

HISTORIC RESOURCES REPORT PRESS-TELEGRAM AND MEEKER/BAKER BUILDINGS LONG BEACH, CA

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1. Introduction

This report was prepared for the purpose of assisting City of Long Beach in their compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as it relates to historic resources, in connection with a proposal to construct 542 residential units in two high-rise towers on the block bounded by Locust Avenue, 7th Street, Pine Avenue, and 6th Street. Both towers would be approximately 22 stories and 250 feet in height. The project would also include ground floor commercial space and a new subterranean and above-ground parking structure. The project proposes to integrate the exterior building walls of the Meeker Building (also known as the Baker Building, 650 Pine Avenue), a City-designated historic landmark located on the southeast corner of 7th Street and Pine Avenue, and portions of the existing interior of the Press-Telegram Building (604 Pine Avenue). The exterior building walls of both the Meeker (Baker) and the Press-Telegram buildings are proposed to be preserved and restored to their respective historic conditions. [Figure 1]

This report assesses the historical and architectural significance of potentially significant historic properties in accordance with the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) Criteria for Evaluation, and City of Long Beach criteria. A determination will be made as to whether adverse environmental impacts on historic resources, as defined by CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, may occur as a consequence of the proposed project, and recommend the adoption of mitigation measures, as appropriate.

This report was prepared by San Buenaventura Research Associates of Santa Paula, California, Judy Triem, Historian; and Mitch Stone, Preservation Planner, for Rincon Consultants, Inc., and is based on a field investigation and research conducted January to June, 2006. The conclusions contained herein represent the professional opinions of San Buenaventura Research Associates, and are based on the factual data available at the time of its preparation, the application of the appropriate local, state and federal regulations, and best professional practices.

2. Administrative Setting

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires evaluation of project impacts on historic resources, including properties "listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources [or] included in a local register of historical resources." A resource is eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources if it meets any of the criteria for listing, which are:

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;
2. Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

By definition, the California Register of Historical Resources also includes all "properties formally determined eligible for, or listed in, the National Register of Historic Places," and certain specified State Historical Landmarks. The majority of "formal determinations" of NRHP eligibility occur when properties are evaluated by the State Office of Historic Preservation in connection with federal environmental review procedures (Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966). Formal determinations of eligibility also occur when properties are nominated to the NRHP, but are not listed due to owner objection.

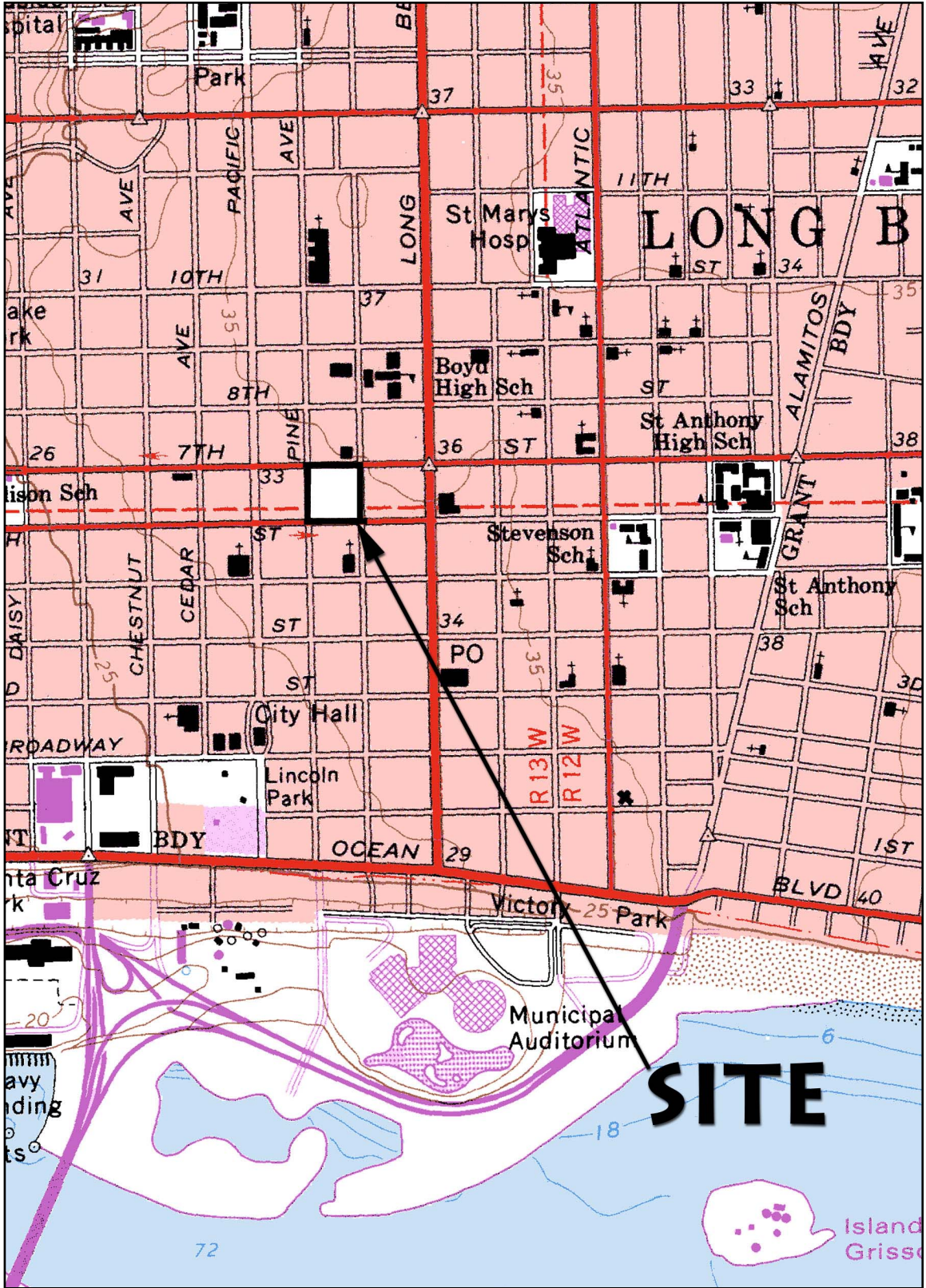


Figure 1. Site Location [USGS 7.5' Quadrangle, Long Beach, 1964]

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The criteria for determining eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) have been developed by the National Park Service. Properties may qualify for NRHP listing if they:

- A. are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. are 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. have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

According to the National Register of Historic Places guidelines, the “essential physical features” of a property must be present for it to convey its significance. Further, in order to qualify for the NRHP, a resource must retain its integrity, or “the ability of a property to convey its significance.”

The seven aspects of integrity are: Location (the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred); Design (the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property); Setting (the physical environment of a historic property); 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); Workmanship (the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period of history or prehistory); Feeling (a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time), and; Association (the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property).

The relevant aspects of integrity depend upon the National Register criteria applied to a property. For example, a property nominated under Criterion A (events), would be likely to convey its significance primarily through integrity of location, setting and association. A property nominated solely under Criterion C (design) would usually rely primarily upon integrity of design, materials and workmanship. The California Register procedures include similar language with regard to integrity.

The minimum age criterion for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) is 50 years. Properties less than 50 years old may be eligible for listing on the NRHP if they can be regarded as “exceptional,” as defined by the NRHP procedures, or in terms of the CRHR, “if it can be demonstrated that sufficient time has passed to understand its historical importance” (Chapter 11, Title 14, §4842(d)(2))

Historic resources as defined by CEQA also includes properties listed in “local registers” of historic properties. A “local register of historic resources” is broadly defined in §5020.1 (k) of the Public Resources Code, as “a list of properties officially designated or recognized as historically significant by a local government pursuant to a local ordinance or resolution.” Local registers of historic properties come essentially in two forms: (1) surveys of historic resources conducted by a local agency in accordance with Office of Historic Preservation procedures and standards, adopted by the local agency and maintained as current, and (2) landmarks designated under local ordinances or resolutions. These properties are “presumed to be historically or culturally significant... unless the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that the resource is not historically or culturally significant.” (Public Resources Code §§ 5024.1, 21804.1, 15064.5)

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Long Beach Landmark Criteria

According to §2.63.050 of the Long Beach Municipal Code (Criteria for designation of landmarks and landmark districts), a cultural resource may be recommended for designation as a landmark or landmark district if it manifests one of the following criteria:

- A. It possesses a significant character, interest or value attributable to the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, the southern California region, the state or the nation; or
- B. It is the site of a historic event with a significant place in history; or
- C. It is associated with the life of a person or persons significant to the community, city, region or nation; or
- D. It portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or
- E. It embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or engineering specimen; or
- F. It is the work of a person or persons whose work has significantly influenced the development of the city or the southern California region; or
- G. It contains elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation or
- H. It is a part of or related to a distinctive area and should be developed or preserved according to a specific historical, cultural or architectural motif; or
- I. It represents an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood or community due to its unique location or specific distinguishing characteristic; or
- J. It is, or has been, a valuable information source important to the prehistory or history of the city, the southern California region or the state; or
- K. It is one of the few remaining examples in the city, region, state or nation possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type; or
- L. In the case of the designation of a tree(s) based on historic significance, that the tree(s) is (are) associated with individuals, places and/or events that are deemed significant based on their importance to national, state and community history; or
- M. In the case of the designation of a tree(s) based on cultural contribution, that the tree(s) is (are) associated with a particular event or adds (add) significant aesthetic or cultural contribution to the community. (Ord. ORD-05-0026 § 1, 2005; Ord. C-6961 § 1 (part), 1992).

3. Impact Thresholds and Mitigation

According to PRC §21084.1, “a project that may cause a substantial change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” The Public Resources Code broadly defines a threshold for determining if the impacts of a project on an historic property will be significant and adverse. By definition, a substantial adverse change means, “demolition, destruction, relocation, or alterations,” such that the significance of an historical resource would be impaired (PRC §5020.1(6)). For purposes of NRHP eligibility, reductions in a resource’s integrity (the ability of the property to convey its significance) should be regarded as potentially adverse impacts.

Further, according to the CEQA Guidelines, “an historical resource is materially impaired when a project... [d]emolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources [or] that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or its identification in an historical re-

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sources survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, unless the public agency reviewing the effects of the project establishes by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not historically or culturally significant.”

The lead agency is responsible for the identification of “potentially feasible measures to mitigate significant adverse changes in the significance of an historical resource.” The specified methodology for determining if impacts are mitigated to less than significant levels are the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* and the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (1995), publications of the National Park Service. (PRC §15064.5(b)(3-4))

4. Historical Setting

General Historical Context

The present city of Long Beach is located on a portion of the 300,000 acres of land granted to Manuel Nieto by the Spanish colonial government in 1784. This tract would subsequently be divided into five smaller land grants, including Rancho Los Alamitos and Rancho Cerritos, on which Long Beach would later be established. The former was purchased in 1840 by real estate speculator and cattleman Abel Stearns, who was in the process of amassing one of the largest land-holdings in Southern California, known collectively as Stearn’s Ranchos. Rancho Los Alamitos was purchased in 1843 by Los Angeles merchant John Temple. Both Stearns and Temple became victims of the prolonged droughts of the early 1860s, eventually selling the two ranchos to Jotham Bixby.

The first effort to develop the ranchos was attempted by William E. Wilmor, in 1880, on a portion of the Bixby landholdings. He called his townsite the “American Colony” or “Willmore City.” Willmore was a few years too early to benefit from the enormous railroad-inspired Southern California land boom of the late 1880s, and was undercapitalized. His efforts failed, but Willmore’s 1882 subdivision formed the precursor to modern Long Beach. The townsite was purchased in 1884 by the Long Beach Land and Water Company, which began making significant improvements, including the construction of a wharf and hotel, and connecting the town to the Southern Pacific Railroad’s Wilmington branch. The elements for growth now in place, the expansion was explosive, especially after the opening of a Pacific Electric line to the city in 1902. Long Beach, which had become one of the region’s premier seaside resorts, was incorporated as a city in 1908.

The city began to take on a more commercial and industrial character with the construction of harbor facilities, beginning with the relocation of the Craig Shipbuilding Company to Long Beach in 1907. The Port of Long Beach continued to expand as oceanfront lands were reclaimed, particularly after the discovery of major oil fields at nearby Signal Hill in 1921. The 1920s would be a defining decade for Long Beach, as it expanded rapidly on the twin pillars of tourism and commerce, emerging as a city rivaling Los Angeles for regional stature and importance.

The devastating 1933 Long Beach earthquake was a major setback for Long Beach, particularly coming as it did at the nadir of the Great Depression. The city’s fortunes would return fairly quickly, however, with the continued development of local oil resources during the 1930s, and the establishment of the Long Beach Navy Base and Shipyard in 1940.

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Site-Specific Context

Long Beach Press-Telegram

The city's prominent daily newspaper was formed in 1924, from the merger of two existing papers, the Long Beach *Press* and the Long Beach *Telegram*. The *Press*, a semi-weekly founded in 1897 by John G. Palmer and F.R. Smith, became the third of three newspapers to be published in the growing community, but only for a matter of weeks. Palmer and Smith quickly absorbed their two competitors, The *Breaker*, which traced its publication history to 1888, and the *Eye*, which first appeared in 1893, combining them into the expanded operations of the *Press*.

Two years later, the paper was purchased by J.A. Miller who in turn sold the newspaper to a group of investors, the Press Publishing Company. In 1902 the new ownership began publishing the newspaper for the first time as a daily. The *Press* now competed for readership with the *Tribune*, which was founded by T.W. Lincoln as a weekly in 1898, but had gone to daily publication in 1900.

In subsequent years, the *Tribune* came to be owned by Frank F. Merriam, who served in the State Legislature from 1917-26, as Lieutenant Governor 1931-34, and was elected governor of California in 1934. In 1907 Merriam sold his interests in the *Tribune* to the Press Publishing Company. The merged newspapers continued publishing as the *Long Beach Press*. In 1911 the *Press* was purchased by a group of investors headed by William F. Prisk and Charles H. Prisk.

A few years earlier, in 1906, William Prisk and younger brother Charles had purchased the Pasadena *Star*, which they merged into the Pasadena *News* ten years later. After the brothers, along with a number of additional partners, purchased the *Long Beach Press* in 1911, Charles Prisk took over the management of the *Star*, while William Prisk published the *Press*. They lived in Pasadena and Long Beach, respectively. After Charles Prisk died in 1940, William Prisk assumed the management of the Star-News companies.

The Long Beach *Telegram* was founded in 1904 by veteran newspaperman Frank C. Roberts. Born in Ohio in 1856, Roberts worked for numerous newspapers throughout the United States before settling in Long Beach after 1900. In 1905, Roberts took on James J. Penny as a partner in the Long Beach Daily Telegram Company. With the death of Frank Roberts in 1922, the paper entered into a period of uncertainty, while his widow May E. Roberts, whom he'd married during the mid-1890s, and Belle McCord Roberts, a daughter from a previous marriage, vied for control of the company. Belle Roberts prevailed in a lawsuit, taking control of the newspaper as its editor and publisher in December 1922. For the next two years, she was reputed to be the only woman in the United States to edit and publish a major daily newspaper.

In 1923, two new daily newspapers were established in Long Beach, the *Sun* and the *News*. In this environment of increased competition for readership, a merger between the *Press* and the *Telegram* was engineered in 1924. William F. Prisk took over as editor and publisher of the *Press-Telegram*, and Belle McCord Roberts moved to the sidelines as a vice-president and minority stockholder, eventually selling her shares in the company to newspaper owner Ira C. Copley. William Prisk continued to run the *Press-Telegram* until 1952, when the newspaper was sold to the Ritter newspaper chain.

In 1924 a new four-story office and printing building was constructed on Pine Avenue and Sixth Street to house the joined *Press* and *Telegram*. The designer was the notable Long Beach architect W. Horace Austin. The building grew to accommodate the expansion of the newspaper. Significant additions and alterations were made to the building in 1945, 1948 and 1972.

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William F. Prisk

William Frederick Prisk was born in Nevada County in 1870, the second son of William and Mary Hosking Prisk. He began his career in the newspaper industry at ten years of age, as a newspaper carrier, advancing to type-setting a few years later. At the age of 18, he became a partner in the publication of the Grass Valley *Evening Telegraph*, the first of numerous newspapers in which he would hold an interest during his lifetime. Prisk worked as the paper's typesetter, reporter and business manager. He sold his share of the paper after two years, and invested in the Fresno *Review*. During this period, he worked as a market reporter in San Francisco and for the Sacramento *Union*. Prisk returned to Grass Valley in 1893 to become the editor and publisher of the Grass Valley *Union*. In 1897, he was elected to the State Senate, the youngest member of that body to that date. He served a single term. He probably arrived in Long Beach in 1911, the year he and his brother purchased the *Long Beach Press*.

William Prisk died in Long Beach in 1962, at the age of 92. Two years earlier, he had been recognized by the state Legislature as "one of California's most distinguished and best-loved citizens." He was inducted into the California Newspaper Publisher's Association Hall of Fame in 1965. During the 1950s, a Long Beach elementary school was named in honor of William Prisk, who by that time was sometimes referred to as "Mr. Long Beach."

Belle McCord Roberts

Roxie Belle McCord Roberts was born in Greenville, Bond County, Illinois in 1878 to Frank Roberts and Roxanna Dresser. Her mother died the same year, possibly in childbirth, and she was placed in the care of her aunt and uncle, John W. McCord and Alenia Dresser McCord, who either formally or informally adopted her. She attended the Port Byron Academy in Port Byron, Illinois, and the Hedding College Conservatory in Abingdon, Illinois. Her undergraduate education was at Cornell College in Iowa, and she earned an M.A. in English at Northwestern University. She taught music and speech at an Iowa high school, and upon returning to Greenville around 1910, operated a school for public speaking. Her grandfather was one-term Illinois State Senator Nathaniel Dresser, and her uncle, William A. Northcott, served as Lieutenant Governor of Illinois.

In 1912 her grandfather died and left her a substantial inheritance. McCord used the money to purchase a ranch near Beulah, Pueblo County, Colorado, remaining there until 1919, when Frank Roberts asked her to join him in Long Beach. During the late 1920s, after divesting her shares in the *Press-Telegram*, Belle McCord Roberts purchased extensive gold mining interests in California and Nevada, which she operated as the Roberts Mining and Milling Company, along with several partners and advisors. By the late 1930s, the company had bankrupted, taking most of her fortune with it. During her lifetime, Belle McCord Roberts was also a noted public speaker, political activist, and a championship trapshooter. She died in Long Beach in 1948.

W. Horace Austin, AIA

William Horace Austin was born in Kansas in 1881, moving to Long Beach with his family in 1895. He began his association with architecture working in the building trades, and later was educated in architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, although he apparently returned to California without obtaining a full degree. During the course of his career, Austin became one of the city's most prolific commercial and institutional architects. His many design credits in Long Beach include the Farmers and Merchants Banks (1921), City National Bank (1921), Long Beach Junior College (1929), Adelaide Techenor Hospital School clinic (1937), and numerous reconstructions and remodeling projects after the 1933 earthquake.

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Outside of Long Beach, he designed the Seal Beach City Hall (1929), the Compton Middle School (1929), Compton Grammar School (1930), the Santa Ana Masonic Hall (1930), the Bowers Memorial Museum in Santa Ana (1930, with Frank Landsdown), and the San Pedro Post Office/Federal Building (1934-36, with Gordon Kaufmann). Collaborating with Los Angeles architect John C. Austin (apparently unrelated) he designed the Citrus Union High School (1921), Woodrow Wilson School in Long Beach (1925 with Ausin and Frederick Ashley) and the Riverside Junior High School (1925 with Austin and Frederick Ashley). He died in Long Beach in 1942.

5. Potential Historic Resources

604 Pine Avenue (Long Beach Press-Telegram Building)

This four-story building located on a prominent corner is characterized by a symmetrical organization of bays along the primary Pine Avenue and Sixth Street elevations, defined by wide brick piers. Each bay is subdivided vertically into three parts by narrow, shallow pilasters topped by capitols and terminating in arches. A blind arcade consisting of shallow arches wraps the main elevations above the bays and below the cornice. The cornice is supported by scrolled piano-leg brackets between each bay. A dentil moulding runs underneath. The street-level elevations are similarly divided into eight storefronts on the two streets frontages. The storefront materials are modern anodized aluminum. The primary building material is poured-in-place concrete, faced with brick. Fenestration located within the bays, which consists of aluminum casements, is covered by a modern louvered aluminum grill. Architecturally, the building exhibits the abstracted Italian Renaissance Revival style as it was utilized frequently during the 1920s

The Press-Telegram building was constructed in 1924 and designed by noted Long Beach architect H. Horace Austin. At that time, the building consisted of three bays on Pine Avenue and eight bays on 6th Street. A fourth bay was added circa 1930. The building was substantially damaged in the 1933 earthquake, and repaired. In 1944-45, a 50 by 70 foot addition was made, apparently to the rear of the building, along Tribune Alley. The building was then roughly doubled in street-frontage with the addition of the four matching bays on Pine Street. The architect for this addition was J.H. Davies, apparently working from Austin's original architectural scheme. In 1968 the original sash windows were replaced with the existing aluminum windows. Presumably, the aluminum grills within the bays were added at the same time. The ground floor, including the lobby areas and storefronts, were altered to their present configurations during a major remodeling campaign in 1969-71. A 15,000 square foot steel-roofed building was added in 1972-73. [Photos 1, 2]

644 Pine Avenue

This two-story commercial building was constructed in 1925, and for several decades was occupied by the Singer Sewing Machine Company store. The original architect, if any, is unknown. This building was extensively altered to its current appearance in 1978. Only the original terra cotta cornice and a small portion of the upper facade remain. [Photo 3]

650 Pine Avenue (Meeker/Baker Building)

The Long Beach Municipal Code contains the following description of this property in connection with its designation as a City Landmark, including the reasons for its designation:

16.52.720 The Meeker Building.

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Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 2.63 and with the recommendation of the planning commission, the city council designates the following building as an historical landmark in the city: The Meeker Building.

A. Location, Description and Reasons for Designation. Located at 650 Pine Avenue/112 East 7th Street in the city, the Meeker Building was constructed in 1924 at the eastern end of the main commercial street of Long Beach. The two-story structure occupies a prominent corner of the business district, contributing to its character and continuity. The building was designed in the Renaissance Revival style and still exhibits elements of that style, primarily on the second story. Elements of the original style still extant include decorative brick and tile work, arched openings, medallions, and a frieze with medallions. Some alterations on the corner have damaged the integrity of the building, but the structure remains a representative example of commercial architecture in downtown Long Beach from the 1920's period of development.

The building entrance at 112 E. 7th Street retains its monumental architectural character in its original condition. It is a two-story Renaissance-styled doorway, flanked by paired columns. The two-story lobby contains an open staircase and original cage elevator. The lobby walls are decorated with cast plaster ornamental floral designs in a frieze.

The second story retains all its original interiors: mahogany woodwork, original glass and mahogany doors with transoms, original double-hung wood frame windows, high ceiling heights. The retention of all the original 1924 building fabric in the interiors is remarkable, and a special asset of the building.

The aluminum storefront sign which obscures the facade is removable; original building material exists underneath. (Ord. C-6921 § 3, 1991).

The current appearance of this building appears to be substantially similar today. Some effort to introduce more suitable ground floor storefront treatments has apparently occurred subsequent to this designation. [Photo 4]

6. Eligibility of Historic Resources

National and California Registers: Significance, Eligibility and Integrity

604 Pine Avenue (Long Beach Press-Telegram Building). The Long Beach *Press-Telegram*, created by the merger of the *Press* and *Telegram* in 1924, represents the combined operations of at least five previous newspapers in the city dating historically to 1888. The newspaper can consequently be regarded as having a nearly 120 year relationship with the city of Long Beach extending back through its predecessors on the *Press* side of the company's family tree, to the city's founding decade. It has operated continuously under its current masthead, and in its present location, for over 80 years. The Press-Telegram Building should therefore be regarded as potentially eligible for the NRHP and CRHR under Criterion A (1) for its lengthy association with Long Beach as one its most prominent commercial institutions.

The property should also be regarded as potentially eligible for the NRHP and CRHR under Criterion B (2) for its association with individuals of importance to the city of Long Beach, including Frank C. Roberts, founder of the Long Beach *Telegram* in 1904, who was lauded as one of the city's leading citizens on his death in 1922; with William Prisk, who purchased the Long Beach *Press* in 1911 and was known statewide for his efforts in newspaper publishing and locally as the newspaper's publisher for nearly 30 years; and with Belle McCord Roberts, briefly the only woman to publish a major daily newspaper in the United States, and who was

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also apparently instrumental in engineering the merger of the *Press* and *Telegram* into its current configuration.

The property also appears to be eligible for the NRHP and CRHR under Criterion C (3) as a building designed by W. Horace Austin, one of the city's most prominent architects during the 1920s, and as a scarce remaining example of monumental commercial architecture of the period.

Integrity Discussion: The integrity of **location** for this property is intact; it is located on the site on which it was originally constructed. The integrity of **design** was substantially compromised during the 1960s and 1970s, with the addition of aluminum screens over the windows, the replacement of the windows themselves, and the alteration of the ground floor storefronts. The historical **setting** for the property is substantially diminished, due to the replacement of much of the surrounding historic commercial district with contemporary construction over the last 20 years. To the extent that the property is altered, its integrity of **materials** and **workmanship** is also reduced. The property's integrity of **feeling** and **association** are largely intact, as the building remains in use as a newspaper office.

On a whole, this property appears to lack the integrity required for it to be eligible for listing on the NRHP or CRHR.

644 Pine Avenue. This property does not appear to be associated with events of importance to the development of Long Beach (Criteria A/1), or with individuals known to be of significance to the city's history (Criterion B/2). It should not be regarded as potentially eligible under Criterion C (3) due to the extensive alterations to its appearance which occurred in 1978.

650 Pine Avenue (Meeker/Baker Building). This property does not appear to be associated with events of importance to the development of Long Beach (Criteria A/1), or with individuals known to be of significance to the city's history (Criterion B/2). However, it should be regarded as potentially eligible under Criterion C (3) as a good, representative example of Renaissance Revival style commercial architecture of the 1920s.

Integrity Discussion: The integrity of **location** for this property is intact; it is located on the site on which it was originally constructed. The integrity of **design** was somewhat compromised with the alteration of the ground floor storefronts. The historical **setting** for the property is substantially diminished, due to the replacement of much of the surrounding historic commercial district with contemporary construction over the last 20 years. To the extent that the property is altered, its integrity of **materials** and **workmanship** is also reduced. The property's integrity of **feeling** and **association** are largely intact, as the building remains in its historical use, as a commercial building, with apartments on the second floor.

On a whole, this property appears to retain a sufficient level of integrity required for it to be eligible for listing on the NRHP or CRHR.

Properties Less Than 50 Years of Age

Properties less than 50 years of age may be eligible if they can be found to be "exceptional." While no hard and fast definition for "exceptional" is provided in the NRHP literature, the special language developed to support nominating these properties was clearly intended to accommodate properties which demonstrate a level of importance such that their historical significance can be understood without the passage of time. In general, according to NRHP literature, eligible "exceptional" properties may include, "resources so fragile that survivors of any age are unusual. [Exceptionalness] may be a function of the relative age of a community and

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its perceptions of old and new. It may be represented by a building or structure whose developmental or design value is quickly recognized as historically significant by the architectural or engineering profession [or] it may be reflected in a range of resources for which the community has an unusually strong associative attachment." No properties in the study area appear to rise to the exceptional level.

Local Significance and Eligibility

604 Pine Avenue (Long Beach Press-Telegram Building). This building was determined by the City of Long Beach to be eligible for listing as a City Landmark in connection with a survey of historic properties conducted in 1988. It was not listed at that time, for reasons which are not fully apparent. However, this property appears to remain eligible for local designation under criteria A, B, C, D, F and I of the Landmarks Ordinance.

644 Pine Avenue. This property does not appear to be eligible for local designation under any ordinance criterion. It has no known historic associations and due to the extensive alterations which occurred in 1978, should not be regarded as architecturally significant. It does not appear to have been previously determined to be eligible through the 1988 survey or other inventories or determinations.

650 Pine Avenue (Meeker/Baker Building). This property is currently a designated Long Beach City Landmark.

Conclusion

The properties located at 604 Pine Avenue and 650 Pine Avenue should be regarded as historic resources for the purpose of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

7. Project Impacts

1. Presently, the property located at 604 Pine Avenue is ineligible for listing on the NRHP and CRHR due primarily to a lack of design integrity. The proposed project proposes to restore the building's exterior street elevations to their historic appearance. Taken on its own, this activity could result in the property becoming eligible for listing on the NRHP and CRHR. However, the project also proposes the removal of a substantial quantity of historic building fabric, including roughly 40% of the above-ground interior spaces of the building related to its historic use, as well as the permanent attachment of new construction which does not respect the materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the historic property. This activity would likely cause the property to become ineligible for the NRHP and CRHR, even if the property had not been previously altered. Taken as a whole, therefore, the impact of the project with respect to NRHP and CRHR eligibility is neutral.

The property is currently eligible for designation as a City Landmark. The project proposes the removal of a substantial quantity of historic building fabric, including roughly 40% of the above-ground interior spaces of the building related to its historic use, as well as the permanent attachment of new construction which does not respect the materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the historic property. Consequently, the proposed activities will result in a currently eligible property potentially becoming ineligible for designation as a City Landmark. Therefore, the project will result in a significant adverse impact on an historic resource which cannot be mitigated to a less than significant and adverse level. (Class 1)

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2. The proposed project will result in the loss of extensive historic building fabric for 650 Pine Avenue, including all or most of the interior spaces of the building related to its historic use, as well as the permanent attachment of the historic building to new construction which does not respect the materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the historic property. As an offsetting factor, the project also proposes to restore the exterior building facade to its historic appearance. These proposed activities will result in the property no longer remaining eligible for listing on the NRHP or CRHR, or as a City Landmark, due to a significant loss of design and setting integrity. These proposed activities will result in a significant adverse impact on an historic resource which cannot be mitigated to a less than significant and adverse level. (Class 1)
3. The project is located in proximity to two designated City Landmarks, 601 Pine Avenue and the Walker Building, at 4th Street and Pine Avenue. Due to the scale, size, bulk and design of the proposed project, the project may have potentially adverse impacts on these properties resulting from a reduction of integrity of historic setting. However, due to the extensive new construction and redevelopment which has occurred in downtown Long Beach within the past two to three decades, the existing historic setting for the designated landmarks has already been substantially degraded. Therefore, the proposed project should not be seen as having a significant indirect impact on these properties.

8. Mitigation Measures and Residual Impacts

A principle of environmental impact mitigation is that some measure or combination of measures may, if incorporated into a project, serve to avoid or reduce significant and adverse impacts to a historic resource. In reference to mitigating impacts on historic resources, the CEQA Guidelines state:

Where maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of the historical resource will be conducted in a manner consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (1995), Weeks and Grimmer, the project's impact on the historical resource shall generally be considered mitigated below a level of significance and thus is not significant. (PRC §15126.4 (b)(1))

These standards, developed by the National Park Service, represent design guidelines for carrying out historic preservation, restoration and rehabilitation projects. The Secretary's Standards and the supporting literature describe historic preservation principles and techniques, and offers recommended means for carrying them out. Adhering to the Standards is the only method described within CEQA for reducing project impacts on historic resources to less than significant and adverse levels.

The demolition of an historic property cannot be seen as conforming with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*. Therefore, the absolute loss of an historic property should generally be regarded as an adverse environmental impact which cannot be mitigated to a less than significant and adverse level. Further, the usefulness of documentation of an historic resource, through photographs and measured drawings, as mitigation for its demolition, is limited by the CEQA Guidelines, which state:

In some circumstances, documentation of an historical resource, by way of historic narrative, photographs or architectural drawings, as mitigation for the effects of demolition of the resource will not mitigate the

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effects to a point where clearly no significant effect on the environment would occur. (PRC §15126.4 (b)(2))

Implied by this language is the existence of circumstances whereby documentation may mitigate the impact of demolition to a less than significant level. However, the conditions under which this might be said to have occurred are not described in the Guidelines. It is also noteworthy that the existing CEQA case law does not appear to support the concept that the loss of an historic resource can be mitigated to less than adverse impact levels by means of documentation or commemoration. (League for Protection of Oakland's Architectural and Historic Resources v. City of Oakland [1997] 52 Cal.App.4th 896)

Taken in their totality, the CEQA Guidelines require a project which will have potentially adverse impacts on historic resources to conform to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*, in order for the impacts to be mitigated to below significant and adverse levels. However, CEQA also mandates the adoption of feasible mitigation measures which will reduce adverse impacts, even if the residual impacts after mitigation remain significant. Means other than the application of the Standards would necessarily be required to achieve this level of mitigation. In determining what type of additional mitigation measures would reduce impacts to the greatest extent feasible, best professional practice dictates considering the level of eligibility of the property, as well as by what means it derives its significance.

Mitigation programs for impacts on historic resources tend to fall into three broad categories: documentation, design and interpretation. Documentation techniques involve the recordation of the site according to accepted professional standards, such that the data will be available to future researchers, or for future restoration efforts. Design measures could potentially include direct or indirect architectural references to a lost historic property, e.g., the incorporation of historic artifacts, into the new development, or the relocation of the historic property to another suitable site. Interpretative measures could include commemorating a significant historic event or the property's connection to historically significant themes.

Mitigation Measures

1. In consultation with a qualified historic preservation professional, the applicant shall produce a Documentation Report consisting of black and white archival, quality photographs and measured drawings of the historic resources to be altered, which along with the Historic Resources Report prepared for this property, shall be submitted to an appropriate repository.
2. In consultation with a qualified historic preservation professional, an interpretive plan for the property shall be produced, focusing on the significant historic themes associated with the properties. The plan may consist of a public display or other suitable approach to interpreting the history of the properties, as determined by the City of Long Beach.
3. To the greatest extent feasible, all modifications to historic building on the property shall be undertaken in conformance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. These alterations should not unnecessarily destroy historic materials or architectural features which characterize the property, and to the greatest extent feasible, shall be based on historical documentation and/or forensic evidence of original conditions.

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4. The language related to alterations contained within the Long Beach Municipal Code related to the City Landmark designation for 650 Pine Street shall be implemented with respect to this property. This language states:

B. General Guidelines and Standards for Any Changes. The "Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings" prepared by the Secretary of the Interior (Revised, 1983), as amended, are incorporated by reference, and they, along with the following additional guidelines and standards as recommended by the cultural heritage commission shall apply to the landmark:

Original historic fabric shall be retained as much possible. Any alterations, repairs or modifications of the subject structure shall be done so in keeping with its historic character. No environmental change shall be allowed unless a certificate of appropriateness has been applied for and approved by the cultural heritage commission upon appeal, authorizing such environmental change. (Ord. C-6921 § 3, 1991).

Impacts After Mitigation

Significant and adverse.

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Photo 1. Long Beach Press-Telegram Building, circa 1930 [Historical Society of Long Beach].



Photo 2. Press-Telegram Building, Pine Avenue and 6th Street elevations [6 January 2006].



Photo 3. 644 Pine Avenue [4 May 2006].



Photo 4. 650 Pine Avenue (Meeker/Baker Building), Pine Avenue and 7th Street elevations [4 May 2006].