

APPENDIX A

Historic Resource Evaluation

Trident Center
11355-11377 Olympic Boulevard
Los Angeles, California

Historical Resource Evaluation Report



Prepared by:



DRAFT March 2016



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Appendix A: Résumés



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of a historical resource evaluation of the Trident Center at 11355-11377 Olympic Boulevard in the West Los Angeles Community Plan Area of the City of Los Angeles. The existing office building was constructed in 1983 and designed by Matlin & Dvoretzky Architects. It is currently proposed for rehabilitation. Forty-five years is typically the age a property must reach to warrant its evaluation as a potential historical resource. The West Los Angeles Community Plan Area was surveyed in 2012 as part of SurveyLA, the ongoing citywide historical resource survey of Los Angeles. However, this property was not evaluated as part of that effort as it post-dates the survey period, which extends to 1980. Although the property falls outside of this period, GPA Consulting (GPA) was retained by Meridian Consultants to complete this intensive-level evaluation to determine if the building is a historical resource subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The property was evaluated in this report using the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) and California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) criteria, as well as the Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument criteria. The primary contexts and themes considered in this evaluation included the commercial development of Los Angeles, specifically corporate office towers; Late Modern architecture; and the work of Matlin & Dvoretzky Architects.

After careful research and evaluation, GPA concluded that the building is ineligible for listing in the National or California Registers due to a lack of significance, nor is it eligible for designation as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument. Therefore, the Trident Center is not a historical resource subject to CEQA. As the property does not meet the CEQA definition of a historical resource, the project will have no direct or indirect impacts on historical resources, no further study is recommended or required.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Qualifications

The purpose of this report is to determine and set forth whether or not a proposed development project will impact historical resources. The proposed project involves the property known as the Trident Center, located at 11355-11377 W. Olympic Boulevard in the West Los Angeles Community Plan Area of the City of Los Angeles. The Assessor Parcel Number is 4260-003-008. The parcel occupies an entire block, with its primary frontage along the north side of W. Olympic Boulevard between Corinth and Purdue Avenues (see Figure 1, below). The parcel is occupied by an office building complex that was constructed in 1983. The project involves the rehabilitation of the complex to address current market demands for both traditional and creative office uses.

GPA Consulting (GPA) was retained to identify historical resources on the project site in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and to analyze the direct and indirect impacts on the identified historical resources. Jenna Kachour and Laura Groves were responsible for the preparation of this report. They fulfill the qualifications for historic preservation professionals outlined in Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 61. Their résumés are attached in Appendix A.

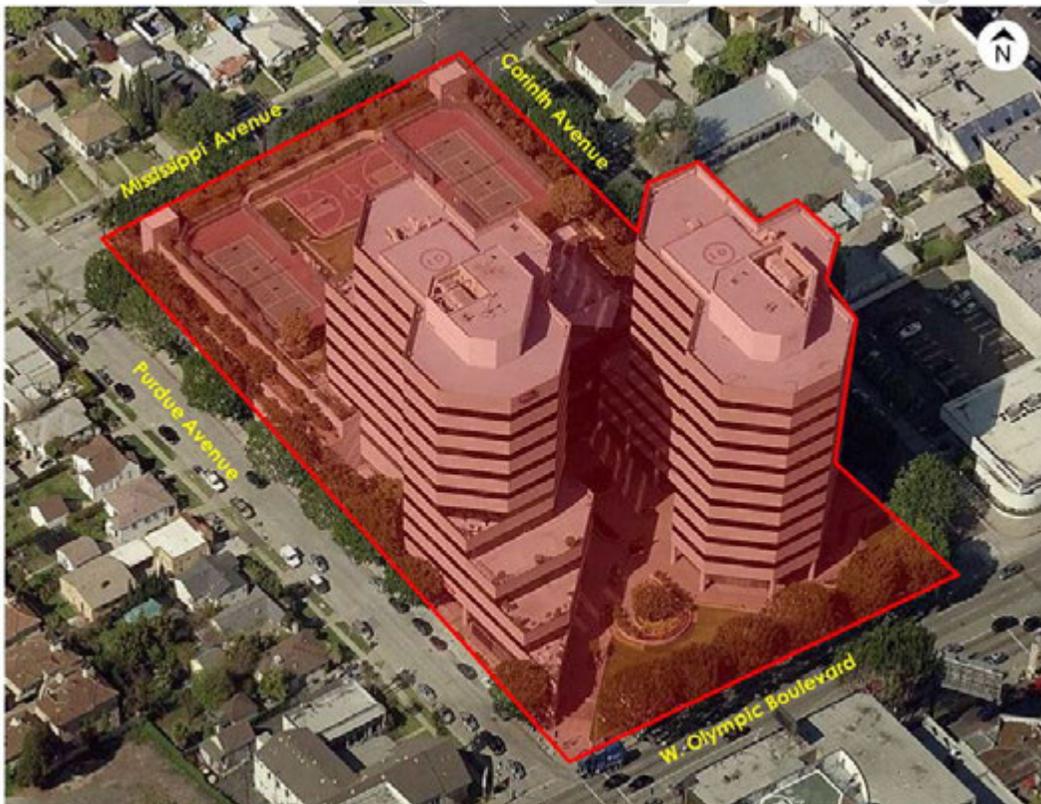


Figure 1: Bird's-eye view of subject property and immediate vicinity. Base map source: Bing Maps. Map annotations by GPA Consulting.



1.2 Methodology

In preparing this report, the following tasks were performed:

1. Conducted a preliminary field inspection of the project site and surrounding area to determine the scope of the study. As the proposed project involves the rehabilitation of the complex, the study area was established as the project site.
2. Researched the property to determine whether or not it is currently listed as a landmark under national, state, or local programs and whether or not it has been previously identified or evaluated as a historical resource. This involved a records search at the South Central Coastal Information Center at California State University, Fullerton. The records search revealed no previously recorded historical resources on the project site.
3. Researched the property to determine whether or not it was identified as significant through SurveyLA, the Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey. The survey period for SurveyLA extends to 1980. As the subject complex was constructed in 1983, it was not included in the survey.
4. Conducted an intensive field inspection of the project site to ascertain the general condition and physical integrity of the complex. Digital photographs were taken during this field inspection, which included the interior and exterior of the buildings.
5. Obtained and reviewed the building permits for the property from the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety. Dates of construction and subsequent alterations were determined by the building permit record, as well as additional sources, such as the field inspection, newspaper articles, and historic photographs.
6. Researched the property and surrounding area at local libraries and archives to establish the general history and context, including a review of the relevant databases, newspapers, books, and articles.
7. Reviewed the SurveyLA Historic Context Outline to determine the appropriate context(s), theme(s), and eligibility standards to evaluate the eligibility of the Trident Center as a historical resource.

2. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Generally, a lead agency must consider a property a historical resource under CEQA if it is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register). The California Register is modeled after the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). Furthermore, a property is presumed to be historically significant if it is listed in a local register of historic resources or has been identified as historically significant in a historic resources survey (provided certain criteria and requirements are satisfied) unless a preponderance of evidence demonstrates that the property is not historically or culturally significant.¹ The National Register, California Register, and local designation programs are discussed below.

¹ Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 and 14 CCR Section 4850.



2.1 National Register of Historic Places

The National Register is "an authoritative guide to be used by federal, state, and local governments, private groups and citizens to identify the nation's cultural resources and to indicate what properties should be considered for protection from destruction or impairment."²

Criteria

To be eligible for listing in the National Register, a property must be at least 50 years of age (unless the property is of "exceptional importance") and possess significance in American history and culture, architecture, or archaeology. A property of potential significance must meet one or more of the following four established criteria:³

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. Yield, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations are provided for properties not ordinarily considered eligible for the National Register, including cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years. These properties qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

- A. A religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
- B. A building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
- C. A birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no appropriate site or building directly associated with his productive life.
- D. A cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or

² Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 60.2.

³ Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 60.4.



- E. A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
- F. A property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or
- G. A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

Integrity

According to *National Register Bulletin #15*, "to be eligible for listing in the National Register, a property must not only be shown to be significant under National Register criteria, but it also must have integrity." Integrity is defined in *National Register Bulletin #15* as "the ability of a property to convey its significance."⁴ Within the concept of integrity, the National Register recognizes the following seven aspects or qualities that in various combinations define integrity: feeling, association, workmanship, location, design, setting, and materials.

Context

To be eligible for listing in the National Register, a property must also be significant within a historic context. *National Register Bulletin #15* states that the significance of a historic property can be judged only when it is evaluated within its historic context. Historic contexts are "those patterns, themes, or trends in history by which a specific...property or site is understood and its meaning...is made clear."⁵ A property must represent an important aspect of the area's history or prehistory and possess the requisite integrity to qualify for the National Register.

2.2 California Register of Historical Resources

In 1992, Governor Wilson signed Assembly Bill 2881 into law establishing the California Register. The California Register is an authoritative guide used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify historical resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse impacts.⁶

The California Register consists of properties that are listed automatically as well as those that must be nominated through an application and public hearing process. The California Register automatically includes the following:

- California properties listed in the National Register and those formally Determined Eligible for the National Register;
- State Historical Landmarks from No. 0770 onward; and

⁴ National Register Bulletin #15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 2002), 44-45.

⁵ National Register Bulletin #15, 7.

⁶ Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 (a).



- Those California Points of Historical Interest that have been evaluated by the State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) and have been recommended to the State Historical Resources Commission for inclusion on the California Register.⁷

The criteria for eligibility for listing in the California Register are based upon National Register criteria, but are identified as 1-4 instead of A-D. To be eligible for listing in the California Register, a property generally must be at least 50 years of age and must possess significance at the local, state, or national level, under one or more of the following four criteria:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States; or
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history; or
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values; or
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important in the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

Historical resources eligible for listing in the California Register may include buildings, sites, structures, objects, and historic districts. Resources less than 50 years of age may be eligible if it can be demonstrated that sufficient time has passed to understand its historical importance. While the enabling legislation for the California Register is less rigorous with regard to the issue of integrity, there is the expectation that properties reflect their appearance during their period of significance.⁸

The California Register may also include properties identified during historical resource surveys. However, the survey must meet all of the following criteria:⁹

1. The survey has been or will be included in the State Historic Resources Inventory;
2. The survey and the survey documentation were prepared in accordance with office [OHP] procedures and requirements;
3. The resource is evaluated and determined by the office [OHP] to have a significance rating of Category 1 to 5 on a DPR Form 523; and
4. If the survey is five or more years old at the time of its nomination for inclusion in the California Register, the survey is updated to identify historical resources that have become eligible or ineligible due to changed circumstances or further documentation and those that have been demolished or altered in a manner that substantially diminishes the significance of the resource.

⁷ Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 (d).

⁸ Public Resources Code Section 4852.

⁹ Public Resources Code Section 5024.1.



OHP Survey Methodology

The evaluation instructions and classification system proscribed by the OHP in its *Instructions for Recording Historical Resources* provide a three-digit evaluation code for use in classifying potential historical resources. In 2003, the codes were revised to address the California Register. The first digit indicates the general category of evaluation. The second digit is a letter code to indicate whether the resource is separately eligible (S), eligible as part of a district (D), or both (B). The third digit is a number, which is coded to describe some of the circumstances or conditions of the evaluation. The general evaluation categories are as follows:

1. Listed in the National Register or the California Register.
2. Determined eligible for listing in the National Register or the California Register.
3. Appears eligible for listing in the National Register or the California Register through survey evaluation.
4. Appears eligible for listing in the National Register or the California Register through other evaluation.
5. Recognized as historically significant by local government.
6. Not eligible for listing or designation as specified.
7. Not evaluated or needs re-evaluation.

2.3 City of Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Ordinance

The Los Angeles City Council adopted the Cultural Heritage Ordinance in 1962 and amended it in 2007 (Sections 22.171 et. seq. of the Administrative Code). The Ordinance created a Cultural Heritage Commission and criteria for designating Historic-Cultural Monuments. The Commission is comprised of five citizens, appointed by the Mayor, who have exhibited knowledge of Los Angeles history, culture and architecture. The four criteria for Monument designation are stated below:

- The proposed Monument reflects the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, state or community; or
- The proposed Monument is identified with historic personages or with important events in the main currents of national, state or local history; or
- The proposed Monument embodies the characteristics of an architectural type specimen inherently valuable for a study of a period, style or method of construction;
- The proposed Monument is the notable work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age.¹⁰

¹⁰ Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 22.171.7.



Unlike the National and California Registers, the Ordinance makes no mention of concepts such as physical integrity or period of significance. Moreover, properties do not have to reach a minimum age requirement, such as 50 years, to be designated as Monuments.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

3.1 History and Description of the Surrounding Area

The project site is located on W. Olympic Boulevard in the western portion of the West Los Angeles Community Plan Area (CPA), just west of Interstate 405 and Sawtelle Boulevard, within the Sawtelle neighborhood. Sawtelle is the only neighborhood within the CPA that was an incorporated city prior to its consolidation with Los Angeles in 1922. Early growth in the Sawtelle area was due to the establishment of the “Old Soldier’s Home” (now known as the Veterans Administration Hospital) in 1888 and an interurban rail line along Santa Monica Boulevard in 1896. The area was largely agricultural in the early 1900s, but by the 1910s, was increasingly residential. At this time, a shift to less land-intensive agricultural uses, such as plant nurseries, took place. Japanese nationals and first-generation Japanese Americans skilled as farmers and horticulturalists were attracted to the area, and by the 1920s a Japanese-American commercial area had developed along Sawtelle Boulevard, south of Santa Monica Boulevard.¹¹

The natural topography of the western and central portions of the CPA is mostly comprised of densely developed flat plains.¹² Orthogonal grids are the predominant street pattern in these level areas (See Figure 2, below). Located near the two interstate freeways within the CPA, the project site is two blocks west of Interstate 405 (San Diego Freeway) and four blocks north of Interstate 10 (Santa Monica Freeway). Olympic Boulevard is considered a major east-west transportation route and noted to be unusual in that “it remains largely residential east of Interstate 405 and transitions to commercial and industrial uses as it continues to the west.”¹³ Development of high-rise office structures along the one-mile “Olympic Corridor” between the 405 and the Santa Monica city limits began in the 1980s. The “Westside building boom” that had previously spread along Wilshire and Santa Monica Boulevards eventually reached Olympic, which was noted as “the last high-rise outpost – and the fastest growing – of West Los Angeles,” by a 1985 local builders’ association guide.¹⁴

High-rise development was never explicitly intended for W. Olympic Boulevard; however, the south side of the street was industrially zoned per the City’s West Los Angeles Plan adopted in 1974 and therefore allowed commercial office development. High-rise buildings began to crop up in the industrial zone as land costs in Century City and Westwood led developers to seek other Westside locations. At the time the Trident Center was constructed in 1983, it was the only commercially zoned lot on the north of side of Olympic large enough to accommodate high-rise development, extending a full block back from Olympic. The 3.6-acre site was previously occupied by the Hansen Chevrolet dealership. Soon after, developers began pursuing zone changes in order to construct additional high-rises along the north side of Olympic, on sites that combined narrow commercially zoned lots with abutting single-family residences. In response,

¹¹ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., SurveyLA Historic Resources Survey Report: West Los Angeles Community Plan Area, August 15, 2012, 6-7.

¹² Sapphos Environmental, Inc., SurveyLA Historic Resources Survey Report: West Los Angeles Community Plan Area, August 15, 2012, 3.

¹³ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., SurveyLA Historic Resources Survey Report: West Los Angeles Community Plan Area, August 15, 2012, 5.

¹⁴ “High-Rise Boom Hits Hard, Fast on Olympic,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 7, 1985.

the Westside Residents Association formed in fall 1984 with the purpose of “obtaining restrictions on the size of Olympic high-rises.”¹⁵



Figure 2: Aerial view of the project site (shaded in yellow) and the “Olympic Corridor” of numerous commercial office buildings between the San Diego Freeway on the east and the city of Santa Monica on the west.

3.2 History and Description of the Project Site

The project site, known as the Trident Center, spans an entire block facing W. Olympic Boulevard and consists of two towers, a plaza, and a parking garage/recreation deck. It is located on the north side of W. Olympic Boulevard between Corinth and Purdue Avenues with Mississippi Avenue as its rear boundary. Formerly occupied by the Hansen Chevrolet dealership, the site was developed by Sam Gilbert & Associates and designed by Matlin & Dvoretzky Architects in 1983.¹⁶ Sam Gilbert reached an agreement with two law firms – Manatt, Phelps, Rothenberg & Tunney and Mitchell, Silberberg & Knupp – in 1980 to construct the Trident Center with an equity participation plan marketed by Security First Group.¹⁷ As the general contractor and leasing manager, Gilbert leased remaining space in the buildings not taken by the two law firms to financial institutions, the Courtside bistro restaurant, and the Trident Room (a private club).¹⁸

¹⁵ “High-Rise Boom Hits Hard, Fast on Olympic,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 7, 1985.

¹⁶ “Offices Topped Out,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 6, 1983; “High-Rise Boom Hits Hard, Fast on Olympic,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 7, 1985; “Architectural Diversity Characterizes Growing Olympic Corridor,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 27, 1982.

¹⁷ “Trident Center is Home for 2 Law Firms,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 6, 1985.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

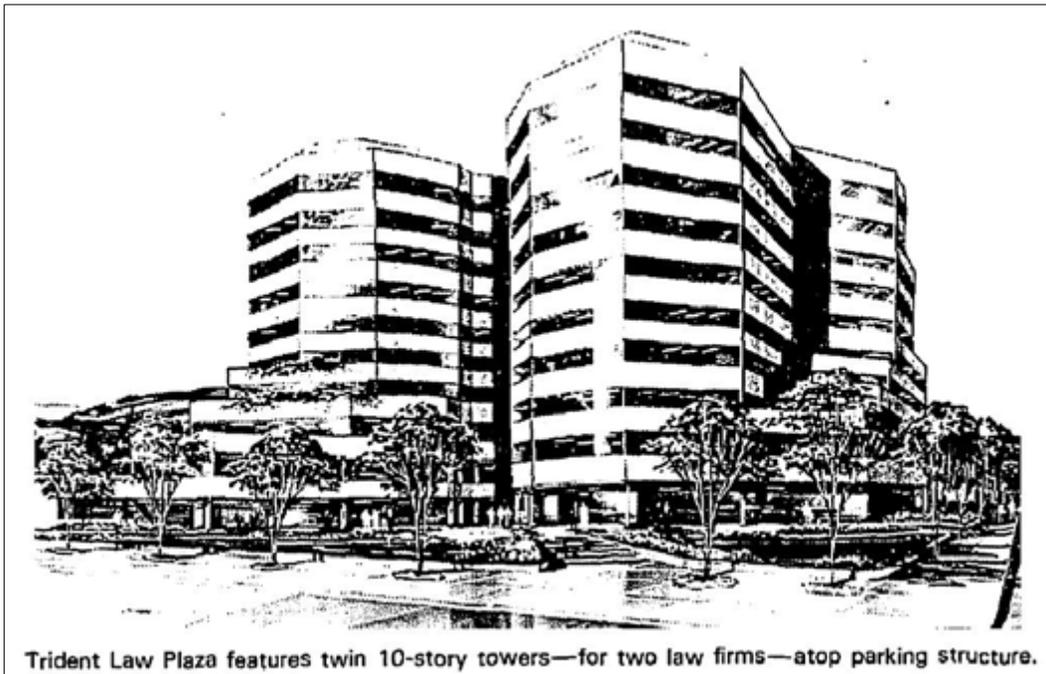


Figure 3: Rendering of the Trident Center prior to completion, *Los Angeles Times*, June, 27, 1982.

Matlin & Dvoretzky Architects was a Los Angeles-area firm with an assortment of residential and commercial work, and especially noted for their Late Modern office buildings. In 1982, the *Los Angeles Times* praised Matlin & Dvoretzky's designs in the Olympic Corridor, which "appear to have been designed by a variety of firms," not resulting in a "stretch of look-a-like buildings."¹⁹ In 1984, the Trident Center won the Beautification Award for new high-rise commercial structure given by the Western Los Angeles Regional Chamber of Commerce.²⁰ The following year, the Trident Center was included in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's annual architecture tour, with the following included in its description:

Outside and in, the towers are angular and zigzagging. The offices are low-ceilinged with subtle lighting from ceiling "portholes." The board-room table, with a granite core, has wooden flaps that are raised and lowered hydraulically. Art works are littered about...²¹

The well-received complex, spanning 323,000 square feet, consists of two 10-story towers, referred to as the East tower and West tower, linked by a tiered three-level parking structure topped by a recreation deck to the rear.²² The ample set back from W. Olympic Boulevard allows for the creation of a park-like plaza in front. The primary massing for each tower is a 10-story, polygonal form (See Figure 4, below). Tiering takes place above the fifth floor on the rear of each tower. The recreation deck, which sits above the parking garage, is at the third floor of each tower and spans nearly the entire back block consisting of a cafeteria, outdoor dining area, a fountain, tennis courts, a basketball court, and green space (See Figure 5, below).

¹⁹ "Architectural Diversity Characterizes Growing Olympic Corridor," *Los Angeles Times*, June 27, 1982.

²⁰ "10 Projects Capture Beauty Awards," *Los Angeles Times*, April 8, 1984.

²¹ "Taste/Trends: A Privileged Look at the Privileged," *Los Angeles Times*, April 14, 1985.

²² "Trident Center is Home for 2 Law Firms," *Los Angeles Times*, January 6, 1985.



Figure 4: View looking northeast from the intersection of Olympic Boulevard and Purdue Avenue. The East tower is shown on the right, the West tower on the left. Photo by GPA Consulting, February 24, 2016.



Figure 5: View looking southeast from the intersection of Purdue and Mississippi Avenues. The rear elevation of the West tower is shown prominently on the right. The parking garage and recreation deck are depicted at center. Photo by GPA Consulting, February 24, 2016.

Currently, the law firm Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP (Manatt) is the tenant for the entire East tower as well as the third and fourth floors of the West tower. The law firm Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp, LLP (MSK) occupies the second and fifth through tenth floors of the West tower. These two law firms are the successors of the building's original tenants. Wells Fargo is a prominent tenant on the ground floor of the West tower; there is also a smaller convenience store tenant in the adjacent retail space. One of the original restaurant spaces on the recreation deck is now used as a cellular telecommunications hub, but the second remains in use as a cafeteria.

The office towers are similar but not identical in form and massing, with angular footprints that gradually and varyingly tier as the height increases, particularly on the rear elevations. For the

most part, the elevations visible from Olympic are uniform, as though they were extruded from the footprint. Both towers are horizontally banded, alternating concrete with exposed aggregate and dark tinted glazing above a columned base. The *Los Angeles Times* referred to the featured building materials as "grey precast concrete" and "solar grey glass" in 1982, shortly before its completion.²³

The plaza facing Olympic is landscaped and slightly raised from street level, meeting each tower's ground floor entry. Oriented towards the boulevard is an original, circular concrete planter with recessed letters that read "Trident Center" (See Figure 6, below). The addresses for each the tower, "11377" and "11355," are rendered in silver metal individual number signs at the west and east ends of the planter, respectively. Three monument signs are set within the sloped lawn area and serve as tenant signage for MSK, Manatt, and Manatt Digital Media. The plaza hardscape includes grey square tile with concrete planters, including small round freestanding containers and larger, tiered, curvilinear planters that are fixed, and an art installation (See Figure 7, below).



Figure 6: Northwest view from Olympic Boulevard of sloped lawn with building and tenant signage. Photo by GPA Consulting, February 24, 2016.



Figure 7: Southwest view from third floor of raised plaza and columned base of each tower. Photo by GPA Consulting, February 24, 2016.

To the rear of the towers is the parking garage topped with a recreation deck that meets each tower on the third floor level. The parking garage has three visible tiered levels of vertically scored concrete, with greenery throughout and above (See Figure 5, above). There are an additional two levels of subterranean parking below, which extends under the towers and the front plaza. Vehicular entries are located on the east and west elevations of the parking structure, on Corinth and Purdue Avenues, respectively. A parking valet lobby is situated within the parking structure's ground floor, between the two towers, and provides pedestrian access to the plaza which in turn leads to the towers' main entry lobbies (See Figure 8, below).

The ground floor entry lobbies for the East and West towers are similar in plan and materials. In these spaces, a high-ceiling foyer with polished concrete walls leads to a lower-ceiling elevator lobby with large, square, dark gray marble wall panels (See Figure 9, above). There are five elevators with polished silver metal doors. The interiors of the elevator cabs have been replaced with synthetic wood and polished silver metal panels. The lobby floors are tiled with square, dark grey ceramic tiles.

²³ "Architectural Diversity Characterizes Growing Olympic Corridor," *Los Angeles Times*, June 27, 1982.



Figure 8: North view of parking valet lobby. Photo by GPA Consulting, February 24, 2016.



Figure 9: East view of West tower main entry lobby. Photo by GPA Consulting, February 24, 2016.

On the upper levels, original materials and floor plans are evident on floors two, five, and six of the East tower, and floors two and five through ten of the West tower. On these floors, the elevator lobby walls are covered with large, cream-colored travertine panels and rectangular travertine tiles are laid in a herringbone pattern on the lobby floor (See Figure 10, below). The elevator doors are white, as is the painted ceiling with recessed soffit lighting. Double doors leading from the lobby to the adjoining spaces to the north and south, as well as other doors throughout the office interior, are slab doors faced in Muningga wood. The north double doors lead to a circular-plan corridor from which individual offices are accessed (See Figure 10, below); while a glass walled conference room is visible from the lobby through the south double doors. The corridors have gray carpet with gray rubber baseboards, white painted walls, and white dropped acoustic ceilings.



Figure 10: West tower, tenth floor; north view of typical original elevator lobby finishes. Photo by GPA Consulting, February 24, 2016.

L.A. Design, an interior architectural and planning firm, designed the original interiors for what was then Manatt, Phelps, Rothenberg & Tunney in the East tower. In 1982, the *Los Angeles Times* described L.A. Design's proposed plans, including a "glass-walled reception room" to "occupy the top floor, rather than the traditional ground floor," and a "40-person capacity board room" and an "open spiral staircase" that would lead to the floor below.²⁴ At present, the tenth floor remains in use as Manatt's main reception floor with stairs (though not spiral) that link to the ninth floor (see Figure 11, below). The seventh and eight floors are also linked by stairs and function as the firm's library. Materials present on the main reception floor and library are white marble panel walls with grey marble inset, wood accent panels, and square tile floors (See Photo 11, below). The interior finishes of these spaces have been altered since the building's construction.

The third and fourth floors of the East tower have also been altered. On these floors, the elevator lobby has white, cloth-covered panels on the walls, grey carpet, and a suspended ceiling with recessed can lighting (See Figure 12, below). The elevator doors are white, as are double doors leading from the lobby to the corridors. The corridors and office spaces have synthetic wall panels and partitions and slab doors, patterned grey carpets with rubber baseboards, and white dropped ceilings.



Figure 11: East tower, tenth floor; north view of non-original elevator lobby and Manatt main reception. Photo by GPA Consulting, February 24, 2016.



Figure 12: East tower, third floor; south view of non-original elevator lobby interiors. Photo by GPA Consulting, October 7, 2015.

In the West tower, the third and fourth floors have been altered as well. On these floors, a circular reception space and conference rooms are located north of the elevator lobby, while closed office spaces are located to the south (See Figure 13, below). The elevator lobby has a barrel-domed ceiling with recessed soffit lighting, beige, cloth-covered wall panels, a gray carpet runner with gray marble tile edge, and pendant lights (See Figure 14, below).



Figure 13: West tower, fourth floor; north view of non-original Manatt conference reception. Photo by GPA Consulting, February 24, 2016.



Figure 14: West tower, fourth floor; north view of non-original elevator lobby interiors. Photo by GPA Consulting, February 24, 2016.

4. EVALUATION OF ELIGIBILITY

4.1 National Register of Historic Places

Criterion A

To be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A, a property must be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The SurveyLA context utilized in this evaluation was “Commercial Development,” under the theme “The Rise of Corporations and Corporate Types” and more specifically, the sub-theme “Corporate Office Buildings.”²⁵ The period of significance for this SurveyLA sub-theme is 1945-1980. The 1980 end date corresponds to the limits of the SurveyLA period, which was 1850-1980. However, the construction of corporate office buildings continued beyond 1980, so this is an appropriate historic context within which to consider the subject property.

Corporate office buildings were constructed in post-World War II Los Angeles along major corridors and designed for major U.S. corporations as their regional headquarters. These large scale buildings (50,000 square feet or larger) included employee amenities, such as cafeterias, conference rooms and lounges, and public areas such as lobbies, restaurants, and retail shops. Associated parking was provided in subterranean garages or separate parking structures.²⁶ The Trident Center is a 1983 high rise office building complex that embodies many of the character-defining features of this property type, including: large scale building mass (323,00 square feet); employee amenities in the form of a recreation deck with cafeteria and sports courts; and public areas including a large plaza, ground floor retail, and main entry lobbies. Parking is provided in an attached garage with above and below grade parking levels. The subject property differs from the corporate headquarters archetype in that it was constructed for two local law firms, Manatt, Phelps, Rothenberg & Tunney and Mitchell, Silberberg & Knupp, in an equity participation plan that included developer Sam Gilbert & Associates, the two law firms, and Security First Group. Office spaces not occupied by the two primary tenants were leased to

²⁵ Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources, “Commercial Development, 1850-1980” in SurveyLA Historic Context Outline and Summary Tables, December 31, 2013, 43.

²⁶ Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources, “Commercial Development, 1850-1980” in SurveyLA Historic Context Outline and Summary Tables, December 31, 2013, 43.



other tenants, including financial institutions.²⁷ In this regard, the Trident Center is not a good example of the historical trend of high rise office buildings constructed for and occupied by a single, major U.S. corporation as their regional headquarters. Instead, the building appears to be more similar to typical, speculative office building development, and does not appear to have made significant contribution to this pattern of development. As a result, the property is not significant in the context of Los Angeles corporate office buildings and does not appear to be significant under Criterion A.

Criterion B

To be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion B, a property must be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past. The building's significance was examined in relation to its proponent, developer and contractor Sam Gilbert.

Sam Gilbert (1913-1987) was the owner of Sam Gilbert and Associates, which constructed "more than 500 homes in the West Los Angeles and Laurel Canyon areas."²⁸ Aside from the Trident Center, he was also responsible for commercial office developments in Encino²⁹ and Beverly Hills,³⁰ and residential condominiums in North Hollywood.³¹ Outside of his real estate development business, Gilbert was known as a booster of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) basketball program and an advisor to college and professional athletes. His involvement with UCLA athletics was somewhat controversial, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association ordered him to disassociate from the program in 1981, when the basketball team was placed on probation.³² Controversy also found Gilbert posthumously, when he was indicted four days after his passing on charges of conspiracy, racketeering, and money laundering in connection with the construction of the Bicycle Club casino in Bell Gardens.³³

Although Sam Gilbert was active in the Los Angeles real estate industry as an investor, developer, and contractor, there are no indications that he can be considered especially significant in his field. *National Register Bulletin #32: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Properties Associated with Significant Persons* states that for a person to be considered significant in their field, it must be shown that they "played a distinctively significant role in comparison with others."³⁴ There is no evidence that Gilbert was more significant than others related to the history of the commercial real estate industry in Los Angeles. Therefore, the property does not appear to be significant under Criterion B.

Criterion C

To be eligible for listing under Criterion C, a property must embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. The SurveyLA context considered in this evaluation was "L.A. Modernism"

²⁷ "Trident Center is Home for 2 Law Firms," *Los Angeles Times*, January 6, 1985.

²⁸ "Sam Gilbert is Dead at Age 74," *Los Angeles Times*, November 23, 1987.

²⁹ "Encino Structure Now Topped Out," *Los Angeles Times*, August 17, 1980.

³⁰ "Sam Gilbert is Dead at Age 74," *Los Angeles Times*, November 23, 1987.

³¹ "Under Construction," *Los Angeles Times*, May 11, 1980.

³² "Sam Gilbert is Dead at Age 74," *Los Angeles Times*, November 23, 1987.

³³ "Miami Trial Gives Startling New Portrait of Sam Gilbert," *Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 1990.

³⁴ Beth Grosvenor Boland, *National Register Bulletin #32: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Properties Associated with Significant Persons* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, publication date unknown), 10.



under the theme “Late Modernism,” and the career of the building’s architects, Matlin & Dvoretzky.

Late Modernism Architecture

Late Modernism emerged in the mid-1960s as a reaction against orthodox Modernism. Los Angeles’ liberal social climate of the 1960s and its temperate physical climate allowed for the type of architectural experimentation associated with Late Modernism. The glass skin version of Late Modern architecture was invented in Los Angeles, and was highly influential as it became a global corporate vernacular through the 1970s and into the 1980s. In addition to the glass skin, there are four other sub-types of Late Modern architecture present in Los Angeles, although they originated elsewhere. These include Brutalism, High Tech, Sculptural, and Twenties Revivalism.³⁵

The Trident Center exhibits some elements of the Sculptural and Twenties Revivalism forms of Late Modernism, but is not a true expression of the style. For example, evidence of the common devices of Sculptural Late Modernism, such as “chamfers, cuts, punchouts, sloping, sharp 45 degree angles, and curves...to break apart the rectangular form...that was a primary character defining feature of orthodox Modernism” are evident in the overall massing and building form of the Trident Center.³⁶ Unlike purer examples of the Sculptural style, however, the subject building lacks “smooth, continuous surfaces over the primary massing or entirety of the building” which are “usually rendered in a single monochromatic material, such as glass skin or concrete.”³⁷ The subject building’s surfaces are generally “smooth,” in the sense that there is very little articulation and the exterior materials, glass and concrete, have smooth finishes. However, the horizontally banded building exterior of the Trident Center does not have the continuous surfaces and monochromatic appearance associated with more typical Sculptural designs, which were mostly glass skinned. For Sculptural building designs, the use of a single exterior material on a highly geometric form helps establish its “presence as a standalone object of minimalist sculpture rather than a composition of parts.”³⁸ As a result of the horizontal rows of fenestration, and the use of pilotis, the Trident Center design trends towards the Twenties Revivalism sub-type, which revisits the 1920s Villas of Modern master Architect Le Corbusier.³⁹ However, while the subject building makes some references to the Late Modernism style, it does not embody the distinctive characteristics to make it excellent example of the style.

Matlin & Dvoretzky, Architects

Nisan Yale Matlin and Eugene Nathan Dvoretzky established their architecture firm, Matlin & Dvoretzky, Architects, in 1959. Both received their Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Southern California; Matlin graduated in 1949 and Dvoretzky in 1953. Matlin was a native Angeleno, while Dvoretzky was born in New York City.⁴⁰ They held professional licenses in multiple

³⁵ Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources, “Late Modernism” in Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context, May 21, 2009.

³⁶ Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources, “Late Modernism” in Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement, May 21, 2009.

³⁷ Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources, “Architecture and Engineering, 1850-1980,” in SurveyLA Historic Context Outline and Summary Tables, January 16, 2014, 493.

³⁸ Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources, “Late Modernism” in Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement, May 21, 2009.

³⁹ Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources, “Late Modernism” in Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement, May 21, 2009.

⁴⁰ “Nisan Yale Matlin” and “Eugene Nathan Dvoretzky” in Pacific Coast Architecture Database, <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/>, accessed March 2016.



states, and accomplished a varied portfolio of projects, including multi-family, government housing, office, commercial and industrial buildings, shopping centers, hospitals, medical buildings, hotels and country clubs.⁴¹

Notable Matlin & Dvoretzky projects in the Los Angeles area include the Ruth and Allen Ziegler Administration Building at University of Judaism campus in Bel-Air (1982), several buildings on the Olympic Corridor, including the Trident Center (1983), the Matlin & Dvoretzky Building (1978), Olympic Plaza (1982), Richlar Building (1985), and the Hollywood Park Casino (1992) in Inglewood. Their contribution to the 1962 Malibu West residential tract was recently praised by the *Los Angeles Times* in a retrospective article that noted the continued popularity of the development, which mixes Matlin & Dvoretzky's Modern style homes and clubhouse with more traditional designs by David Freedman.⁴² Their design for a garden apartment received an honor award in the 1961 Homes for Better Living Awards program, sponsored by the American Institute of Architects in collaboration with House & Home and Life magazines.⁴³

Information was not found to determine when Matlin & Dvoretzky stopped practicing as architects. Matlin passed away in 2012; while Dvoretzky is presumed to be living. Although they had an active practice with many projects mentioned in periodicals, no information was found to indicate that Matlin & Dvoretzky could be considered master architects. As *National Register Bulletin #15* states, "A master is a figure of generally recognized greatness in a field, a known craftsman of consummate skill, or an anonymous craftsman whose work is distinguishable from others by its characteristic style and quality."⁴⁴ Neither Nisan Matlin nor Eugene Dvoretzky can be demonstrated to have achieved recognized greatness in the field of architecture, nor does their body of work have a distinguishable characteristic style or quality. As a result, the subject property does not appear to be the work of a master architect.

Criterion D

Criterion D was not considered in this report, as it generally applies to archeological resources. At any rate, there is no reason to believe that the property has yielded, or will yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or nation.

Criteria Consideration G

A property that is less than 50 years old must demonstrate significance under one or more of the evaluation criteria and also be of exceptional importance in order to be eligible for the National Register. The Trident Center was constructed in 1983 and is less than 50 years old, but does not appear to be significant under any of the evaluation Criteria A-C. Therefore, as the property has not achieved significance within the last 50 years and cannot be demonstrated to be of exceptional importance, it does not appear eligible for listing in the National Register at this time.

Integrity

To be eligible for listing in the National Register, properties must retain their physical integrity from the period in which they gained significance. In the case of architecturally significant properties,

⁴¹ "Nisan Yale Matlin" in AIA Historical Directory of American Architects, <http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa>, accessed March 2016.

⁴² "A 1960s tract called Malibu West offered affordable slices of paradise," *Los Angeles Times*, March 27, 2010.

⁴³ "Southland Architects Win Six AIA Awards," *Los Angeles Times*, April 16, 1961.

⁴⁴ *National Register Bulletin #15*; p. 20.



the period of significance is normally the date of construction. For historically significant properties, the period of significance is usually measured by the length of the historic associations. As the subject property is not significant, it has no period of significance and an analysis of integrity is not required. It is worth noting, however, that the property retains all aspects of integrity from 1983, which is the date of the building's completion. Following is a point-by-point analysis of the seven aspects of integrity:

- *Location – The place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.*

The complex has not been moved. Therefore, its integrity of location has been retained.

- *Setting – The physical environment of the historic property.*

The general setting of the complex has not changed significantly. Aerial photographs from 1980 show that just a few years prior to the construction of the Trident Center, this portion of Olympic Boulevard had more medium-scale industrial development on the south side, and more low-scale commercial development on the north side, with single-family residential neighborhoods to the north. By 1989, however, aerials show several large-scale commercial office development on the south side, and a few on the north side, including the Trident Center. The single-family residential neighborhood to the north remains generally unchanged. Through the 1990s and early 2000s, the trend of large-scale office, as well as large retail shopping developments, has continued along Olympic Boulevard. Much of the development is contemporary to the Trident Center, therefore the general setting remains.

The immediate setting of the complex also remains much as it did in 1983. The footprint still occupies the entire block, with public sidewalks still adjoining the complex on all sides. The same single-family residential neighborhoods that surrounded the property to north, east, and west still remain today. The immediate setting therefore remains.

- *Materials – The physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.*

The exterior materials of the complex remain largely unaltered. The concrete with exposed aggregate and dark tinted glazing on the upper stories and ground floor appear to be original. The overall design of the front plaza and recreation deck appears original, as do the hardscape materials, however an original landscape plan was not obtained to confirm if the plantings are in keeping with the original design. The building's main entry doors and public lobby interiors appear intact, both in plan and material finishes, with the exception of the elevator cab interiors, which have been replaced. On the upper levels, the original flooring, wall coverings, and doors in the elevator lobbies of the West tower's fifth through tenth, and second floors, and the East tower's second, fifth, and sixth floors appear intact. High quality interior finishes that remain in these spaces include large, cream-colored travertine wall panels, rectangular travertine floor tiles in a herringbone pattern, and slab doors faced in Muninga wood. There are eight of the twenty total floors which have seen substantial interior alterations, including the West tower's third and fourth floors (Manatt conference center), and the East tower's seventh through tenth floors (Manatt library and main reception), and third and fourth floors (renovated Manatt office floors). Therefore, the overall integrity of materials remains on the exterior to a very high degree, and somewhat less so on the interior.



- *Design – The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.*

The complex has seen almost no exterior alterations. In the front plaza, the tower addresses were added to the prominent circular planter and three monument signs with tenant names were installed in the lawn, but do not alter the overall form or style of the complex. Some material replacements have occurred on the interior, but the plan and materials of the elevator lobbies appears and the general arrangement of the corridors remains intact in twelve of the twenty total floors. The great majority of the building's design elements from the period of significance remain. The building therefore retains integrity of design overall.

- *Workmanship – The physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.*

The techniques used in the construction of the complex are on display on the exterior, and for the most part, on the interior. Except for the later alterations and replacements described above, the physical evidence of the labor and skill involved in constructing the complex remains. Therefore, the integrity of workmanship remains.

- *Feeling – A property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.*

The exterior and adjoining outdoor spaces continue to express the aesthetic of an office building complex constructed in the 1980s. The main entry lobbies and a number of the upper office floors do as well, with the exception of eight floors that appear more like an office interior from the early 2000s and later. The integrity of feeling remains highly intact on the exterior, but it has been somewhat diminished on the interior.

- *Association – The direct link between an important event or person and a historic property.*

The complex is not significant under Criterion A and is not associated with an important historic event or person. Therefore, this aspect of integrity does not apply, as there is no historic association.

Summary of Eligibility

The Trident Center retains the majority of its aspects of integrity on the exterior, but the interior of the building has diminished integrity of materials and feeling. However, the building does not possess significance under any of the National Register Criterion A-C. Therefore, the property does not appear to be eligible for listing on the National Register.

4.2 California Register of Historical Resources

Because the California Register criteria mirror those of the National Register, the subject property does not appear to be eligible for listing in the California Register for the same reasons outlined under the National Register evaluation.



4.3 City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments

For the same reasons outlined under Criterion C of the National Register evaluation above, the subject property does not appear to be eligible for designation as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument.

5. CONCLUSION

The Trident Center is not currently designated under any national, state, or local landmark programs. It is located within the West Los Angeles Community Plan Area, which was surveyed in 2012 as part of SurveyLA, the ongoing citywide historical resource survey of Los Angeles. However, the property was not evaluated as part of that effort as it post-dates the survey period, which extends to 1980. The complex was evaluated in this report to determine if it is a historical resource subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). It does not appear to be eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, or for designation as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument due to a lack of significance. Therefore, the property is not a historical resource subject to CEQA. As the project will have no impact on historical resources, no further study is recommended or required.

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Appendix A - Resumes



JENNA KACHOUR is an Associate Preservation Planner at GPA. She has over nine years of diversified planning experience in private consulting, public agency, and non-profit settings. She has been professionally involved in the field of historic preservation since 2010. In her prior role as Preservation Director for Pasadena Heritage, Jenna was responsible for reviewing alterations for a portfolio of more than 80 historic preservation easements; advocating for the protection of historic resources by engaging stakeholders, coordinating with city staff, and addressing decision makers at public hearings; and preparing National Register and

Local Landmark applications. Since joining GPA, Jenna has prepared compliance documents for Section 106 and CEQA purposes, conducted historic resource surveys, and prepared Mills Act applications.

Educational Background:

- Master of Planning, University of Southern California, 2007
- Certificate, Historic Preservation, University of Southern California, 2007
- B.S., Public Policy, Management and Planning, University of Southern California, 2007

Professional Experience:

- GPA Consulting, Associate Preservation Planner, 2013-Present
- Pasadena Heritage, Preservation Director, 2010-2013
- Deborah Murphy Urban Design + Planning, Planner, 2009-2010
- City of Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources, Intern, 2009
- Brown/Meshul, Inc. Land Use Consultants, Assistant Project Manager, 2006-2009
- Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Intern, 2006

Qualifications:

- Meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for architectural history pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61, Appendix A.

Selected Projects:

- Sunset Junction, Los Angeles, CEQA Historical Resource Evaluation Report, 2015
- Main Street Bridge Replacement, Sutter Creek, CEQA/NEPA Historical Resource Report, 2015
- Avenue 66 Grade Separation, Riverside County, CEQA/NEPA Historical Resource Report, 2015
- Nelles Correctional Facility Specific Plan, Whittier, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2014
- 6th Street Bicycle Boulevard, Long Beach, CEQA/NEPA Historical Resource Report, 2014
- Daisy Corridor Bicycle Boulevard, Long Beach, CEQA/NEPA Historical Resource Report, 2014
- Sunset and Everett, Los Angeles, CEQA Historical Resource Evaluation Report, 2014
- Mills Act Program Recommendations Report, Long Beach, 2014
- Mills Act Inspections, Long Beach, 2014
- Mills Act Applications, Laguna Beach, 2014
- Main Street Bridge, Sutter Creek, Historical Resource Evaluation Report, Section 106 Review, 2014
- Avenue 66 Grade Separation, Riverside County, Historical Resource Evaluation Report and FOE, Section 106 Review, 2013
- Silver Lake/Echo Park/Elysian Valley Historic Resource Survey, SurveyLA, 2013-14
- High Desert Corridor, Los Angeles County, Historical Resource Evaluation Report, Section 106 Review, 2013
- 2155 Webster Street, San Francisco, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2013



LAURA GROVES is an Architectural Historian I at GPA. She recently graduated from Columbia University in the City of New York in 2015 and has been professionally involved in the field since 2010. At GPA, Laura carries out fieldwork, research, and documentation for a variety of projects. Recent projects include assistance with the development of the Oakwood Middle and High School Master Plan CEQA Report, Historic District Design Guidelines for the City of Long Beach, and Mills Act Applications for the City of Laguna Beach. Laura has contributed to the photo-documentation of historic resources in Long Beach, North Hollywood, and Los Angeles. Laura is also experienced with graphics-editing software programs including Adobe Photoshop and Adobe InDesign as well as tools for mapmaking and 3-D modeling such as ArcGIS and SketchUp, respectively.

Educational Background:

- M.S., Historic Preservation, Columbia University, 2015
- M.S., Urban Planning, Columbia University, 2015
- B.S., Architecture Studies, University of Arkansas, 2009
- B.S., Art History/Criticism, University of Arkansas, 2009

Professional Experience:

- GPA Consulting, Architectural Historian I, 2016-Present
- Quimby McCoy Preservation Architecture, Preservation Planner, 2015-2016
- Columbia University, Teaching Assistant, 2013-2014
- *Instituto Rio Patrimônio da Humanidade*, Intern, 2013-2014
- City of Lawrence, Kansas, Planner I - Historic Preservation, 2011-2012
- Kansas State Historical Society, Special Projects Associate, 2011-2012
- Watkins Community Museum of History, Intern, 2010-2012
- Kristy Stubbs Gallery, Assistant, 2010

Qualifications:

- Meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for history and architectural history pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61, Appendix A.

Selected Projects:

- City of Garland Downtown Historic District Evaluation, Historic Resources Survey, 2016
- Is there a role for preservation planning in a favela?, Master's Thesis, 2015
- Rio das Pedras: A Toolbox for Community Improvement, Urban Planning Studio, 2014
- Preservation & Climate Change: Assessing New York after Sandy, Preservation Studio, 2013
- Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail, Multiple Property Submission (MPS) to the National Register of Historic Places, 2012
- Augusta Frisco Depot, Register of Historic Kansas Places Nomination Form, 2010
- Digital Pompeii, computerized 3-D model of the ancient city, 2009