foster and Kleiser erected a billboard upon the lot. The company, which would ultimately become media giant Clear Channel Communications, was a pioneer in the “outdoor advertising” realm and owned the rights to billboards across the city. By the 1940s, the property was in use as a used car lot. It seems that there were still no major buildings or structures on the lot through 1947 when the lot owner Jim Cox filed a permit for a small sales office.³

Although appearing far later than most of the auto related businesses along Van Ness Avenue, the lot was one of many automobile related facilities built on the avenue. Following the 1906 earthquake and fire, the middle blocks of Van Ness Avenue transformed from largely residential to an area increasingly dominated by automobile sales, manufacturing, and repair. Close to the urban core, yet endowed with more space and more moderate lot and rent prices, the Van Ness corridor quickly became one of the west’s largest Auto Rows. The industry initially appeared in the vicinity of Market Street, but soon scores of auto related businesses steadily opened further north, flanking the broad avenue from Market nearly to the Bay. By 1920, grand showrooms such as the Paige Motor Company Building accompanied scores of more modest salesrooms, garages, and repair shops. The cohesiveness of the row was already in decline by the 1940s, however, as pressures from suburban lots led to the decreasing economic viability of urban showrooms. The auto sales lot at 2525-2545 thus joined a fading part of the avenue’s history.

The car lot does not appear to have remained in business for long because owners Cohn & Cohn developed the present two-story office building on the front of the lot in 1952. The office space was soon filled by a real estate firm, and in 1962 the ground floor of the building was converted to use for a laundry facility, which it remains to the present.⁴

Evaluation

As a modest and evolving commercial property, 2525-2545 Van Ness Avenue does not have direct associations with the development of either the American auto industry or Van Ness’ Auto Row specifically (Criteria A and 1). The used car lot appeared after the early twentieth century surge of development that shaped Auto Row, and was only one of several brief developments in the overall history of the lot. Subsequent commercial development was not significant, and the building is a generic commercial and office space that is not important for its association with any significant events, trends, or patterns of development.

The building is not associated with any individuals significant in local, state, or national history (Criteria B and 2). Commercial tenants, including medical and real estate professionals, were standard representatives of these disciplines and there is no evidence that any specific individual was historically significant.

³ San Francisco Department of Buildings, Building Permits.

⁴ San Francisco Department of Buildings, Building Permits.

CONTINUATION SHEET

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

B10. Significance: (Continued)

The building does not appear to be the work of a master. Nor does it demonstrate distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, but rather illustrates a well-established design sensibility that includes allusions to a basic modern aesthetic and an accommodation of office and commercial functions (Criteria C and 3). The architect of the building is unknown, however the basic construction and design is unremarkable within the context of mid-century commercial development.

In rare instances buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies, but this type of commercial construction is otherwise well documented and does not appear to be a principal source of information in this regard (Criteria D and 4).

In addition to failing to meet any of the criteria for listing on the NRHP or the CRHR, the building displays a marked loss of integrity. Years of commercial entryway insertions and reconfigurations at the ground level as well as a two-story rear addition have eroded the building's original form and altered the original International Style commercial design aesthetic.

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 2: 2525-2545 Van Ness Avenue, storefront detail, camera facing northwest, 3/8/09



Photograph 3: 2525-2545 Van Ness Avenue, camera facing southwest, 3/8/09

*Recorded by: Polly S. Allen

*Date: March 2009

Continuation

Update

Photographs: (Continued)



Photograph 4: 2525-2545 Van Ness Avenue, auto entrance, camera facing west, 3/8/09