

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received APR 23 1984

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Brea City Hall and Park

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JUL 11 1985

and/or common Brea City Hall and Park

OMP

2. Location

street & number 401 South Brea Boulevard

N/A not for publication

city, town Brea N/A vicinity of

state California code 06 county Orange code 059

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name City of Brea

street & number Number One Civic Center Circle

city, town Brea N/A vicinity of state California 92621

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Orange County Recorder

street & number 630 N. Broadway

city, town Santa Ana, Ca. 92701 state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Brea Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date March 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Office of Historic Preservation, P. O. Box 2390

city, town Sacramento state California 95811

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated on what was the main boulevard of the original downtown of early Brea, The City Hall is a free-standing rectangular shaped (86 feet by 69 feet) two-story structure. It has a flat roof with a short tower over the entrance and is constructed of stuccoed concrete masonry block. Architecturally, the building combines Art Deco and Spanish Colonial Revival styles which were popular during the 1920's when the building was constructed. It has been altered by additions at the side and rear. The structure has been the location of Brea's first publicly-owned municipal government facility for over fifty years. It is located on the corner of the city park, which also contains a former American Legion Hall (1931), a swimming pool and bath house (1928) as well as modern playground, recreation pavilion, basketball court, restrooms, two temporary buildings and parking lots.

¶ The front facade of the City Hall has a central entrance with a cupola having segmentally arched openings with wrought-iron and a hipped tile roof with finial. The entrance was enclosed in May, 1965, with glass doors at the arches of the front facade. The front fenestration is symmetrical and each window is hooded and joined together with stylized Art Deco ornamentation based upon Churrigueresque sources.

The front entrance is segmentally arched, hooded with Art Deco/Spanish Renaissance ornamentation and flanked by pilasters having decorative Spanish design luminaires.

Tri-grouped casement windows are on either side of the entrance; a reveal of about six inches was created by recessing the windows into the thick walls of the building.

A secondary entrance is located on the south side of the building and has an arched opening with a small tile roof. Additional casement windows with Churrigueresque detail are also located on the north/and south elevations. A small room addition was added to the south elevation in September 1975 which partially obscured the arched side entrance. Also a second story was added to the rear of the City Hall in May, 1965, however, it is not visible from the front of the building. The building's original architecture is demonstrated primarily by its front facade.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

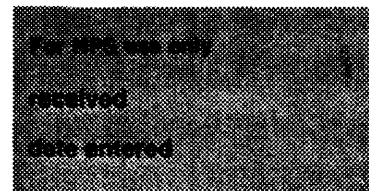
The features of the interior entryway of the City Hall are carried out in the same styling as the exterior. The foyer is in its original condition with the exception of a lighted drop ceiling and a new doorway added in 1965. This entryway has four arched doorways and four additional Spanish arches (see enclosed photographs), three of which serve as entryways and the fourth serves primarily a design function. The arched entryways are accented with coving that follows the perimeter of the entryway, a red clay tile floor covers the entire entryway, wrought-iron railing joins arches and ceiling-hung, Spanish-design lighting fixtures are present in the foyer.

The Brea City Hall is located at the northeast corner of a 4.474 acre City Park. Immediately to the southwest of the City Hall is a 25-meter municipal plunge (swimming pool) and bathhouse which was constructed in 1928 at the same time the City Hall was constructed. The bathhouse/ ^{also combines Art Deco and} Spanish Revival design. A red tile gable roof splits the stucco building in half (remaining portion of the building has a flat roof). The east elevation has an arched entryway and both the east and west elevations each have eight evenly-spaced, rectangular buttresses adding an overall symmetrical design to the building. The plunge was modernized with a new filtration system in 1977 and glass doors added to the west elevation.

Located at the southeast corner of the park is a single-story, Spanish style building with ^{red tile roof and a} a/basement. After the City Park had been established and the City Hall erected, this building was constructed in 1931 as the home of the Brea American

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Continuation sheet Description Item number 7 Page 2

Legion Post No. 181. The Legion Hall is a white painted brick building with an arched entryway (glass doors added in 1970) and a low-pitched, red mission tile roof. The north section of the building has side-facing gables and a series of pilasters flank recessed windows across the building's facade. The south section has a shed roof which slopes toward the side of the property.

In addition to the above described buildings, a basketball court, restroom, rose garden, gazebo and playground have been constructed in the park since 1970. Two modern temporary buildings are attached to the City Hall and American Legion building; parking lots are also adjacent to these two buildings. These items are non-contributing elements of the historic value of this property but are mentioned only for identification purposes.

Immediately to the west of the park and across the street are located some of the homes of the original neighborhood developed by the Union Oil Company in the early 1920's for its oil field workers.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1922 - 1929 **Builder/Architect** Allen Ruoff

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Brea City Hall, constructed in 1928, was in planning stages by the City's Board of Trustees (City Council) as early as February 15, 1922.⁽¹⁾ The Hall is significant for its historic association with the early development of Brea, North Orange County, the California oil industry, and was the first city government facility to consolidate all municipal functions, including a public library, into one building in the County. The design of the City Hall is exemplary for its skillful combination of Art Deco and Spanish Colonial Revival styling. It is also notable for its location in the City Park, surrounded by attractive public open space. The City Hall, park and municipal plunge were planned as an integrated complex, and served as the center of local government until the recent removal of city offices to the new civic complex.

During the same period of time (1922-1923) that the City's Board of Trustees was considering a site for a new city hall and a public park, the same civic leaders were planning for the organization of Brea's first Volunteer Fire Department and dealing with traffic congestion problems caused by the stagecoach line's loading and unloading on the main business street.⁽²⁾

Brea (a Spanish word meaning "tar" or "asphalt"), was officially incorporated as a City in 1917 with a population of 732; it has the pioneering heritage of a town that was born and raised on the oil industry. The oil boom of the early 1900s and

9. Major Bibliographical References

Brea City Council Minutes 1922 to 1927, Number One Civic Center Circle
Mel Scott, American City Planning Since 1890, 1969
Purl Harding, History of Brea to 1950, 1950, Number One Civic Center Circle
Dean Millen, Interview June 1, 1983

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 4.474 acres

Quadrangle name La Habra

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

11	4116	61810	317	512	8210
Zone	Easting	Northing			

B

Zone	Easting	Northing			

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property occupies Lot A of Tract No. 154 and measures 649 feet by 300 feet. Boundaries are drawn to encompass the historic limits of the city park.

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

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tom Combiths-Associate Planner Assisted by Pam Eicholtz-Intern

organization City of Brea date June 8, 1983

street & number Number One Civic Center Circle telephone (714) 990-7758

city or town Brea state California

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *D. Millen*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 12/20/83

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

Mel Scott Entered in the National Register date 5/24/84
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:
Chief of Registration

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related opportunities for employment attracted many young families to settle in Brea to seek a livelihood. By that time, the Pacific Electric Railroad had brought its line through Brea which increased pressures for growth. Brea's first municipal offices were rented and located on the second floor of the Sewell Building (Brea's first brick-constructed building) just north of the future City Hall site.

Pomona Avenue (known today as Brea Boulevard) was the main thoroughfare to the north and was paved curb-to-curb for the first time in 1922. It was on this street that the City officials first began to look at property owned by the Union Oil Company. A down payment to Union Oil for the property on Pomona Avenue eventually became the site of the City's first own municipal offices.⁽³⁾

Over five years were spent by civic leaders planning and considering plans for a new city hall and park. In February, 1922, as indicated in City Council minutes, plans were submitted for a new city hall by Kays Architect of Santa Ana, but must have not been satisfactory to the City since they were never implemented and no records exist of their disposition. According to official City Council minutes for the next several years, discussion continued with regard to a site for the city hall and park. Although the term 'community planning' was never used, it was evidenced in the deliberations of civic leaders. In October, 1927, a special municipal election was held which approved by a two-thirds vote a bonded debt of \$60,000 for the acquisition and construction of a 4 ½ acre city park, swimming pool and city hall, all to be located on the same site.⁽⁴⁾ This effort was a considerable undertaking for a community with a population under 2,000. We believe that the influence of the "City Beautiful" movement from the Chicago World's Fair is discernable by this effort in attempting to

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foster civic pride in government through municipal improvement and beautification.⁽⁵⁾
This philosophy had already taken physical form in several efforts to make beautiful public buildings and the spaces that surround them (e.g., Chicago, New York City, St. Louis and San Francisco).⁽⁶⁾

Not only was the design of the City Hall meritorious because of its architectural detail, but the placing of the building in a park setting was unusual in Southern California. Allen Ruoff, Los Angeles architect, designed the City Hall, plunge, bathhouse and park as a unit; they are among the few existing public landmarks located in a public park in Orange County today that are more than a half-century old. The plunge itself is one of the oldest fresh water public swimming pools of that era still in operation today in Southern California. The use by Ruoff in the 1920's of Art Deco/Spanish Revival styling for civic architecture constitutes a major landmark in the small-scale urban environment of Brea and Orange County.

In addition to the contribution of the plunge and bathhouse to the historical significance of the City Hall and park, located at the southeast corner of the site is the old American Legion Hall built in 1931 (after the construction of the park and City Hall). It utilized Spanish Revival elements to be compatible with the existing buildings on the site and therefore, was a harmonious addition to the park plan.⁽⁷⁾

Also located in the park are modern improvements including a basketball court, a restroom, a playground, a gazebo and a rose garden. All of these improvements were added to the park after 1970 and are therefore non-contributing to the historical significance of this site.

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The new City Hall for the first time consolidated all of the City's municipal functions within one building, including a public library. In addition, it was the first such municipal facility in Orange County. (8)

The Hall housed the City Jail, Fire Department, Public Library, Municipal Judge's office, the Water Department, Council Chambers and Administrative Staff.

Many oil field workers and their families settled in homes provided for them by the oil companies in and around the general area of the new City Hall. Brea was a family-oriented community different from the boom town that sprang up as a result of the Gold Rush. The oil field workers were family-oriented, conservative and stable individuals. (9) The City Hall, plunge and the park became the focus of summer activities for their families when the Brea Municipal Band would hold its summer concerts on the park lawn and the Lions Club would have its annual town barbecue. (10)

In the early 1930's, the Shaffer Memorial Fountain, a unique water fountain with a thirty-five foot diameter base and "dancing colored waters" was donated to the City by Shaffer Tool Company, one of Brea's oldest oil well related industries. (11) The fountain was placed in the City Park immediately to the south of the City Hall and became an attractive and well known landmark until its removal in the 1960's when it became dysfunctional. The City Hall Park itself was the only park in the community until the late 1940's, and for that reason was the hub of the social life of early Brea. The social fabric of the community was also represented through the City Hall and Park by donation of gifts through the City in Living Tree Programs of elm, Pepper and magnolia trees to the park by members of the community commemorating

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birthdays, anniversaries and holidays.

The community life of early Brea in the 1920's and 30's was focused around this approximately $4\frac{1}{2}$ acre block. At the time the American Legion Hall was added to the site, a balanced tri-functional plan was produced: a) The old City Hall represented the governmental element of the community life, b) the park and plunge, the recreational element, and c) the Legion Hall, the social element, by being the host for many years to come of various community dances and dinners. These three buildings and the park represent to the community's residents, neighbors and visitors a critical tangible link with Brea's 1920's and 30's "small town cultural heritage." Brea/^{today} is located at the eastern fringe of the Los Angeles/Orange County metropolitan area and the home of a regional commercial center, international business and a growing population of 32,000. The preservation of the City Park and its buildings will ensure that future generations will have a genuine opportunity to experience and enjoy the heritage of the once small "oil boom" American town.

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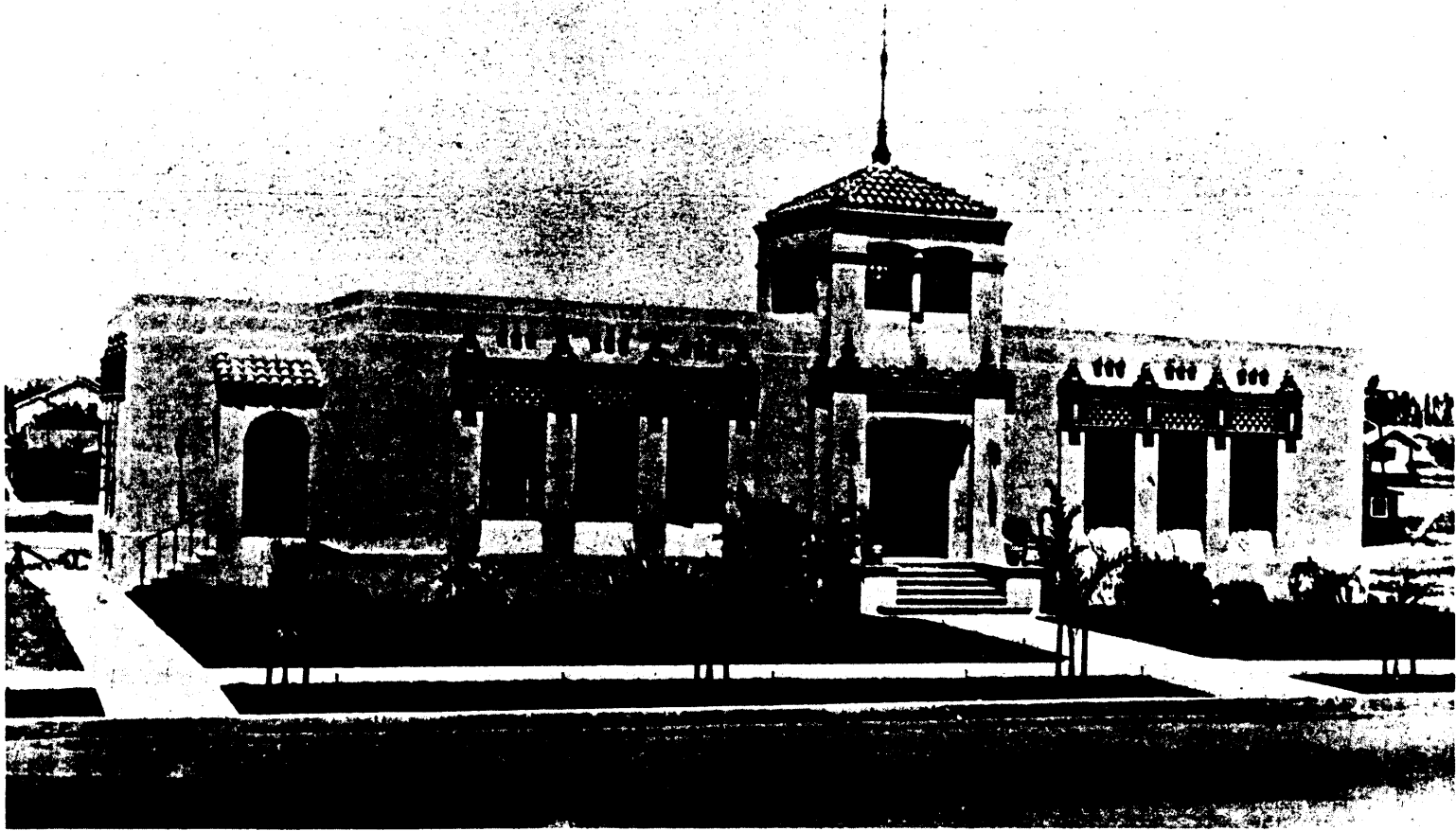
CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 5

FOOTNOTES

1. City of Brea, City Council Minutes, February 15, 1922 and March 1, 1922.
2. City of Brea, City Council Minutes, March 1, 1922 and November 21, 1923.
3. City of Brea, City Council Minutes, February 20, 1924.
4. City of Brea City Council Minutes, October 3, 1927.
5. Scott, Mel, American City Planning Since 1890, University of California Press, Berkeley, California, 1969, p. 43.
6. Ibid, pp. 55-70.
7. Harding, Purl, History of Brea to 1950, (Brea Chamber of Commerce: Brea Progress Publishers, 1950), pp. 24-25.
8. Telephone interview held June 3, 1983, with seven Orange County cities (Santa Ana, Anaheim, Huntington Beach, Newport Beach, Orange, Fullerton, and Seal Beach), Brea, California.
9. Harding, Purl, History of Brea to 1950, (Brea Chamber of Commerce: Brea Progress Publishers, 1950), p. 17.
10. Millen, Dean, interview held by telephone June 1, 1983, Brea, California.
11. Harding, Purl, History of Brea to 1950, (Brea Chamber of Commerce: Brea Progress Publishers, 1950), p. 54.

Brea City Hall and Park
401 South Brea Blvd.
Brea, Orange County, California

1929 Photograph
EXHIBIT "A"

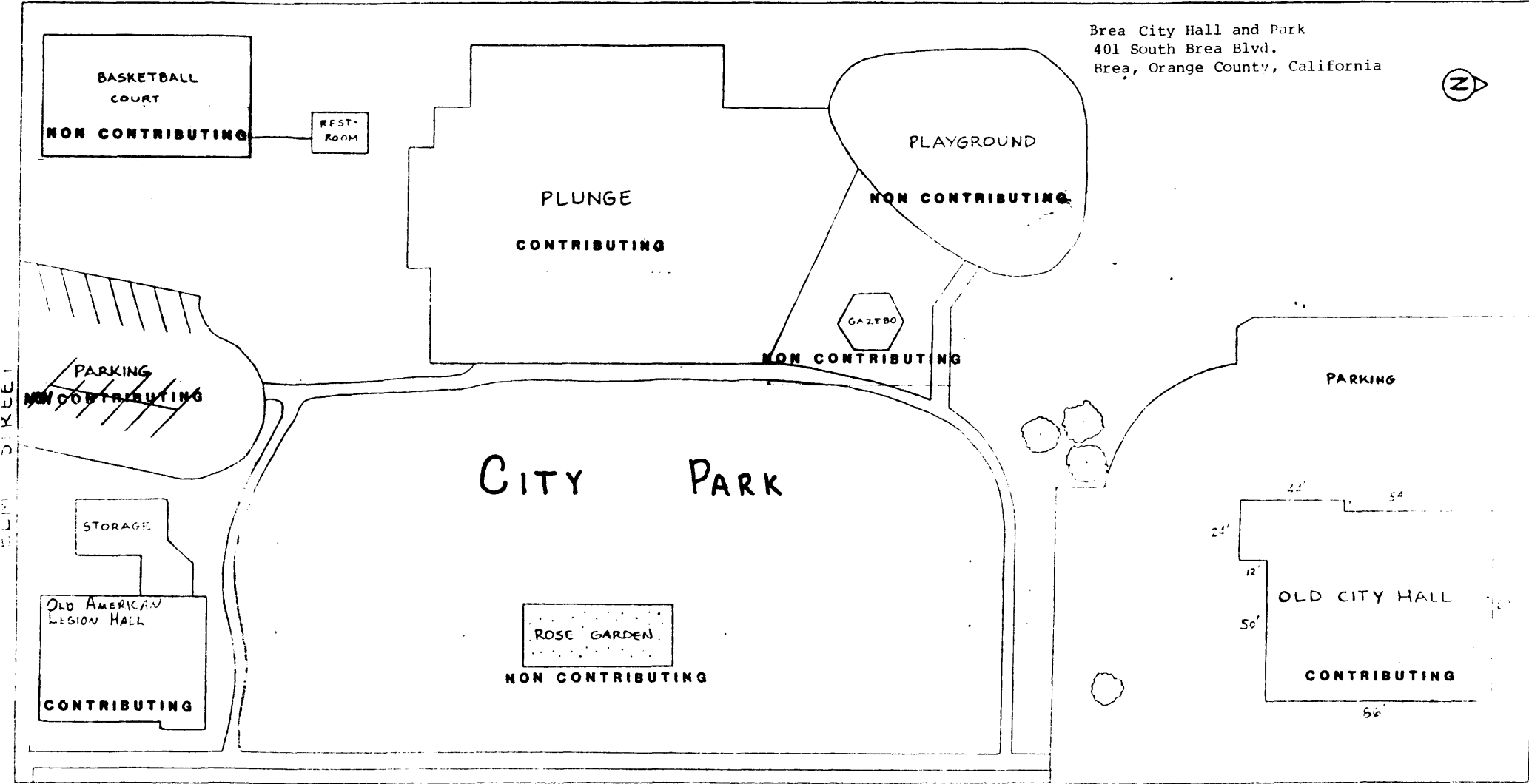


BREA CITY HALL

The Brea City Hall was completed in 1929 and has been utilized continuously since that time. Due to Brea's rapid growth, this facility is no longer adequate and City officials and staff move to their new home with a strong sense of Brea heritage, symbolized by the original City Hall.

WALNUT AVENUE

Brea City Hall and Park
401 South Brea Blvd.
Brea, Orange County, California



BASKETBALL COURT
NON CONTRIBUTING

REST-ROOM

PLUNGE
CONTRIBUTING

PLAYGROUND
NON CONTRIBUTING

GAZEBO
NON CONTRIBUTING

PARKING
NON CONTRIBUTING

PARKING

CITY PARK

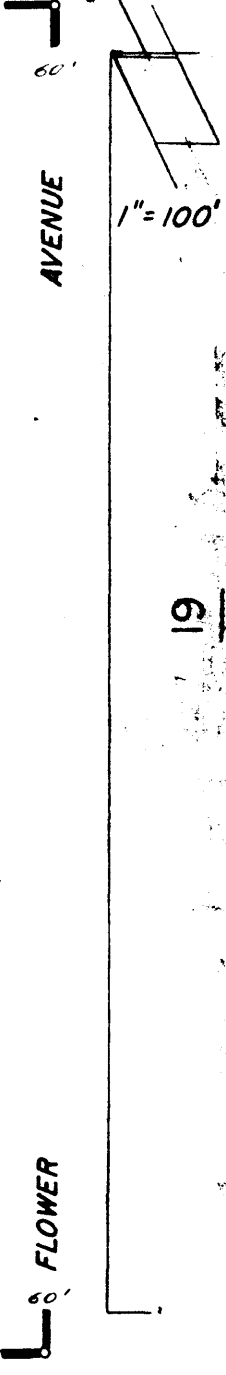
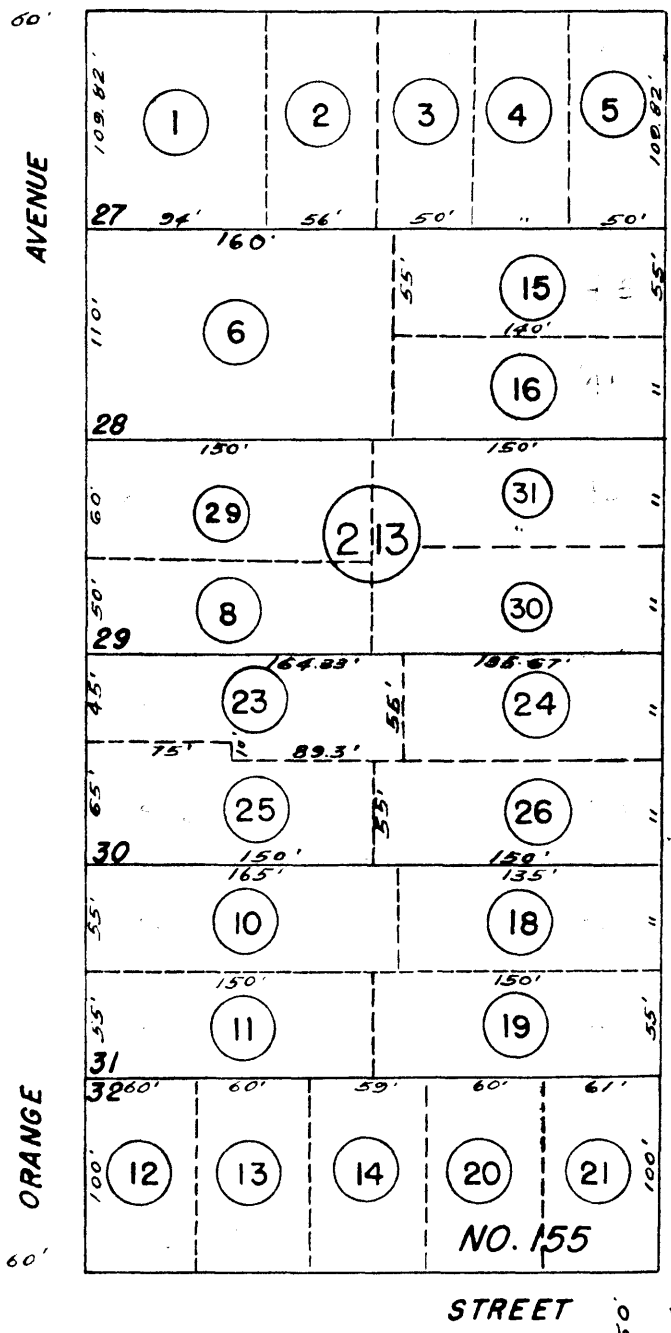
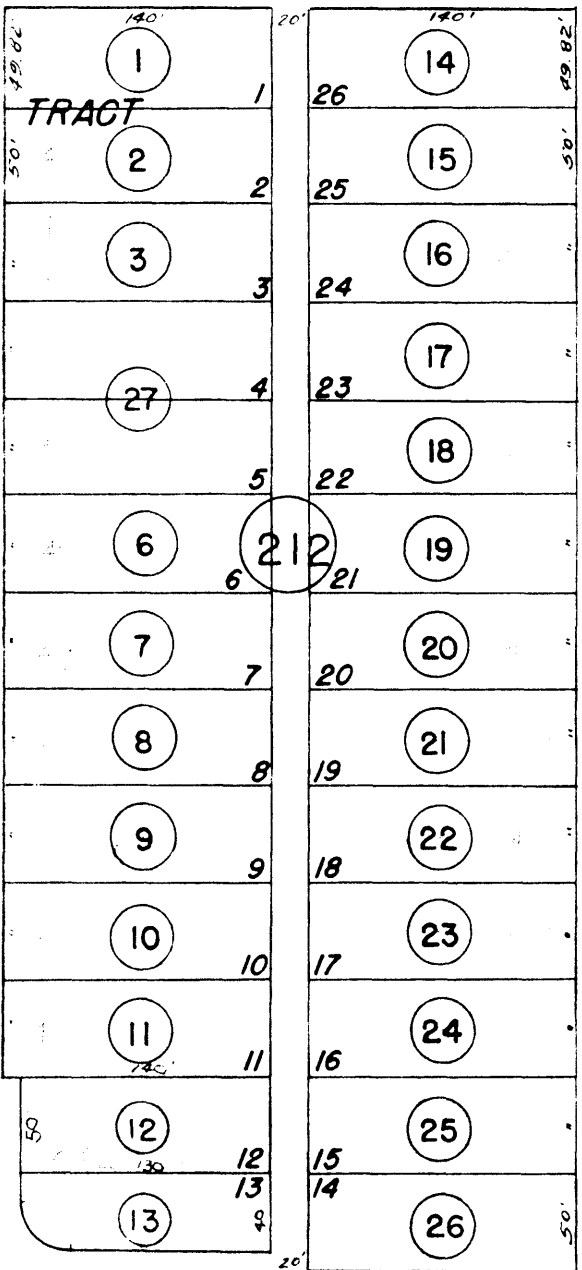
ROSE GARDEN
NON CONTRIBUTING

STORAGE

OLD AMERICAN
LEGION HALL
CONTRIBUTING

OLD CITY HALL
CONTRIBUTING

BREA BLVD.



NOTE - ASSESSOR'S BLOCK &
PARCEL NUMBERS
SHOWN IN CIRCLES

ASSESSOR'S MAP
BOOK 20 PAGE 21
COUNTY OF ORANGE

Brea City Hall and Park
401 South Brea Blvd.
Brea, Orange County, California



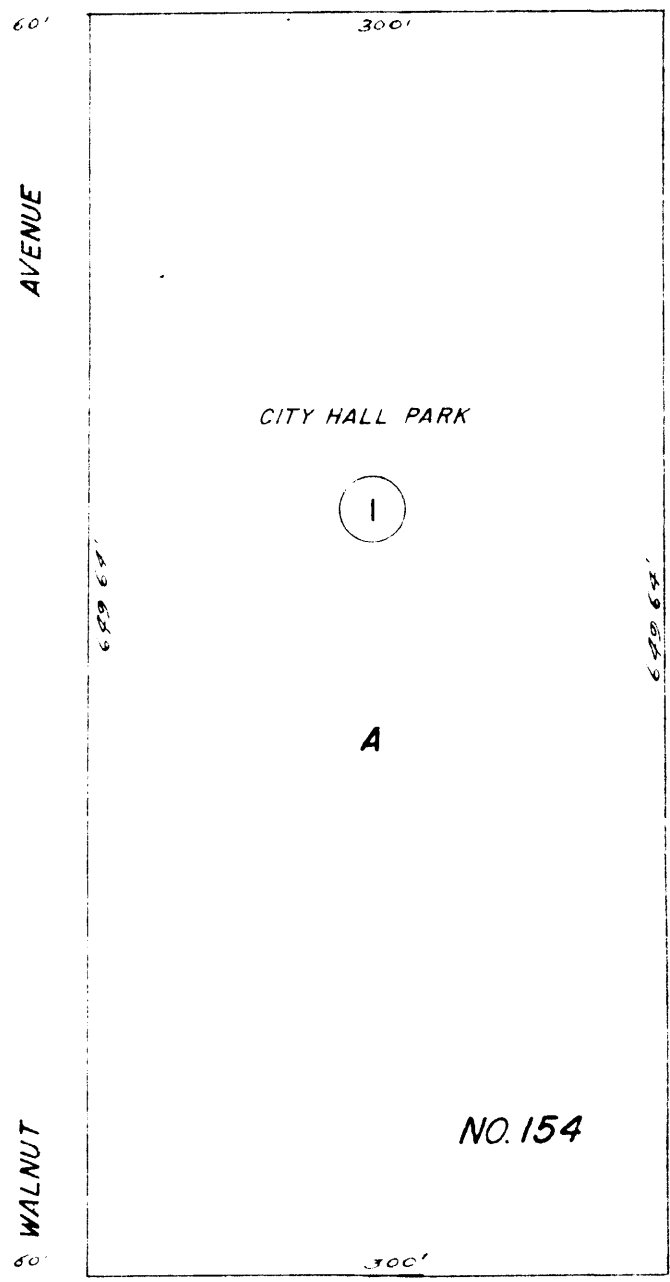
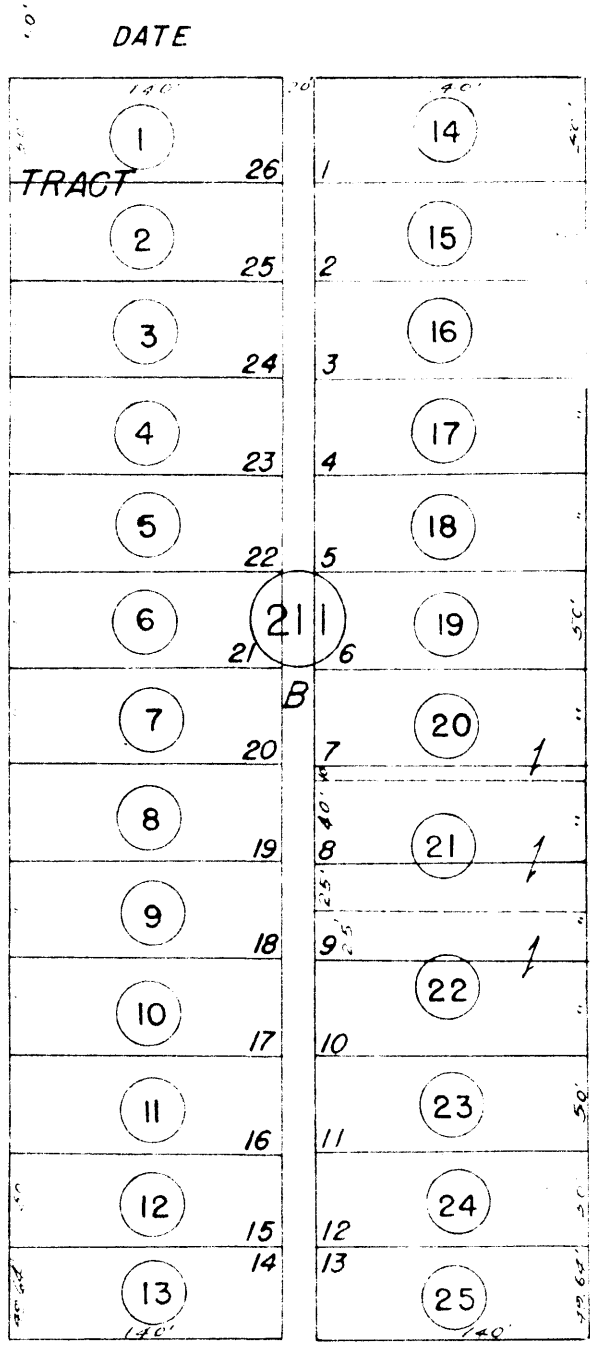
CC

RI/VD

POMONA AVE

DOLE

80



AVENUE

AVENUE

MADRONA

WALNUT

DATE

TRACT

CITY HALL PARK

NO. 154

MARCH 1948

TRACT NO. 154 M.M. 12-14
TRACT NO. 155 M.M. 11-44