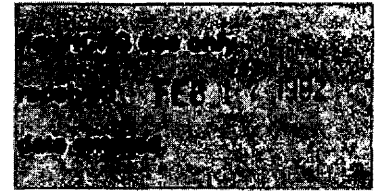


United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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



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

MAR 19 1982

1. Name

historic The Plaza Historic District

and/or common Downtown Orange

RECEIVED
MAY 15 1980

2. Location

Roughly bounded by Maple and Almond
Aves., Orange and Olive Sts.

street & number (See Continuation Sheet) _____ not for publication

city, town Orange _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 35 39th

state California code 06 county Orange code 059

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple ownership (List attached)

street & number _____

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Los Angeles County Recorder Orange County Recorder

street & number 227 North Broadway 630 North Broadway

city, town Los Angeles, California 90012 Santa Ana, California 92701
state

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

National Register of Historic Places
title ("The Plaza") has this property been determined eligible? yes _____ no

date December 1978 _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Keeper of the National Register

city, town Washington, D.C. state _____

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 _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Plaza Historic District contains fifty-three buildings of which thirty-five are considered to be historic and contributing to the significance of the district. The majority of these are brick commercial in style, however a few concrete buildings may also be found. The district centers upon The Plaza, a public square. The Plaza was laid out in 1886 and has been in continuous use since that date. The circular park in the center of The Plaza holds a fountain dating from 1937 and a number of mature trees, some of which date from the park's creation. Brick sidewalks and planters were added to the corners in 1970. The Plaza is the hub from which two streets radiate in four directions. The north-south street is Glassell Street and the east-west street is Chapman Avenue. The buildings within the first block north and south and the first one and one-half blocks east and west of The Plaza include most of the district. Older residential homes and a scattered number of commercial buildings as well as more recent buildings surround the district. Within three blocks of The Plaza is the original Orange High School campus (now Chapman College) which has several buildings listed on the National Register. Other potential National Register properties in the vicinity provide a historic "conservation" area or "old towne" community setting. Almost all of the buildings within the district adjoin one another to form a continuous row of structures. Few breaks appear between buildings giving the district a distinct appearance as a single integral unit. While a few of the district's buildings' facades have been altered over the years, in almost all such instances, the

(Continued on Continuation Sheet)

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1871-1931 **Builder/Architect** Unknown (See descriptions)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

While many California communities have successfully preserved their historic downtown commercial districts as physical reminders of their heritage, The Plaza Historic District in the City of Orange clearly stands out among almost all such districts in the state. The Plaza central square with its quaint traffic circle park provides the most outstanding feature of the proposed district. This feature combined with the surrounding commercial buildings, most of which range in age from the 1880's to the 1930's, captures the feeling of time and place so often associated with Southern California's rural past, now almost lost amid rapid urbanization. A similar historic district containing a public square in continuous use since its creation does not appear to exist in Southern California. Such a public square in the heart of a community's central business district is, indeed, a most unusual community planning/landscape architectural element throughout the Western United States.¹ On a more local level, the district has played significant roles in the areas of architecture, agriculture, commerce and the theater. These areas demonstrate the salient position the district has had in the social, political and economic development of Orange and its surroundings. Yet, on a state-wide level of historic significance, The Plaza dominates the district by setting it apart as a unique California landmark and cultural resource.

The Town of Orange traces its beginnings to the breakup of the 1810 Spanish land grant, the Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana. When this sprawling cattle ranch

(Continued on Continuation Sheet)

NTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

9. Major Bibliographical References

(See Continuation Sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property Eight acres

Quadrangle name Orange

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	1	4	2	1	0	9	0	3	7	3	8	7	6	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

see continuation sheet

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

state 7e code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul F. Clark, President, Orange Community Historical Society (A)
Frederick W. Buss, Assistant Planner, City of Orange (B)

organization Orange Community Historical Society (A) date
City of Orange (B)

street & number 300 East Chapman Avenue (B) telephone (714) 532-0434 (B)

city or town Orange 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature [Signature]

title date 2-2-82

For HCRS use only

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

[Signature] Entered in the National Register date 3/19/82

Attess: Chief of Registration date

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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Location:

The 100 blocks of north and south Glassell Street; the 100 blocks of east and west Chapman Avenue; 201, 205, 207, 211, 223 West Chapman Avenue; 201, 208, 212 East Chapman Avenue; 111, 120, 122, 124 South Orange Street; 127, 133 South Olive Street; 80, 84, 60 Plaza Square; 111, 119, 123 North Olive Street. The eight blocks in downtown Orange centered on Orange Plaza bounded by Almond Avenue, Lemon Street, Maple Avenue, and Grand Street.

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PROPERTY OWNERS:

1. Jesus Galvin, P.O. Box 4476, Santa Ana, Ca. 92702
2. Jack Arpejian, 207 W. Chapman Ave., Orange, Ca. 92666
3. Charles Miles, 722 W. Chapman Ave., Orange, Ca. 92668
4. Virgil G. Nolde, 12702 7th Street, Garden Grove, Ca. 92640
5. Virgil G. Nolde, 12702 7th Street, Garden Grove, Ca. 92640
6. Virgil G. Nolde, 12702 7th Street, Garden Grove, Ca. 92640
7. Cecil C. Wright, 60 Plaza Square, Orange, Ca. 92666
8. Masonic Temple Association of Orange, P.O. Box 230, Orange, Ca. 92666
9. Andrew H. Hansen, 114 N. Glassell Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
10. Lester Snyder, TR, 122 N. Glassell Street, Orange, Ca. 92666

11. Sandra Banner, 250 Almont Drive, Beverly Hills, Ca. 90211
12. Duncan Clark, 259 S. Glassell Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
13. Vincent Licata, 13712 Rushmore Lane, Santa Ana, California 92705
14. Son-Light Christian Center, Inc., 172 N. Glassell Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
15. Wallace C. Zirkle, 1140 E. Rose Avenue, Orange, Ca. 92667
James Housley, 2101 N. Towner, Santa Ana, Ca. 92706
16. Son-Light Christian Center, Inc., 172 N. Glassell Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
17. Jack P. Selman, et al, 144 N. Orange Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
18. Steven R. Smith, P.O. Box 11631, Santa Ana, Ca. 92711
19. Wells Fargo Bank, Real Property #931, P.O. Box 4400, San Francisco, Ca 94144

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20. Elk's Building Association of Orange, P.O. Box 768, 211 E. Chapman Avenue, Orange, Ca. 92666
21. Donald D. Greek, et al, % Noble Management Company, 2323 North Tustin Avenue, Suite Z, Santa Ana, California 92705
22. Assistance League of Orange, California, Inc., 124 S. Orange Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
23. David Corbisier, et al, 1247 N. Glassell St., Suite 1, Orange, Ca. 92666
24. Assistance League of Orange, Ca., Inc., 124 S. Orange Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
25. Thomas G. Flock, 1530 Center Street, Redlands, Ca. 92373
Samuel G. Mahdesian, 609 S. Mansfield Avenue, Los Angeles, Ca. 90036
26. Wilfried A. Meyer, 2525 Williamson Avenue, Fullerton, Ca. 92633
27. Carlos H. Alvarez, et al, 131 S. Glassell Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
28. Andrew Vargo, 303 N. Waverly Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
29. Clyde W. Higgins, 155 S. Glassell Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
30. Clyde W. Higgins, 155 S. Glassell Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
31. Orange County Fruit Exchange, 195 S. Glassell Street, P.O. Box 189, Orange, Ca. 92666
32. Susan Elwell Ames, et al, 32938 Avenida del Rosal, San Juan Capistrano, Ca 92675
33. Ronald E. Presta, 1729 S. Upper Terrace Rd., Spokane, Wa. 99203
34. Robert D. Smith, et al, 725 N. Tustin Street, Orange, Ca. 92667
35. Norbert Foigelman Trust, 10371 Balliet Dr., Villa Park, Ca. 92667
36. Leason Pomeroy III, 44 Plaza Square, Orange, Ca. 92666
37. Mark Hurwitz, 100 W. Chapman Avenue, Orange, Ca. 92666
38. Roderick A. Fraser, 411 S. Batavia, Orange, Ca. 92668
39. Ann I. Post, P.O. Box 813, Orange, Ca. 92666

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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- 40. Frederick C. Krebs, 212 East Chapman Avenue, Orange, CA 92666
- 41. Jamie Tiscareno et al, 351 Glenoaks Street, Brea, CA 92621

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- A. Jack Arpejian, 207 W. Chapman Ave., Orange, Ca. 92666
- B. Andrew D. Verburg, 145 N. Jewell Place, Orange, Ca. 92668
- C. Sandra Banner, 250 Almont Drive, Beverly Hills, Ca. 90211
- D. Duncan Clark, 259 S. Glassell Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
- E. Steve Finlay, P.O. Box 278, Orange, Ca. 92666
- F. Steve Finley, 141 N. Glassell Street, Orange, Ca. 92666
- G. Charles Casserly, TR, 495 Las Palmas Dr., Santa Barbara, Ca. 93110
- H. Wells Fargo Bank, Trust Real Estate Dept., 770 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Ca 90017
- I. Wells Fargo Bank, Trust Real Estate Dept., 770 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Ca 90017
- J. Wells Fargo Bank, Trust Real Estate Dept., 770 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, Ca 90017
- K. Kenneth Leung, 121 1/2 N. Glassell St., Suite 1, Orange, Ca. 92666
- L. Carlos H. Alvarez, et al, 131 S. Glassell Street, Orange, Ca. 92666

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rear portions of these buildings have successfully preserved the original brick construction style and appearance. The district presents its component parts in a holistic manner by not simply focusing on facades or store fronts as measures of the degree of historic integrity.

Currently the district maintains its commercial uses although these have changed in recent years as the agricultural economic base of Orange has been replaced with increased urbanization. A number of antique dealers have collected within or nearby the district taking advantage of the historic atmosphere. Also, several office-professional firms specializing in engineering, architecture and planning have located here. These examples of present district occupants reflect the changes that have affected the district and suggest its potential for preserving, in an economically viable fashion, the character and ambience of small town America on the rapidly evolving Southern California landscape.

CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS:

1. 223 West Chapman Avenue Date: 1926
"W. O. Hart Post Office"
Brick commercial with decorative front
AP #39-173-11
2. 201, 205 West Chapman Avenue Date: ca. 1920
Brick commercial with small cornice
AP #39-173-13, 14, 20, 21
3. 123 North Olive Street Date: 1925
"Ward's Cookie Factory"
Concrete and cement brick
AP #39-174-08
4. 131, 133 W. Chapman Avenue & Date: 1922
111 North Olive Street
Brick commercial
AP #39-174-11, 12

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5. 109, 129 West Chapman Avenue Date: 1920
"Jorn Building Addition"
Brick commercial, wire glass skylight, two floors, repeats design of adjacent building.
AP #39-174-11, 12
6. 105 West Chapman Avenue & Date: 1910
58 Plaza Square (Jorn Building)
Brick commercial, yellow brick veneer with stone cornice, wire glass skylight.
AP #39-174-11, 12
7. 60 Plaza Square Date: 1889
"Pixley Newspaper Office"
Brick commercial with modestly decorated front
AP #39-174-10
8. 102, 106, 108 North Glassell Street Date: 1912
73, 75 Plaza Square
"D. F. Campbell Building" or "Campbell's Opera House"
AP #39-174-13
9. Reclassified to Non-Contributing
10. Reclassified to Non-Contributing
11. Reclassified to Non-Contributing
12. 154 North Glassell Street Date: 1931
"Santa Ana Valley Irrigation Company Building"
Brick commercial, includes rear garage
AP #39-174-02
13. 160, 162 North Glassell Street Date: ca. 1920
Brick commercial
AP #39-174-17

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14. 172 North Glassell Street Date: 1928
"Orange or Pantages Theater"
Reinforced concrete with wood truss, includes balcony, stage and considerable
ornamentation, plastered interior
AP #39-174-18
15. 177 North Glassell Street Date: ca. 1920
108, 112, 116 E. Maple Avenue
"Eltistie Addition"
Brick commercial with wood truss on concrete floor
AP #39-174-24 & 39-174-22
16. 161, 165, 169, 173 North Glassell Street Date: 1911
"M. Eltistie Building"
Brick commercial
AP #39-251-27
17. 131, 141, 143 North Glassell Street Date: 1916
144 North Orange Street
"Kogler Hardware Building"
Brick commercial with decorative corniced facade, two floors
AP #39-251-03
18. 101, 109, 115, 117, 121-1/2, 123 North Glassell Street Date: 1905
78, 80, 84 Plaza Square
"N. T. Edwards Block"
Brick veneered with steel post reinforcement, wire glass skylight, two floors
AP #39-251-06, 30
19. 101 E. Chapman Avenue Date: 1928
"First National Bank"
Architects: Morgan, Walls and Clements
Reinforced concrete with steel beams and wood truss
Corinthian columned Beaux Arts Bank
AP #39-251-08, 20, 21
20. 201, 211 East Chapman Avenue Date: 1924
115, 117 North Orange Street
"Elk's Building"
Concrete building with second floor hall, steel truss reinforcement on concrete
columns over hall.
AP #39-252-07

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-
21. 111 South Orange Street Date: 1910
"Barger's Hall"
Brick commercial with cornice, recent mural on exterior west wall, two floors
AP #390-382-01
22. 122, 124 South Orange Street Date: 1912
"Alfred Kuhn Building"
Brick commercial
AP #390-381-18, 19
23. 112, 116, 118, 120 E. Chapman Avenue Date: 1900
"Odd Fellows Hall" or "Watson's Drug Store"
Brick veneered with wood posts, two stories, exterior remodelled to present
Mission Revival style about 1919
AP #390-381-20, 21
24. 20 Plaza Square Date: 1922
"Old Orange Building and Loan Bank"
Brick commercial
AP #390-381-18, 19
25. 101, 107 S. Glassell Street Date: 1901
22, 24-1/2 Plaza Square
"M. L. Willits Building"
Brick veneered with modern exterior placed on building in 1935, two floors
AP #390-381-01
26. 109 S. Glassell Street Date: 1920
Brick commercial
AP #390-381-02
27. Reclassified to Non-Contributing
28. Reclassified to Non-Contributing

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29. Reclassified to Non-Contributing
30. 183, 185 S. Glassell Street Date: 1922
Brick with later concrete addition in rear
AP #39-381-09, 10
31. 195 S. Glassell Street Date: 1923
"Orange County Fruit Exchange" or "Sun-kist Building"
Brick with frame cornice and tile roof, similar design to "Riverside-Arlington
Heights Fruit Exchange" in Riverside, California
AP #390-381-11
32. 142, 144 S. Glassell Street Date: 1887
"M. Dobner Building"
Brick veneered with brick rear addition
AP #41-164-18
33. 132, 134, 136, 138, 140 S. Glassell Street Date: 1914
"Friedman Hall"
Brick commercial with second floor hall, wire glass skylight
AP #41-164-09, 10
34. 108, 110, 114, 118, 122, 126 S. Glassell Street Date: 1907
38, 40, 42 Plaza Square
"Ehlen and Grote Building"
Brick commercial with wood posts, two floors, corniced facade, wire glass
skylight, advertising murals on exterior south wall
AP #41-164-17
35. 100, 104 S. Glassell Street Date: 1905
30, 34, 36 Plaza Square
"M. C. Cuddleback Building"
Brick and concrete block, veneered, with cornice
AP #41-164-12
36. 44 Plaza Square Date: 1909
"Orange Daily News Building"
Brick commercial, exterior remodelled to present condition in 1930
AP #41-164-03, 16

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37. 100 W. Chapman Avenue Date: 1905 (major construction)
"Ainsworth Block"
Building built originally about 1888 (iron post has: "1888 Baker Iron Works
Los Angeles"), then original frame expanded on, brick veneered, wire glass
skylight, two floors
AP #41-164-14
38. 118 W. Chapman Avenue Date: 1922
Brick commercial with wood truss and concrete floor, wire glass skylight
AP #41-164-01
39. 127, 133, 139, 145 S. Olive Street Date: 1914
"McGiness Print Shop"
Brick commercial with wood truss and concrete floor
AP #41-164-04 & 41-164-03
40. 212 E. Chapman Avenue Date: C.1915
Brick commercial with wood truss and basement
AP #390-382-03 Original design concealed by reversible alteration.
41. 208 E. Chapman Avenue C.1915
Brick commercial with wood truss and basement
AP #390-382-02 Original design concealed by reversible alteration.

CONTRIBUTING HISTORIC OBJECT:

Sidewalk tie-ring for horses - located on the west side of Glassell Street
approximately 140 feet north of the centerline of Almond Avenue (see star on sketch
map).

NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS:

- A. 207, 211 West Chapman Avenue
Extensive remodeling removes this from the district.
- B. 119 North Olive Street
This is a relatively new building.
- C. 138, 140, 142, 144, 146, 148 North Glassell Street
This one was questionable - there has been extensive remodelling of the facade.

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E. 153, 155 North Glassell Street

This one was also questionable - the facade has been remodelled although the rear seems to maintain some continuity with the rest of the district.

F. 149, 151 North Glassell Street

This appears to be a newer building and is out of character with the rest of the district.

G. Portion of 131 North Glassell Street

New addition to original building - this portion is only one story while the rest of the building is two stories - out of character.

H. Portion of 101 East Chapman Avenue

New addition to the original building - totally different architectural style.

I. 104, 106 East Chapman Avenue

New addition to 102 E. Chapman, same style facade - out of character.

J. 102 East Chapman Avenue (16 Plaza Square)

Extensive exterior modification brought building into 50's style facade.

K. 121 South Glassell Street

This is a facade only - the building was gutted by fire and removed.

L. Portion of 131 South Glassell Street

A new building and addition was added to the original building and now partially surrounds original building. The total facade change is out of character with the rest of the district.

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9. 114 North Glassell Street Date: 1886
"G. Schirm Bakery" (Nick & Fergy's TV)
Brick commercial, wire glass skylight, extensive facade remodeling
AP #39-174-07, 14
10. 122, 128 North Glassell Street Date: 1886
"D.D. Pixley Building" (122-Aames Rents & Sells) (128-Royal Drug)
Brick commercial, extensive facade remodeling
11. 148-A, 150 North Glassell Street Date: 1885
"C.M. Woodruff Building" (O'Hara's Pub)
Brick commercial, first brick building in Orange, Non-contributing, but
with potential for rehabilitation to earlier appearance, extensive
facade remodeling
27. 131 S. Glassell Street Date: 1906
"Gunther Building"
Brick veneered, advertisement mural on exterior of south wall, two
stories, Non-contributing but with potential for rehabilitation to
earlier appearance, extensive facade remodeling
28. 141 South Glassell Street Date: 1923
"Boring Block Addition"
Brick commercial, Non-Contributing but with potential for rehabilitation
to earlier appearance
29. 155 South Glassell Street Date: 1910
"J.P. Boring Block"
Brick commercial with wood truss, sides and rear preserve original building,
Non-contributing with potential for rehabilitation to earlier appearance

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was subdivided in the late 1860's, a Los Angeles lawyer, Alfred B. Chapman² represented several parties in the partition suit. He took about four thousand acres as payment for his fees. Farm lots were first surveyed in the fall of 1870 ranging in size from ten to forty acres.³ In the following year and under the supervision of William T. Glassell, four ten acre lots in the tract's center were further parceled into town lots of about 50 x 150 feet each. The allocation of eight town lots in the middle as a public square created the Plaza.

At first the Plaza was an unimproved dirt square. It hosted a variety of motley activities, such as a playing field, watering area and even a trash dump. Meanwhile, the adjacent town lots ^{acquired} ~~witnessed~~ their first buildings. These structures were of wood frame fabrication, and none have survived within the present day district.

Like most Southern California communities, Orange was strongly affected by the Great Boom of the 1880's,⁴ especially since the Santa Fe Railroad entered Orange about four blocks west of The Plaza in August 1887.⁵ This land boom saw the most important improvements to The Plaza. In 1886 the circular park pattern was designed and surveyed. Plantings (some of which still exist) and a little later an old world style fountain appeared within the new park which became ~~an~~ objects of civic pride.⁶ A number of the first brick commercial buildings also went up at this time, including the C. M. Woodruff store ^{# 11} (1885) and the D. C. Pixley store ^{# 10} (1886). These and other boom era brick buildings, or portions thereof, still stand and add to the district's sense of age and continuity.

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Construction lay dormant in the aftermath of the great boom for over ten years. After 1900, another building period saw the erection of many of the most important structures in the district. Examples of this early twentieth century building era are the N. T. Edwards Block (1905), the Ehlen & Grote Building (1907) and the Kogler Hardware Building (1916). This construction tide receded with the coming of World War I. The final building period influencing the makeup of the district occurred during the 1920's. Notable buildings representing this time would be the Orange or Pantages Theater (1928), the W. O. Hart Post Office (1926) and the former First National Bank Building (1928). This was the fourth and last construction period to have added buildings which now contribute to the district's historic significance. In later years, fronts and interior remodeling have altered some of the buildings in the district, and a few post World War II buildings mildly intrude into the district.

The significance of The Plaza Historic District lies primarily in the area of community planning and landscape architecture. As noted in the opening statements, The Plaza is an extremely unusual California phenomenon. According to the historical geographer, Edward T. Price, "the heartland of central courthouse squares lies around the population center of the United States in Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and Missouri."⁷ As Dr. Price comments in a letter dated January 7, 1980 (see Exhibit 1), few California towns center on squares, and none do in Southern California. This special feature has attracted attention in the descriptive literature relating to the Southland.⁸ Orange has been fortunate to be able to utilize

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The Plaza as a community focal point and identification mark within the Los Angeles-Orange County metropolitan area.

Architecturally, The Plaza Historic District provides a rare opportunity to experience the now bygone ambience of early twentieth century rural America. This is particularly strong within the Plaza square itself, ringed as it is with numerous examples of well preserved turn-of-the-century buildings. In their architectural guidebook, David Gebhart and Robert Winter exclaim, "Amazingly, the plaza and the avenues remain and retain their smalltown scale and charm."⁹ One district edifice, the former First National Bank, finds specific mention in their publication.

In the area of agriculture, it should be noted that the proposed district was, until the 1960's, surrounded by one of California's most productive citrus belts. This is reflected in the functions of at least two of the district's buildings. The first is the Santa Ana Valley Irrigation Company building of 1931. This 1877 cooperative water venture (until it closed its books and sold out in 1977) has always had its headquarters at this site. The Santa Ana Valley Irrigation Company served the farmers of Orange, Santa Ana and Tustin. Without its control of water rights and its extensive system of canals, the economic development of this section of Orange County would have been greatly hampered. The second building of agricultural importance would be the Orange County Fruit Exchange or Sunkist Building. The Orange County Fruit Exchange was one of the original members of the 1893 Southern California Fruit Exchange. This group marketed the citrus product of

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Orange County under the famous "Sunkist" brand.¹⁰

The Plaza Historic District was the commercial hub of the Orange Community. At one time the district held the principal banks, newspapers, stores and public institutions of Orange. Such business centers would have included the former Orange Building and Loan Bank, the Ehlen & Grote Building, the former First National Bank (on which site a bank has always stood since 1887), the M. Dobner Block, and Watson's Drug Store. Many of these buildings have specific associations with pioneer community leaders, including businessman D. C. Pixley, newspaperman W. O. Hart, and state senator N. T. Edwards. Social and humanitarian organizations also had their community headquarters here, such as the 1920's Elk's Building which still serves this benevolent order.

As stated above, the Plaza downtown area was the commercial and social center of historic Orange. Of special importance here is the role of the theater. At one time the district contained four active theaters, at least two of which included stage as well as cinematographic productions among their repertoires. Campbell's Opera House (1912) offered for a time an early showplace for vaudeville acts in Orange. The Orange or Pantages Theater, however, is the most significant. The cultural heritage of the community is exemplified in this handsome structure that once served on the famous West Coast Pantages vaudeville circuit. The interior and exterior are fine although somewhat unfinished examples of theater architectural bravura of the 1920's. This was the showhouse of Orange from 1928 until the early 1970's. In recent years the building has been restored and turned into a church.

An active interest in preserving the historic atmosphere of The Plaza Historic district exist both among property owners within the district and in the Orange

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community as a whole. Recent years have seen the investment of monies by property owners to improve their buildings appearance and this has been accomplished with a sensitivity to the historic architecture of their structures. Unlike many other cities which have "written off" their older urban centers, the Orange municipal government has traditionally encouraged the economic health of the downtown district without resort to massive demolition of major buildings. The Orange Community Historical Society, after sponsoring The Plaza square National Register nomination, promoted a National Register district nomination. The society has now been joined by the Orange Downtown Businessmen's Association, the Old Orange Antique Dealers Association and the City of Orange in this district effort. The city has appointed an "Old Towne" committee to study the area and recommend methods to improve it. It is hoped that a successful nomination will continue this progress and give further recognition to The Plaza Historic District throughout the State of California.

Footnotes:

¹Edward T. Price, "The Central Courthouse Square in the American County Seat," Geographical Review, January, 1968, pp. 29-60.

²For a biographical sketch of Chapman, see James M. Guinn, ed., Historical and Biographical Record of Southern California, (Chicago: Chapman Publishing Co., 1902), p. 327.

³The Anaheim Gazette, December, 1870.

⁴Glen S. Dumke, The Boom of the Eighties in Southern California, (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1944). See also Orange, California, Illustrated and Described, (San Francisco: W. W. Elliott & Co., 1886); reprint edition, (Orange: Friends of the Orange Public Library, 1975).

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⁵Don Meadows, Historic Place Names in Orange County, (Balboa Island: Paisano Press, In., 1966) p. 108.

⁶For further details on this first of many Plaza beautification drives, see the National Register nomination for The Plaza dated 1976.

⁷Price, p. 29.

⁸George W. James, Travelers' Handbook to Southern California, (Pasadena: George Wharton James, (1895)), p. 36.; T. D. Murphy, On Sunset Highways: A Book of Motor Rambles in California, (Boston: Page Company, 1915), p. 33.

⁹A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California, (Santa Barbara: Peregrin Smith, Inc., 1977) p. 429.

¹⁰For a brief description of the importance of the "Sunkist" citrus brand in California history, see Warren A. Beck and David A. Williams, California: A History of the Golden State, (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc. 1972) pp. 288-289.

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Gibson, Wayne D. The Olive Mill: Orange County's Pioneer Industry.

Santa Ana: Orange County Historical Society, 1975.

Friis, Leo J. Orange County Through Four Centuries.

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Records of the City of Orange, City Clerk.

Records of the City of Orange, Planning Department.

Records of the County of Orange, Office of the County Assessor.

The Anaheim Gazette, various issues.

The Orange Daily News, various issues.

The Orange News, various issues.

The Orange Post, various issues.

The Orange Tribune, various issues.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Starting at a point 165 feet west of the centerline of Glassell Street on Maple Avenue, proceed due south 365 feet to the northeast corner of the Ambassador Building Maintenance Company building. Now proceed west 165 feet to the centerline of Olive Street and turn south for approximately 160 feet. Proceed west for 85 feet turning north for 46 feet and west for 87 feet. Turn due south for 152 feet to the centerline of Chapman Avenue and proceed east for 205 feet to the middle of the intersection of Chapman Avenue and Olive Street. Turning south, proceed 303 feet to the intersection of Olive Street and an alley in the middle of the block. Proceed east about 150 feet and south 115 feet stopping at the rear wall of the Satellite Market. Following the edge of this wall, proceed west 119 feet to the front of the building. Now turn south along the middle of the sidewalk past the horse tie-ring for a distance of 211 feet to the centerline of Almond Avenue. Move east through the intersection of Almond Avenue and Glassell Street for 185 feet reaching the southeast corner of the Sunkist Building. At this point turn north and proceed to the southwest corner of the courtyard of the Assistance League of Orange building behind the Radio Shack building: a distance of 415 feet. Turn east and proceed approximately 260 feet to the southeast corner of Brier's Photography. Turn north and follow the east wall of Brier's Photography 211 feet to the centerline of Chapman Avenue and turning westward along the centerline for 6 feet. Head due north along the original wall of the

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Elk's building 211 feet turning east for 280 feet and stopping behind the Chamber of Commerce. Proceed due north for 450 feet to the centerline of Maple Avenue, turn west for 330 feet to the point of origin.