Vermont Corridor Development Plan
Los Angeles, California

Historical Resource Report

Prepared by:

GPA
May 2017
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**APPENDIX A – Résumés**
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to determine and set forth whether or not the Vermont Corridor Development Plan (Project) would directly or indirectly impact any historical resources subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Project involves three discontinuous Project Sites comprising multiple parcels in the Wilshire Center area. The Project Sites are located in the City of Los Angeles, but are owned by the County of Los Angeles. GPA Consulting (GPA) was retained to identify historical resources on or in the vicinity the three Project Sites, to assess any potential impacts the Project may have on the identified historical resources, and to recommend mitigation measures, as appropriate. The Project Sites are currently improved with five office buildings, two parking structures, and two surface parking lots. The Project would involve the demolition of all but one of the existing buildings and structures, and the construction of new buildings that would include office, residential, retail, and parking space.

GPA concluded that there are no known or potential historical resources on the Project Sites. The buildings and structures on the Project Sites over 45 years of age were evaluated in this report using the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, and County of Los Angeles Historic Preservation Ordinance criteria for Project Sites 1 and 3, and City of Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Ordinance for Project Site 2. Applicable sections of the Los Angeles Historic Context Statement, prepared as part of Survey LA and applicable to all properties within the City of Los Angeles, were utilized as a framework for evaluating the properties. After careful research and evaluation, GPA concludes that the properties are ineligible as historical resources under national, state, and local landmark designation programs as a result of a lack of significance and/or integrity. As none of the buildings or structures that would be demolished or altered as a result of the Project are historical resources, the Project would have no direct impacts on historical resources.

There is one historical resource in the vicinity of the Project at 432-436 South New Hampshire Avenue, which is immediately west of Project Site 3. The historical resource is the Brynmoor Apartments Neon Roof Sign, which is designated Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #641. The threshold for determining significant impacts on historical resources in the State CEQA Guidelines is whether the Project would cause a substantial adverse change, which is defined as demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource such that the significance of the historical resource is materially impaired. GPA analyzed the indirect impacts on the identified historical resource and concluded that the Project would have a less than significant impact.

The Project would have no direct impacts on historical resources, and the indirect impacts on the historical resource in the vicinity would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required or recommended.
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Qualifications

The purpose of this report is to determine and set forth whether or not the Vermont Corridor Development Plan (Project) would impact historical resources. The Project involves three discontinuous project sites (Project Sites) comprising multiple parcels (see Table 1 below). The Project Sites are located in the City of Los Angeles, but are owned by the County of Los Angeles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>APN</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Year Built</th>
<th>Proposed Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5077-003-905</td>
<td>510 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Office Building</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Demolish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5077-003-904</td>
<td>526 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Surface Parking</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Demolish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5077-003-903</td>
<td>532 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Office Building</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Demolish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5077-003-901</td>
<td>523-531 Shatto Place</td>
<td>Parking Structure</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Demolish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>540-550 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Office Building</td>
<td>1960-1964</td>
<td>Adaptive Reuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5077-003-902</td>
<td>3175 W. 6th Street</td>
<td>Office Building and Parking Structure</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Demolish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>427-433 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Office Building and Surface Parking</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Demolish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Project would involve the demolition of all but one of the existing buildings and structures on Project Sites 1, 2, and 3, and the construction of new buildings that would include office, residential, retail, and parking space. The one extant building that would remain is 540-550 S. Vermont Avenue, located on Project Site 2. It is a 12-story office building that would be adaptively reused as a mixed-use building with ground floor commercial space and upper floor residential uses.

GPA Consulting (GPA) was retained to identify historical resources on and in the vicinity of the Project Sites, to assess any potential impacts the Project may have on the identified historical resources, and to recommend mitigation measures, as appropriate, for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Allison Lyons and Audrey von Ahrens 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.
1.2 Methodology

To identify known and potential historical resources and assess potential project impacts, GPA performed the following tasks:

1. Conducted a field inspection of the three Project Sites and vicinity to determine what areas might be impacted by the Project and to identify any known or potential historical resources. For the purposes of this report, the study area was identified as the three Project Sites and abutting parcels (see Figure 1 above).
2. Requested a records search from the South Central Coastal Information Center to determine whether or not the study areas contain any properties that are currently listed as landmarks under national, state, or local programs and whether or not any properties have been previously identified or evaluated as historical resources. The search results revealed no previously recorded historical resources in the study areas.

3. Researched the study areas to determine whether or not they contain any properties that were identified as significant through SurveyLA, the Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey. This research revealed that a rooftop sign on the Brynmoor Apartments Building, located within study area 3, is designated as Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #641.

4. Concluded during the field inspection that the buildings in the study areas did not form a historic district. Therefore, the buildings on the Project Sites over 45 years of age were evaluated individually as potential historical resources according to National Park Service, State Office of Historic Preservation, and County of Los Angeles Historic Preservation Ordinance standards.

5. Researched the buildings identified as potential historical resources at local libraries and archives to establish the general history and context, including a review of the relevant databases, newspapers, directories, books, and newspaper articles.

6. Consulted the Context/Theme/Property Type (CTP) eligibility standards formulated for the Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement (LAHCS) to identify the appropriate CTPs under which to evaluate the identified properties. Although the identified properties are owned by the County of Los Angeles, they are located within the City of Los Angeles and were therefore evaluated in the context of the City’s development. Accordingly, the LAHCS provides a framework for evaluating historical resources within the Project Sites.

7. Reviewed and analyzed ordinances, statutes, regulations, bulletins, and technical materials relating to federal, state, and local historic preservation assessment processes and programs to evaluate the significance and integrity of the identified properties.

8. Reviewed and analyzed the Project plans to determine if the Project would have direct or indirect impacts on the identified historical resources as defined by CEQA.
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 historical 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. Sites 1 (County office building) and 3 (affordable housing public benefit project) are exempt from City land use regulations. Therefore, the applicable local designation program for Sites 1 and 3 is the County of Los Angeles Preservation Ordinance. Site 2 is subject to City zoning regulations and therefore the applicable local historic criteria for that property is set forth in the City of Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Ordinance.

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.

Context

To be eligible for listing in the National Register, a property must 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

¹ Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 and 14 California Code of Regulations Sections 4850 & 15064.5(a)(2).
² Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 60.2.
³ Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 60.4.
made clear.”

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.

**Integrity**

In addition to possessing significance within a historic context, to be eligible for listing in the National Register a property must have integrity. Integrity is defined in National Register Bulletin #15 as “the ability of a property to convey its significance.” 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. Integrity is based on significance: why, where, and when a property is important. Thus, the significance of the property must be fully established before the integrity is analyzed.

### 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.

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

**Criteria and Integrity**

For those properties not automatically listed, the criteria for eligibility of 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

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5 Ibid, 44-45.
6 Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 (a).
7 Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 (d).
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.

Properties eligible for listing in the California Register may include buildings, sites, structures, objects, and historic districts. A property 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.  

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

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 procedures and requirements;
3. The resource is evaluated and determined by the office 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.

**SOHP Survey Methodology**

The evaluation instructions and classification system prescribed by the SOHP 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.

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8 Public Resources Code Section 4852.
9 Public Resources Code Section 5024.1.
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 Los Angeles County Historic Preservation Ordinance (Sites 1 and 3)

While Sites 1 and 3 are located within the City of Los Angeles, they are owned by the County of Los Angeles. Site 1 would be developed for County use, and Site 3 would be developed as a public benefit project (affordable housing), and thus, are not subject to the City land use regulations. Accordingly, the Los Angeles County Historic Preservation Ordinance provides the appropriate historic criteria for Sites 1 and 3.

The County Historic Preservation Ordinance of Los Angeles County seeks to preserve distinctive historical, architectural, and landscape characteristics that are part of the County’s overall history, and includes criteria and procedures for the designation of landmarks within unincorporated Los Angeles County, as well as County-owned properties.\textsuperscript{10}

A structure, site, object, tree, landscape, or natural land feature may be designated as a Los Angeles County Landmark if it is 50 years of age or older and satisfies one or more of the following criteria:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the nation, State, County, or community in which it is located;

2. It is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in the history of the nation, State, County, or community in which it is located;

3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, architectural style, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose work is of significance to the nation, State, County, or community in which it is located; or possesses artistic values of significance to the nation, State, County, or community in which it is located;

4. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, significant and important information regarding the prehistory or history of the nation, State, County, or community in which it is located;

5. It is listed, or has been formally determined eligible by the United States National Park Service for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places, or is listed, or has been formally determined eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission for listing, on the California Register of Historical Resources;

6. If it is a tree, it is one of the largest or oldest trees of the species located in the County; or

7. If it is a tree, landscape, or other natural land feature, it has historical significance due to an association with an historic event, person, site, street, or structure, or because it is a defining or significant outstanding feature of a neighborhood.

A property less than 50 years of age may be designated as a County Landmark, if it meets one or more of the above criteria and exhibits exceptional importance. The interior space of a property,\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{10} Los Angeles County Historic Preservation Ordinance (Ord. 2015-0033 § 3, 2015).
or other space held open to the general public, including but not limited to a lobby, may be designated as a Landmark or included in the Landmark designation of a property if the space qualifies for designation as a Landmark under the applicable criteria.  

2.4 Los Angeles City Cultural Heritage Ordinance (Site 2)

The proposed Site 2 project is governed by City of Los Angeles zoning regulations. Thus, the City of Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Ordinance provides the appropriate historic criteria for Site 2.

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 (HCM). 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 HCM designation are stated below:

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

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 HCMs.

11 Los Angeles County Ord. 2015-0033 § 3, 2015, Section 22.52.3060.
12 Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 22.171.7.
3. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

3.1 History and Description of the Study Areas

The Project Sites and surrounding study areas are located in the Wilshire Community Plan Area of the City of Los Angeles. Historically, this neighborhood was known as the Wilshire Boulevard district or Wilshire Center. The area developed to the north and south of Wilshire Boulevard, a major east-west thoroughfare connecting downtown Los Angeles to the ocean. Following the initial subdivision of the area in the 1880s, Wilshire Center was developed with a variety of residential, commercial, and institutional property types.

In 1886, brothers Henry Gaylord and William Wilshire subdivided their 35 acres of barley fields speculating for the development of wealthy single-family homes as spillover from the recently developed Westlake Park (today known as MacArthur Park) to the east. The subdivision successfully attracted the social elite from downtown and the area became a well-known enclave of extravagant single-family homes in the late 1800s. The city expanded its borders west to include Vermont Avenue in 1897.

Streetcar lines that ran on 6th Street, 8th Street, 9th Street and Western Avenue connected the area to downtown, and facilitated development. In the 1910s, development trends in the area shifted from single-family homes to luxurious apartment hotels, replacing some of the original single-family homes with denser development. Religious institutions followed their congregants and built large, lavish houses of worship in the area. In 1928, building restrictions that prohibited commercial development on Wilshire Boulevard were removed and the commercial real estate market in the area boomed. With the rapid development of commercial buildings and the influx of department stores, Wilshire Center adopted the moniker “Fifth Avenue of the West,” retaining its elite status, but transitioning to a commercial destination. The new commercial landscape began attracting tourists who wanted to see where the stars shopped and admire their homes.

As automobile ownership became common in the 1930s, downtown was decentralized and the streetcar routes became less significant. The eastern and western sections of Wilshire Boulevard were fully connected across Westlake Park in 1934. Western Avenue and Vermont Avenue, major intersecting streets with Wilshire Boulevard, were transformed from residential thoroughfares to major commercial arteries. Specifically, Vermont Avenue contained a large concentration of automobile showrooms, both new and used, constructed in the most popular architectural styles of the time.

It was not until the late 1950s that office development spread from Wilshire Boulevard north along Vermont Avenue, beginning a transition from a concentration of auto showrooms to a concentration of corporate office buildings. From the 1940s to 1960s, many of the auto showrooms were replaced by office buildings and multi-family housing brought on by post-World War II population growth and the increasing decentralization of the city. Typical developments of the period were high-rise office buildings designed in styles of the Modern Movement and “dingbat” multi-family apartment buildings. The area retained its elite status up until the 1970s.

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14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
when shopping malls built throughout the region brought on the decline of commercial corridors like Vermont Avenue and Wilshire Boulevard. Although office buildings were still erected in the area throughout the 1970s, the department stores along Wilshire Boulevard closed, and wealthier residents moved out of the area, making way for a socioeconomic and demographic shift.

One of the shifts in Wilshire Center in the mid-twentieth century was an influx of residents from Korea. The first wave of Korean immigrants arrived in Los Angeles with the onset of the Japanese occupation of Korea, which lasted from 1910 to 1946. During this period, the Korean population settled and remained in an area south of the Project Sites. As businesses closed and properties were vacated in Wilshire Center in the 1970s, rents became more affordable, which created an opportunity for the growing Korean community. The heart of the Korean American business community was centered along Wilshire Boulevard between Normandie Avenue to the east and Western Avenue to the west. The name “Koreatown” was officially adopted by the area in 1971 although it included a large Latin American immigrant population. The 1970s saw a wave of mini-mall construction in the area as Korean businesses were established. By 1985, 40% of all Korean-owned businesses in the Los Angeles were located in the Koreatown area.16

Major changes to the area occurred following the opening of the Metro system, with multiple stops along Wilshire Boulevard, and an increasing population of younger people. Multiple new high-rise, mixed-use buildings have been constructed in the area since the late 1990s.

The style of the buildings located on the Project Sites is best described as Mid-Century Modern. Most examples of Mid-Century Modern commercial architecture in Los Angeles were constructed following World War II and are concentrated in communities developed in the postwar era, such as those in the San Fernando Valley.

The prevalent architectural style for commercial buildings constructed between 1946 and 1965 across the United States was Mid-Century Modern. Frequently, buildings from the pre-1946 period were altered to fit modern aesthetics and sensibilities in the postwar era. Mid-Century Modern was fully embraced by the public following World War II. The style utilized the industrial materials and streamlined construction techniques developed during the war years. Designs relied on light metal or concrete frames sheathed in thin glass skins over boxy, geometric forms.17 The unadorned simplicity and technological sophistication of the style demonstrated a “faith in the future and progress.”18

Nationwide, noted architects designed every type of commercial, residential, and institutional building in the Mid-Century Modern style. With its immense postwar growth and community of émigré exiled European architects, Los Angeles became a center of Mid-Century Modern design. Master architects of the Mid-Century Modern style, such as Richard Neutra, A.C. Martin, Wurdeman & Becket, Edward Durrell Stone, and Charles Luckman designed buildings in the style throughout Los Angeles. Until the late 1950s, newly constructed commercial buildings were relatively small in scale due to existing height restrictions of 150 feet and the emphasis on developing suburban, automobile-centric communities in outlying areas of the city.

18 Roth, 412.
In the early 1960s, a new wave of Mid-Century Modern commercial architecture began along the region’s commercial and office corridors, with a concentration of Modern skyscrapers in the redeveloping area of Bunker Hill in downtown Los Angeles. While office building development had consistently radiated west from downtown along Wilshire Boulevard, in the late 1950s the intersection of Vermont Avenue and Wilshire Boulevard transformed into a corridor of commercial office development from an intersection of relatively low rise automobile dealerships and retail buildings. Most new buildings were constructed in the prevailing Mid-Century Modern commercial styles of the times. These new buildings were boxy in massing and featured walls of glass and stucco as well as accommodations for automobile parking.

### 3.2 Known Historical Resources in the Study Areas

There is only one historical resource located in the vicinity of the Project: HCM #641, the Brynmoor Apartments Neon Roof Sign. The Brynmoor Apartments Building is located at 432-436 S. New Hampshire Avenue within the study area of Project Site 3. The sign is an example of an intact neon rooftop sign. Though the date of its installation has not been determined, Los Angeles has a long history of neon rooftop signs. Los Angeles became one of the first cities to embrace neon lighting technology after signs were installed at a Packard automobile dealership in 1923. Neon tended to be concentrated along automobile corridors such as Wilshire, where multi-family residential and commercial buildings alike used the signs for advertising purposes. The Brynmoor Apartments Neon Roof Sign was designated in 1997.

![Figure 2](image1.png)  
**Figure 2**  
Brynmoor Apartments Neon Roof Sign, view looking south. (Zimas, circa 1997)

![Figure 3](image2.png)  
**Figure 3**  
Brynmoor Apartments Building, view looking southwest from Vermont Avenue (Project Site 3 Parcel G) is located in the foreground on the left. (GPA, January 2017)

### 3.3 Properties Identified and Evaluated as Potential Historical Resources on the Project Sites

The Project Sites are three separate sites in Wilshire Center along Vermont Avenue between W. 6th Street and W. 4th Street. For the purpose of this report, they are referred to as Project Sites 1, 2 and 3 (see Table 1 and Figure 1 above). All of the existing buildings and structures located on the
above mentioned Project Sites were originally constructed by private developers and occupied by private businesses, insurance companies, and federal government agencies between 1938 and 1965. The Los Angeles County Probation Department was the first County department to have offices in the area. The probation department leased space at 433 S. Vermont Avenue (Project Site 3, Property G) in 1967.19 The County leased additional space in the area throughout the 1970s. Most of the office space in 510, 532, 540-550 S. Vermont Avenue and 3175 W. 6th Street (Parcels A, E, and F, discussed below) was leased by the County when the buildings were sold in 1978 by owner Acoustics Inc. to Sixth & Vermont Investment Co.20

The buildings and structures on the Projects Sites over 45 years of age are described and evaluated below under the applicable criterion for the national, state, county, and city registers. As the properties are located within the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement (LAHCS) was used as a framework for evaluating the properties as potential historical resources. The LAHCS was developed by SurveyLA, a Citywide evaluation and inventory of historical resources, which is applicable to all properties within the City, regardless of ownership. LAHCS is organized into contexts and themes. The Architecture and Engineering Context and the Mid-Century Modern Theme were the most relevant. Because of the ubiquity of the style in Los Angeles, designated and eligible examples of Mid-Century Modern office buildings generally meet a high threshold for quality of design. Significant examples of Mid-Century Modern office buildings meet the following eligibility standards:

- Constructed during the period of significance (1945-1970)
- Exhibit quality of design through distinctive features
- Retain the essential character-defining features of Mid-Century Modernism from the period of significance:
  - Direct expression of the structural system, often wood or steel post and beam
  - Flat roof, at times with wide overhanging eaves
  - Floor-to-ceiling windows, often flush-mounted metal framed
  - Horizontal massing
  - Simple, geometric volumes21

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19 Los Angeles Street Address Directory, April 1967.
**Project Site 1**

Project Site 1 comprises four parcels in the center of the city block bounded by S. Vermont Avenue to the west and Shatto Place to the east. Improvements include two office buildings (Parcels A and C), a surface parking lot (Parcel B), and a parking structure (Parcel D) (see Figure 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parcel</th>
<th>APN</th>
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<th>Use</th>
<th>Year Built</th>
</tr>
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<td>510 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Office Building</td>
<td>1959(^{22})</td>
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<td>526 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Surface Parking</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>532 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Office Building</td>
<td>1938(^{23})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>5077-003-901</td>
<td>523-531 Shatto Place</td>
<td>Parking Structure</td>
<td>1965(^{24})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{23}\) Building Permit 1959LA34584, Building: New, November 1, 1938.


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**Figure 4**

Project Site 1 (solid red outline), with parcel lines (dashed red lines) for properties A, B, C and D. (Base map courtesy of Google Maps)
Parcel A: 500-510 S. Vermont Avenue

![Figure 5](image1.png)  ![Figure 6](image2.png)

Primary (west) elevation, view looking southeast (left) and view looking northeast (right).
(GPA, January 2017)

Architectural Description

Parcel A is associated with the addresses 500-510 S. Vermont Avenue (primary address 510 S. Vermont Avenue). Parcel A is improved with a two-story office building located on the southern portion of the parcel and a narrow surface parking lot to the northern half of the parcel. The two-story building is rectangular in plan and oriented towards Vermont Avenue, abutting the sidewalk. The building has brick cladding. The primary (west) elevation is divided into three bays. The main entrance of fully glazed, paired aluminum frame doors, is located in a recessed center bay fronting S. Vermont Avenue. The entrance is recessed and separated from the sidewalk by a metal security gate. The outer bays are dominated by infilled storefront windows with brick bulkheads. Vertical metal slats shade the entire second story of the primary elevation. The horizontal line between the first and second floor continues across the elevation as a stucco spandrel, cantilevered over the entrance to the parking lot north of the building. Secondary elevations appear to be clad in painted brick. Fenestration on secondary elevations is not visible from the public right-of-way. The north side elevation has a central secondary entrance. The parking lot is separated from the sidewalk along S. Vermont Avenue by brick wall and a metal entrance gate.

Building History

510 S. Vermont Avenue was constructed in 1959 as an office building by owner M. William Downs. The building was designed by the architecture firm Wormhoudt & Tennebaum. Initial construction in 1959 included a “car parking shelter” located along the north property line, also designed by Wormhoudt & Tennebaum. The first tenant listed for the building was the US Government Justice Department of Immigration and Naturalization Services in 1960. Frequent turnover of tenants was common and many new owners made changes to the interior of the building. Architect Charles Wormhoudt designed a series of interior alterations in 1966 for new owner J.A. Enterprises, Inc. The alterations include the addition and removal of partitions and

26 Los Angeles Street Address Directory, 1960.
plumbing fixtures. No major exterior alterations were recorded in building permits. The tenant of the building in 1966 was IBM Corp. 27 IBM was briefly listed on permits as the owner of the building between 1966 and 1968, though it appears J.A. Enterprises actually retained ownership. 28 In 1968, J.A. Enterprises completed further interior alterations. 29 The building was purchased by Acoustics, Inc., who made further interior changes in 1977. 30 It is not known when the first floor storefront windows were infilled. The building is now offices for the Los Angeles County Parks & Recreation Department.

Evaluation

The office building at 510 S. Vermont Avenue appears to be one of many office buildings constructed along Vermont Avenue during the late 1950s and early 1960s. While it was associated with the trend of office development in Wilshire Center, mere association with this trend is not enough, in and of itself, to be eligible for an association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Research did not indicate that the building’s specific association with this trend could be considered important. No information could be found about original owner M. William Downs. The building had a variety of tenants. Though one of these tenants, IBM, is significant in American commercial history, research did not indicate that the building was the site of significant events in the company’s history during the two years the firm was a tenant. Long-term owners J.A. Enterprises, a commercial real estate development firm, do not appear to be significant in the history of the Wilshire Center’s development. No information was found to suggest that individuals of historic significance were associated with the building.

The building is best described as Mid-Century Modern in style. While it exhibits several character-defining features of the architectural style as applied to the property type, as a whole, the building is not an original or unique architectural statement nor an excellent example of the Mid-Century Modern style. The building does not exhibit quality of design through distinctive features that would make it eligible for listing as an example of the Mid-Century Modern style. The architects of the building are listed as Wormhoudt & Tennebaum. Neither the partnership nor individual work of Charles Wormhoudt and David Tennebaum has been identified as masterful. Their work was typical of the period, representing variations of the Mid-Century Modern style. No information was found to indicate that either could be considered a master architect.

The potential of the property to yield information important in prehistory or history was not considered as part of this evaluation as it applies to archeological resources.

510 S. Vermont Avenue does not appear to be eligible for listing as a historical resource under national and state criteria A/1, B/2, or C/3, or corresponding county criteria.

28 Building Permit 1968LA59155, Application to Alter-Repair-Demolish, January 10, 1968.
Parcel B: 526 S. Vermont Avenue

Figure 7
Surface parking lot, view looking southeast.
(GPA, January 2017)

Architectural Description
Parcel B is associated with the address 526 S. Vermont Avenue. It is occupied by a surface parking lot with two entrances from S. Vermont Avenue. The parking lot is separated from the street along the Vermont Avenue (west) property line by a low brick wall on the north side, cement block wall on the south side, and swinging chicken wire gates at both entrances.

Building History
The parcel was occupied by a used auto sales business during the 1950s. The auto sales business closed prior to 1964. Since then, Parcel B has been a surface parking lot.31

Evaluation
There are no built resources to evaluate. The potential of the property to yield information important in prehistory or history was not considered as part of this evaluation as it applies to archeological resources.

526 S. Vermont Avenue does not appear to be eligible for listing as a historical resource under national and state criteria A/1, B/2, or C/3, or corresponding county criteria.

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Parcel C: 532 S. Vermont Avenue

Architectural Description

Parcel C is associated with the address 532 S. Vermont Avenue. It is improved with a one-story office building. The office building is rectangular in plan and clad in stucco. The main entrance and windows on the primary (west) elevation are located under a narrow cantilevered overhang and are covered by metal security gates. The primary elevation is divided into seven bays with window openings recessed between projecting stucco mullions extending from the lintel to the sidewalk. The north (side) elevation has a series of evenly spaced windows covered in metal security screens. Material behind the screens is not visible. A metal staircase is accessible from Vermont Avenue and extends up along the north elevation to the roof of the building.

Building History

According to building permit records, the building at 532 S. Vermont Avenue was constructed in 1938 when the parcel was owned by the Trustees of John G. Bulbeck’s Estate. The building was originally constructed as a United States Post Office substation designed by John M. Cooper. The post office moved away from this location in 1959 as part of an expansion and modernization of the postal service. The property was privately owned throughout the time it housed the post office. Several alterations were made to the interior and exterior after the postal service vacated. In 1959, the composition roof was replaced to accommodate 50 spaces of rooftop parking under the direction of engineer R.Y. Lin and contractor Ellis White. In 1960, architect Charles Wormhoudt completed an addition of exterior stairs on the north side elevation and the addition of a marquee to the primary (west) elevation. Multiple later alterations consisted of reconfigurations of the interior partitions. New York Life Insurance Company is listed as a tenant from 1964 until they

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32 Building Permit, 1938LA36639, Building: New, November 1, 1938.
34 Building Permit, 1959LA47393, Application to Alter-Repair-Demolish, November 18, 1959.
relocated their offices in 1974.\textsuperscript{35} The property was sold by M.W. Downs to J.A. Enterprises around 1966.\textsuperscript{36} Acoustics Inc. purchased the property in the late 1970s.\textsuperscript{37}

Evaluation

The office building at 532 S. Vermont Avenue was originally constructed as a post office in 1938 and substantially altered in the succeeding decades. No information was found to indicate the building played an important role in the history of the United States Postal Service. After alterations in 1959, the building appears to be similar to many small office and commercial buildings constructed along Vermont Avenue during the late 1950s and early 1960s. While it was associated with the trend of office development in Wilshire Center, mere association with this trend is not enough, in and of itself, to be eligible for an association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Research did not indicate that the building’s specific association with this trend could be considered significant. Later owners MW Downs, an individual developer, and J.A. Enterprises, a commercial real estate development firm, do not appear to be significant in the history of development. No information was found to suggest that individuals of historic significance were associated with the property.

The building has been substantially altered since its original construction in 1938. It is now best described as Mid-Century Modern in style. While the building exhibits several character-defining features of the architectural style as applied to the property type, as a whole, it is not an original or unique architectural statement nor an excellent example of the Mid-Century Modern style. The building has been altered since initial construction and does not exhibit quality of design through distinctive features that would make it eligible for listing as an example of the Mid-Century Modern style. The original architect of the building was John Montgomery Cooper (1883-1950), a prolific local Los Angeles architect. Cooper designed a variety of building types, but strongly influenced the design of industrial buildings in Los Angeles during the 1920s when he was the architect for a concentration of manufacturing and industrial loft buildings in the wholesale manufacturing and garment district in the area southeast of downtown Los Angeles. During his career Cooper designed and often served as the contractor of retail stores, industrial warehouses and factories, office buildings, theatres, hotels, religious buildings, civic buildings, educational institutions, and single-family residences. Cooper's designs ranged in style, and included Mediterranean Revival (Hotel Knickerbocker addition and Bakersfield's Padre Hotel); Art Deco (Roxie and Wilshire Theaters); commercial vernacular (San Diego Wholesale Terminal Market and Angelus Furniture Company); and Moderne (Pepperdine College's first campus on 78th Street and Vermont Avenue in south Los Angeles).\textsuperscript{38} Between 1922 and 1930, Cooper designed over 20 industrial manufacturing buildings in Los Angeles. His designs for industrial loft type buildings emphasized efficient and flexible floor plans and rapid construction techniques, with decorative elements limited to the ground floors and primary elevations. Concrete, used for its fireproof qualities, defined Cooper's increasingly understated industrial aesthetic over the course of the 1920s. Like many architects during the Depression, Cooper completed designs for federal public works projects. The post office building at 532 S. Vermont Avenue was one of these buildings. Cooper never cited it as an example of his work. His designs for industrial buildings have been identified as significant and eligible examples of their property type; however, the subject property does not

\textsuperscript{36} Building Permit, 1966LA27890, Application to Alter-Repair-Demolish, June 24, 1966.  
\textsuperscript{37} Building Permit, 1977LA40120, Application to Alter-Repair-Demolish, February 18, 1977.  
\textsuperscript{38} Peter Moruzzi, “John M. Cooper,” Memorandum, City of Santa Monica.
retain any resemblance to Cooper’s designs or a building from the late 1930s and is not representative of his work as an architect.

The potential of the property to yield information important in prehistory or history was not considered as part of this evaluation as it applies to archeological resources.

532 S. Vermont Avenue does not appear to be eligible for listing as a historical resource under national and state criteria A/1, B/2, or C/3, or corresponding county criteria.

Parcel D: 523-531 Shatto Place

![Figure 9](image1)  
Primary (east) elevation, view looking southwest (left). South side elevation, view looking northwest (right). (GPA, January 2017)

![Figure 10](image2)

Architectural Description

Parcel D is associated with the addresses 523-531 Shatto Place. The six-story parking garage is a steel reinforced concrete structure with a rectangular plan. The primary (east) elevation faces Shatto Place and is clad in metal horizontal slats. The north and south side elevations are clad in solid stucco. The main automobile entrances are on the far north and south ends of the primary elevation. Both automobile entrances have roll-down metal security gates. A main entrance to a stairwell is located at the far north end of the elevation and has a fully glazed aluminum frame door.

Building History

The parking structure at 523-531 Shatto Place was constructed under the ownership of J.A. Enterprises in 1965. It was designed by architect L.W. Davidson.\(^{39}\) An elevator was added to the building in 1966.\(^{40}\)

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\(^{40}\) Building Permit, 1966LA25480, Application to Alter-Repair-Demolish, May 18, 1966.
Evaluation

The parking structure at 523-531 Shatto Place was originally constructed in 1965 by JA Enterprises, owners of adjacent office buildings. No information was found to indicate the structure played an important role in the development of Wilshire Center or Vermont Avenue as a center of commercial office development. While it was associated with the trend of office development in Wilshire Center, mere association with this trend is not enough, in and of itself, to be eligible for an association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Research did not indicate that the structure’s specific association with this trend could be considered significant. No information was found to suggest that individuals of historic significance were associated with the property. The parking structure does not appear to be an original or unique architectural statement nor an excellent example of an architectural style. The original architect of the structure was Lawrence Whitney Davidson. Davidson was born in Chicago in 1913. He received his Bachelor of Science in Architecture from Illinois Institute of Technology in 1935. He worked primarily as an engineer and did not pursue an architectural career until the early 1950s. In 1953, he started his own firm, L.W. Davidson & Associates, based in North Hollywood. The firm completed projects all over the country, from Alaska to New York, focusing on large industrial buildings, public works projects, and military facilities. The firm was active through the 1980s.41 His work was typical of the period, representing variations of the Mid-Century Modern style. No information was found to indicate that Davidson could be considered a master architect.

The potential of the property to yield information important in prehistory or history was not considered as part of this evaluation as it applies to archeological resources.

523-531 Shatto Place does not appear to be eligible for listing as a historical resource under national and state criteria A/1, B/2, or C/3, or corresponding county criteria.

Project Site 2

Project Site 2 consists of two parcels located on the northeast corner of the intersection of S. Vermont Avenue and W. 6th Street. Improvements include a high-rise office building (Parcel E) and a mid-rise office building (Parcel F) separated by a surface parking lot.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parcel</th>
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<th>Use</th>
<th>Year Built</th>
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<td>540-550 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Office Building</td>
<td>1960-196442</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>5077-003-902</td>
<td>3175 W. 6th Street</td>
<td>Office Building and Parking Structure</td>
<td>195843</td>
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Figure 11

Project Site 2 (solid orange outline), with parcel lines (dashed orange line shows division) for Parcels E and F.
(Base map courtesy of Google Maps)

Parcel E: 540-550 S. Vermont Avenue

Figure 12

Primary (west) elevation, view facing east (left). Main entrance, view facing southeast (right).
(GPA, January 2017)
Architectural Description

Parcel E is associated with the addresses 540-550 S. Vermont Avenue. The parcel is improved with an International Style high-rise office building that fills the entire lot. The twelve-story building is rectangular in plan and clad in a curtain wall with glare-resistant glass and spandrel panels in a graphite color with vertical aluminum mullions on the primary (west) and rear (east) elevations. The north and south side elevations are clad in aluminum curtain walls.

The primary elevation fronts S. Vermont Avenue. The main entrance is located on the northern portion of the elevation. The first floor is clad in marble tile capped with a decorative ceramic veneer fascia that runs the entire length of the façade and juts out as a cantilevered overhang above the main entrance doors. Below the overhang, the entrance consists of paired, fully glazed aluminum frame doors set off-center set in a fully glazed surround. An entrance to a parking garage with a metal security gate is located at the far north end of the primary elevation. A storefront entrance is located on the southwest corner of the property on the south side elevation. Vertical aluminum siding runs the full height of the building in the center of the primary elevation.

![Figure 14](image)

**Figure 14**

Rendering of originally planned office complex at Vermont Avenue and W. 6th Street. Parcel E is shown on the left and Parcel F is shown on the right. (Los Angeles Times, 1959)

Building History

The building was completed in 1964 and was originally named the LeSage Building after the original owner, Robert Le Sage. Research indicates that Le Sage’s only foray into Los Angeles real estate development was a multi-building office development planned for the southern portion of a block along Vermont Avenue, Shatto Place, and 6th Street (see Figure 14). The development was planned to feature exterior walkways and connecting terraces, though this never came to fruition.

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44 “Office Building, First Part of $5 Million Project, Opened,” Los Angeles Times, October 25, 1959, F17.
One of the originally planned buildings, Parcel F (described below) was constructed close to original designs before the plans for the site changed. A simplified version of the high-rise office building originally planned for the Parcel E was constructed as the LeSage Building. The architect was Charles Wormhoudt. Major alterations include the addition of a restaurant and a drug store on the first floor in 1965 using the same architect. In 1967, the restaurant was listed as The Galleon Restaurant and the drug store was the Imperial Drug Company. A penthouse dwelling unit was added to the twelfth floor in 1965. Robert Le Sage resided in the penthouse suite in 1967. Subsequent alterations included the addition and removal of partitions on the interior as tenants changed. The building served as offices for various types of corporations and government agencies. One of the first tenants was the State Division of Highways, which signed a ten-year lease in 1965 to occupy the first six floors of office space. Other tenants were typically insurance agencies. Other tenants include J.A. Enterprises, Bristol Myers Products, Republic Insurance Company, and Pacific National Life. The Imperial Drug Company was a tenant from 1967 to 1989. The Galleon Restaurant remained in operation at this building from 1967 until at least 1990, when it came under the ownership of Morris Magid.

Building permits indicate that the property was purchased by Los Angeles County around 1991. The building is currently occupied by Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, Patients’ Rights Office.

Evaluation

The LeSage Building is one of many office buildings constructed along Wilshire Boulevard and Vermont Avenue during the late 1950s and early 1960s. While it was associated with the trend of office development in Wilshire Center, mere association with this trend is not enough, in and of itself, to be eligible for an association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Research did not indicate that the building’s specific association with this trend could be considered important as well. The building had a variety of tenants. Research did not indicate that the tenants of the LeSage Building were significant in the development of Wilshire Center or may be considered significant companies in commercial history. No information was found to suggest that individuals of historic significance were associated with the property. The original owner and developer of the building was Robert Le Sage (1891-1976). Le Sage founded a wholesale liquor distributor, LeSage Industries, based in Dallas. He sold his company to his employees in the late 1940s and engaged in a variety of investment activities, including real estate development. The LeSage Building is best described as Mid-Century Modern in style. While the building exhibits several character-defining features of the architectural style as applied to the property type, as a whole, it is not an original or unique architectural statement nor an excellent example of the Mid-Century Modern style. The building has been altered since initial construction and does not exhibit quality of design through distinctive features that would make it eligible for listing as an example of the Mid-Century Modern style. The architect of the building was Charles Wormhoudt. Wormhoudt received a degree in architecture.

46 Building Permit, 1965LA87681, Application to Alter-Repair-Demolish, February 8, 1965.
from the University of Southern California in 1948. Between 1949 and 1955 he worked for the architecture firms of John D. Forsyth, H. L. Gogerty, and Pereira & Luckman. Wormhoudt started his own firm in 1955 and designed numerous mid-rise office and government buildings in the 1950s and 1960s.53 The individual work of Wormhoudt has not been identified as masterful. His work was typical of the period, representing variations of the Mid-Century Modern style. No information was found to indicate that he could be considered a master architect.

The potential of the property to yield information important in prehistory or history was not considered as part of this evaluation as it applies to archeological resources.

The LeSage Building at 540-550 S. Vermont Avenue does not appear to be eligible for listing as a historical resource under national and state criteria A/1, B/2, or C/3, or corresponding city criteria.

Parcel F: 3175 W. 6th Street

--Figure 15
Primary (south), view looking northwest (left). Detail of façade looking north (right). (GPA, January 2017)

Architectural Description

Parcel F is associated with the address 3175 W. 6th Street. The parcel is occupied by a four-story office to the east and a parking structure to the west. The building abuts the sidewalk on W. 6th Street and is setback from the parcel to the east by a narrow alley that wraps around the building to the north and provide access to the parking structure to the west of the building. The building is rectangular in plan and is clad in stucco. The primary (south) elevation is six bays across. At the ground floor, the three westernmost bays are recessed from the sidewalk and have terrazzo floors. The main entrance of paired aluminum fully glazed doors is offset in the third bay of the west end of the elevation. Metal security gates cover the three recessed bays. The three bays on the east end of the ground floor have no fenestration. The upper floors of the primary elevation have small

rectangular windows covered by vertical window sun shades. The sun shade returns two bays back along the side elevations. The east and west elevations have regularly placed, vertically oriented, fixed divided light windows on the upper three floors with smaller, fixed divided light windows on the first floor covered in metal security bars. The building has a flat roof with a metal chain link fence raised along parapet. The parking structure has one deck of parking above ground and one level below ground.

Building History

The building at 3175 W. 6th Street was constructed in 1958 under the ownership of Robert Le Sage. The architect was Norbert W. Pieper. The building was originally planned as part of a connected, multi-building office development (see Figure 14). The complete development never came to fruition. A one story parking garage was added in 1959 on a space originally designed for a terrace connecting 3175 W. 6th Street with planned buildings to the west and north. Tenants since the building’s completion included various corporations, the majority of which were insurance companies. The building also served as offices for Robert Le Sage and J.A. Enterprises until both companies moved next door to 550 S. Vermont Avenue in 1964. The type of tenants remained consistent after 1964, as various firms and insurance agencies moved in and out of the building. In 1969, tenants included several insurance agencies: Great Southern Insurance, Llewellyn Co. Insurance, Washington National Insurance, and Lincoln National Insurance Co. By 1973, the list of tenants consolidated to just three: Graham Miller & Co., Janpower, and Michael Gary Inc. The building is currently occupied by Los Angeles County Community and Senior Services.

Evaluation

The office building at 3175 W. 6th Street is one of many office buildings constructed along Wilshire Boulevard and Vermont Avenue during the late 1950s and early 1960s. While it was associated with the trend of office development in Wilshire Center, mere association with this trend is not enough, in and of itself, to be eligible for an association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Research did not indicate that the building’s specific association with this trend could be considered important as well. The building had a variety of tenants, mostly insurance agents. Later owners J.A. Enterprises, a commercial real estate development firm, do not appear to be significant in the history of development. Research did not indicate that the tenants of the building were significant in the development of Wilshire Center or may be considered significant companies in commercial history. No information was found to suggest that individuals of historic significance were associated with the property. The original owner and developer of the building was Robert Le Sage (1891-1976). Le Sage founded a wholesale liquor distributor, LeSage Industries, based in Dallas. He sold his company to his employees in the late 1940s and engaged in a variety of investment activities, including real estate development. Research did not indicate that Robert Le Sage could be considered an individual of historic significance.

The office building is best described as Mid-Century Modern in style. While the building exhibits several character-defining features of the architectural style as applied to the property type, as a whole, it is not an original or unique architectural statement nor an excellent example of the Mid-
Century Modern style. The building has been altered since initial construction and does not exhibit quality of design through distinctive features that would make it eligible for listing as an example of the Mid-Century Modern style. The building was part of a larger development that was never completed. Subsequent changes to the site plan of the building in relation to adjacent buildings and structures have made it a “standalone” building. The architect of the building was Norbert Pieper. Pieper received his B.A. in Architecture from the University of California in 1951 and worked at the architecture and engineering firm of Sheldon L. Pollack until establishing his own architectural subsidiary within the company. Through the 1970s and 1980s, Pieper designed mid-rise office buildings around Southern California. The firm’s principals focused on frugality over design, which is apparent in its designs for 3175 W. 6th Street (Parcel F) as well as nearby building 2535 W. Temple Street. The architectural work of Pieper has not been identified as masterful. His work was typical of the period, representing variations of the Mid-Century Modern style. No information was found to indicate that he could be considered a master architect.

The potential of the property to yield information important in prehistory or history was not considered as part of this evaluation as it applies to archeological resources.

3175 W. 6th Street does not appear to be eligible for listing as a historical resource under national and state criteria A/1, B/2, or C/3, or corresponding city criteria.

**Project Site 3**

Project Site 3 consists of one parcel (Parcel G) located at the center of the city block bounded by W. 5th Street to the south, W. 4th Street to the north, S. Vermont Avenue to the east and S. New Hampshire Avenue to the west. Improvements to the property consist of an office building and a surface parking lot.

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<td>5502-009-900</td>
<td>427-433 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Office Building and Surface Parking</td>
<td>1963</td>
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Parcel G: 427-433 S. Vermont Avenue

Architectural Description

Parcel G is associated with the addresses 427 and 433 S. Vermont Avenue, an office building and surface parking lot. The four-story Mid-Century Modern style building is slightly “T”-shaped in plan.
with a longer elevation along Vermont Avenue. The building sits on a podium elevated over ground floor parking. The building is seven bays across. Six bays are identical, with a repeated fenestration and cladding pattern emphasizing verticality. The seventh and northernmost bay is a solid mass that extends above the roofline of the other bays. The main entrance is located in the northernmost bay. The entrance is recessed and paired, fully glazed aluminum doors. The floors above the main entrance are clad in stone veneer. This bay extends an additional floor with a doorway that leads onto the flat roof of the building.

The other six bays of the primary elevation are clad in a curtain wall system with stone veneer paneling. The rear (west) and north and south side elevations are clad in buff-colored brick. The rear elevation has evenly distributed vertical divided windows that return two bays around north and south elevations, along the base of the T-shape. A surface parking lot extends from S. Vermont Avenue surrounds the building along the north side and rear, wrapping around the rear of the building and connecting the parking podium on the first floor.

Building History

The office building at 427-433 S. Vermont Avenue was built in 1963 by a partnership known as 433 S. Vermont Building Company. The building was designed by architect Henry Rossine.61 One of the first tenants listed is the Los Angeles County Probation Department in 1967.62 The County of Los Angeles held a seven-year lease that expired in April of 1972, after which they bought the building from the partnership.63 The building is currently occupied by the Los Angeles County Department of Parks & Recreation. Alterations since 1963 include multiple reconfigurations of interior spaces for changing tenants.

Evaluation

The building at 427-433 S. Vermont Avenue is one of many office buildings constructed along Vermont Avenue during the late 1950s and early 1960s. While it was associated with the trend of office development in Wilshire Center, mere association with this trend is not enough, in and of itself, to be eligible for an association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Research did not indicate that the building’s specific association with this trend could be considered important. The building was an early location of Los Angeles County government offices in the area; however, research did not indicate that the building was the site of significant events in the history of Los Angeles County’s government. No information was found to suggest that individuals of historic significance were associated with the property.

The building is best described as Mid-Century Modern in style. While the building exhibits several character-defining features of the architectural style as applied to the property type, as a whole, it is not an original or unique architectural statement nor an excellent example of the Mid-Century Modern style. The building does not exhibit quality of design through distinctive features that would make it eligible for listing as an example of the Mid-Century Modern style. The architect of the building, Henry Rossine, was a local architect who designed a few commercial and residential buildings, repeating design elements across buildings. The three-story Coronado Building at 2525 W. 8th St., completed in 1962, is very similar to the office building at 427-433 S. Vermont Avenue (Parcel G). Both feature exterior metal screening and continuous strip windows with aluminum

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mullions. His residential work includes a 21-unit apartment building at 711 Westmount Drive in West Hollywood (1965) and the Valerio Capri apartments at 14360 Valerio St, Van Nuys. The work of Rossine has not been identified as masterful. His designs were typical of the period, representing variations of the Mid-Century Modern style. No information was found to indicate that he could be considered a master architect.

The potential of the property to yield information important in prehistory or history was not considered as part of this evaluation as it applies to archeological resources.

427-433 S. Vermont Avenue does not appear to be eligible for listing as a historical resource under national and state criteria A/1, B/2, or C/3, or corresponding county criteria.

**Summary**

Summary of National Register Eligibility: For a property to be eligible for the National Register, it must possess both significance and integrity from its period of significance. None of the buildings or structures on the Projects Sites appears to be eligible for listing in the National Register for significance under Criteria A, B or C. Criterion D, the potential of the property to yield information important in prehistory or history was not considered as part of this evaluation as it applies to archeological resources.

Summary of California Register Eligibility: The criteria for listing in the California Register mirror the National Register criteria. As explained in detail above, none of the buildings or structures on the Project Sites appears to be eligible for listing in the California Register.

Summary of Los Angeles County Landmark Eligibility: The first four criteria for Los Angeles County Landmark eligibility mirror the National and California Register criteria (see Section 2.3). As explained in detail above, none of the buildings or structures on Project Sites 1 or 3 appears to be eligible for listing under the first four Los Angeles County criteria. The fifth criterion deals with properties that are already listed or formally determined eligible for listing in either the National or California Registers. None of the buildings or structures on the Project Sites 1 or 3 have been listed or formally determined eligible for listing in either register, so none satisfy this criterion. The last two criteria relate to trees and landscape features, rather than buildings, so these criteria do not apply to this evaluation. None of the buildings or structures on the Project Sites 1 or 3 appears to be eligible for listing as Los Angeles County Landmarks.

Summary of City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument Eligibility: The four criteria for City of Los Angeles historic-cultural monument eligibility mirror the National and California Register criteria (see Section 2.4). As explained in detail above, none of the buildings or structures on Project Site 2 appears to be eligible for listing under the four City of Los Angeles criteria. None of the buildings or structures on Project Site 2 appears to be eligible for listing as Historic-Cultural Monuments under the four City of Los Angeles criteria.

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4. **PROJECT IMPACTS**

4.1 **Determining the Significance of Impacts on Historical Resources**

The State CEQA Guidelines set the standard for determining the significance of impacts to historical resources in Title 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15064.5(b), which states:

> A project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.

Title 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15064.5(b)(1) further clarifies “substantial adverse change” as follows:

> Substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.

Title 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15064.5(b)(1) in turn explains that a historical resource is “materially impaired” when a project:

> Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that convey its significance and that justify its inclusion in or eligibility for inclusion in the California Register, local register, or its identification in a historic resources survey.

The following factors are set forth in the City of Los Angeles’ “L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide,” which states that a project would normally have a significant impact on a historical resource if it would result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of the historical resource. A substantial adverse change in significance occurs if the project involves:

- Demolition of a significant resource;
- Relocation that does not maintain the integrity and (historical/architectural) significance of a significant resource;
- Conversion, rehabilitation, or alteration of a significant resource which does not conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings; or
- Construction that reduces the integrity or significance of important resources on the site or in the vicinity.

As such, the test for determining whether or not a proposed project will have a significant impact on an identified historical resource is whether or not the project will alter in an adverse manner the physical integrity of the historical resource such that it would no longer be eligible for listing in the National or California Registers or other landmark programs such as the list of HCMs.

4.2 **Project Description**

The proposed Project would involve the demolition of all but one of the existing buildings and structures on Project Sites 1, 2, and 3, and the construction of new buildings including office, residential, retail, and parking space. The one extant building that would remain is 540-550 S. Vermont Avenue, located on Project Site 2. It is a 12-story office building that would be adaptively
reused as a mixed-use building with ground floor commercial space and upper floor residential uses. The plan for each Project Site is elaborated below.

### Table 5: Project Site 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parcel</th>
<th>APN</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Current Use</th>
<th>Proposed Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5077-003-905</td>
<td>510 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Office Building</td>
<td>Demolish existing building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5077-003-904</td>
<td>526 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Surface Parking</td>
<td>Redevelop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>5077-003-903</td>
<td>532 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Office Building</td>
<td>Demolish existing building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>5077-003-901</td>
<td>523-531 Shatto Place</td>
<td>Parking Structure</td>
<td>Demolish existing parking structure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proposed development on Project Site 1 would involve comprehensive redevelopment. The buildings at 510 S. Vermont Avenue and 532 S. Vermont Avenue (Parcels A and C) and parking structure (Parcel D) would be demolished. The surface parking lot (Parcel B) would be developed with a new County office building (new building). The new building would contain office use and ground floor retail over a parking structure. The new building would consist of 21 stories (13 office floors over an eight-story parking structure with seven levels above grade and one level at grade). In addition, a new parking structure would be constructed on the site of the existing seven-story parking structure on Parcel D. This new structure would be 11 stories above grade with two below grade levels.

On Project Site 2, the Project would involve adaptive reuse and conversion of the existing twelve-story office building at 540-550 S Vermont Avenue (Parcel E) into residential units and ground floor retail. The existing building height would not change under the Project. In addition, the Project would involve the demolition of the four-story office building 3175 W. 6th Street. A new ten-story, mixed-use building with five residential levels over a five-level podium of parking (3.5 levels above grade and 1.5 levels below grade) would be constructed.

### Table 6: Project Site 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parcel</th>
<th>APN</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Current Use</th>
<th>Proposed Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>5077-003-902</td>
<td>540-550 S. Vermont Avenue</td>
<td>Office Building</td>
<td>Adaptive Reuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>5077-003-902</td>
<td>3175 W. 6th Street</td>
<td>Office Building and Parking Structure</td>
<td>Demolish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On Project Site 3, the Project would demolish the existing building at 427-433 S. Vermont Avenue (Parcel G) and construct a new six-story residential building with three stories of underground parking (nine stories total).
### 4.3 Analysis of Project Impacts

The proposed Project does not involve the demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of any historical resources. None of the buildings proposed for demolition or rehabilitation are historical resources defined by CEQA. Therefore, the Project would have no direct impacts on historical resources. CEQA also requires the analysis of indirect impacts on historical resources in the vicinity of the Project. There is one historical resource within the study area for Project Site 3, the Brynmoor Apartments Neon Roof Sign, which is designated HCM #641. In determining impacts of adjacent new construction on an individual resource such as the Brynmoor Apartments Neon Roof Sign, the central question is whether the new building would affect the physical integrity of the historical resource to the degree that it would no longer qualify as a historical resource. Such an effect would only occur if the Brynmoor Apartments Neon Roof Sign no longer retained sufficient integrity to convey its significance. According to National Register Bulletin #15, there are seven aspects of integrity: feeling, association, workmanship, location, design, setting, and materials. The only relevant aspect with respect to the impact of a new building on this historical resource is setting.

Project Site 3 abuts the rear of the parcel containing the five-story Brynmoor Apartments Building, on top of which the historical resource is located. While the roof sign is visible from Vermont Avenue, it is an advisement primarily oriented towards Wilshire Boulevard, the major thoroughfare when the building was constructed.\(^{66}\)

The primary visual interaction between the proposed new building and the roof sign would occur from Vermont Avenue. The footprint of the new building would cover areas that are presently surface parking. The new building would obscure the view of the minimally visible roof sign from Vermont Avenue (See Figures 3 and 18 views towards the Brynmoor Apartments Building from site 3).

The new building would introduce a new visual element to the setting of the Brynmoor Apartments Neon Roof Sign; however, the setting in Wilshire Center is already characterized by a variety of mid and high-rise buildings that obscure views of the roof sign from Vermont Avenue. Thus, the Project would not result in a substantial adverse change to the Brynmoor Apartments Neon Roof Sign or its immediate surroundings. It would continue to possess all aspects of integrity, including setting. Though a secondary view of the sign would be obscured, the primary view would remain intact. Accordingly, it would continue to convey its significance. Therefore, the impact on this historical resource would be less than significant.

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\(^{66}\) The Brynmoor Apartments Building dates to 1925. The date of installation for the rooftop signage could not be determined.
5. CONCLUSIONS

The Project would have no direct impacts on historical resources. There are no historical resources on the three Project Sites and no historical resources would be demolished, destroyed, altered, or relocated as a result of the Project. Indirect impacts on historical resources were also analyzed. The Project would have a less than significant impact on the only historical resource in the vicinity, namely the Brynmoor Apartments Neon Roof Sign. Although the Project would introduce a new visual element to the area, it would be physically separated from the nearby historical resource. The Project would not result in a substantial adverse change to the immediate surroundings of the historical resource to the degree its eligibility as a resource would be materially impaired. The integrity of the Brynmoor Apartments Neon Roof Sign would not be compromised by the Project. It would continue to be eligible for listing as a historical resource defined by CEQA. No mitigation is required or recommended.
6. **SOURCES**

AIA Historical Directory of American Architects, various dates.

Ancestry.com, various names and dates.


Los Angeles County Historic Preservation Ordinance 2015-0033.

Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety Permit Records, various dates.

Los Angeles Street Address Directory, various dates.

Los Angeles Times, various dates.

Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources, Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Outline and Summary Tables. 2015.

Moruzzi, Peter. “John M. Cooper.” Memorandum. City of Santa Monica.


Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, various dates.
Appendix A - Résumés
ALLISON M. LYONS is an Associate Architectural Historian at GPA. She has been involved in the field of historic preservation since 2007 and has worked throughout the country. Allison has researched, evaluated, and documented a wide variety of property types. Her many projects have included historic context statements for Fremont and West Hollywood, historic resource surveys from San Diego to Monterey, and National Register nominations for the Great Wall of Los Angeles and properties associated with the Chicano Moratorium. She is a member of alumni board of Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation at Columbia University. In addition to being a talented researcher and writer, Allison is proficient in ArcGIS and uses her skills to provide technical support, maps, and illustrations on various projects.

Educational Background:
- M.S., Historic Preservation, Columbia University, 2010
- B.A., European Studies, Scripps College, 2006

Professional Experience:
- GPA Consulting, Associate Architectural Historian, 2015-Present
- Architectural Resources Group, Architectural Historian, 2010-2013
- Mellon Graduate Fellowship in Primary Sources, Columbia University, 2009-2010
- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Section 106 Essentials Course, 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.

Professional Activities:
- Urban Land Institute, Young Leader’s Group
- Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation at Columbia University, Alumni Board Member

Selected Projects:
- Los Angeles Wholesale Flower Terminal, Los Angeles, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2016-2017
- Art Center College of Art, Pasadena, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2016
- 2222 S. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2016
- 1440-1452 Gordon Street, Los Angeles, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2016
- 8430 Reseda Boulevard, Los Angeles, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2016
- 736-42 Parkman Avenue, Los Angeles, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2016
- City of Hope Master Plan, Duarte, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2015-2016
- SurveyLA, Jewish Historic Context Statement, 2015-2016
- Chicano Moratorium in Los Angeles, Multiple Property Documentation Form, 2015
- La Loma Bridge, Pasadena, HAER Documentation, 2015
- Fremont Mid-Century Historic Context Statement, 2015
- Sunkist Building, Los Angeles, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2015
- 730 S. Los Angeles Street, Los Angeles, Historic-Cultural Monument Application and Part 1 Federal Tax Credit Application, 2014
- West Los Angeles Veterans Administration Historic District, National Register of Historic Places Update, 2014
- San Vicente Inn, West Hollywood, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2013
- Flintridge Sacred Heart Master Plan, La Cañada Flintridge, Historical Resource Report, 2013
AUDREY VON AHRENS is an Architectural Historian I at GPA. She recently graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in the City of Philadelphia. At GPA, Audrey carries out fieldwork, research, and documentation for a variety of projects. She 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, University of Pennsylvania, 2016
- Master of City Planning, University of Pennsylvania, 2016
- B.A., Urban Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 2013

Professional Experience:
- GPA Consulting, Architectural Historian I, 2017-Present
- Tacony Community Development Corp., Intern, 2014
- Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, Intern, 2013
- University of Pittsburgh, Teaching Assistant, 2012-2013
- City of Pittsburgh Planning Department, Intern, 2012
- Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership, Intern, 2011

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:
- High Speed Rail, Burbank to Los Angeles Project Section, CEQA/NEPA Historical Resource Report, 2017
- Onni Vine Street Project, Los Angeles, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2017
- 913 S. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CEQA Historical Resource Report, 2017
- Hughes Industrial Historic District Interpretive Program, 2017