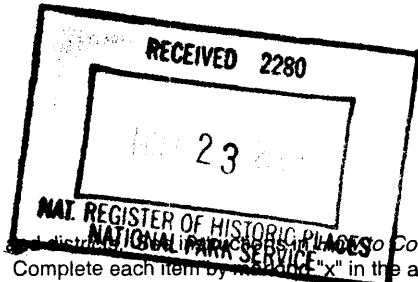


1498

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by entering "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.



1. Name of Property

historic name **Santa Fe Freight Depot**

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number **970 East 3rd Street** NA not for publication

city or town **Los Angeles** NA vicinity

state **California** code **CA** county **Los Angeles** code **037** zip code **90013**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Michael Wayne Clark (8 NOV 2005)
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain):

Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
1.3.06

Santa Fe Freight Depot
Name of Property

Los Angeles, California
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

none

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related/train depot

INDUSTRY/industrial storage/warehouse

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/college

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th century American movements:
Commercial Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Concrete

roof Asphalt

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Santa Fe Freight Depot
Name of Property

Los Angeles, California
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation
Architecture

Period of Significance

1906-1922

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Dates

1906 (original construction)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Albright, Harrison, architect
Leonardt, Carl, builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Santa Fe Freight Depot
Name of Property

Los Angeles, California
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.6 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>11</u>	<u>386300</u>	<u>3767640</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christy Johnson McAvoy, Managing Principal; Frank F. Parrello, Principal
organization Historic Resources Group date October, 2003
street & number 1728 Whitley Avenue telephone (323) 469-2349
city or town Los Angeles state CA zip code 90028

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Dynamic Builders (contact: Carol Lefkowitz, Regional Marketing Director)
street & number 2114 South Hill Street telephone (213) 746-6630
city or town Los Angeles state CA zip code 90007

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

Section 7: Architectural Description

Summary

The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Freight Depot is a reinforced concrete building designed in a utilitarian industrial manner with few style characteristics. The building is situated in an industrial district on the east side of downtown Los Angeles, near the west bank of the Los Angeles River. The building is approximately one quarter-mile (1200 feet) in length, which runs along Santa Fe Avenue. The site (which echoes the shape of the building's footprint) is bounded by E. 4th Street to the south and by E. 3rd Street to the north. The north half of the building (a length of 540 feet) is forty feet wide, and the south half is sixty feet wide, creating an unusually long and narrow footprint. Most of the structure is one story high, with approximately the north one-quarter of the building being taller to accommodate a second story. The roof is flat with a surrounding parapet.

After being abandoned for many years, the building was rehabilitated for adaptive reuse as a school of architecture, the Southern California Institute of Architecture, or SCI-Arc. This certified rehabilitation of the property was undertaken for a rehabilitation tax credit project. All work complied with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The rehabilitation is discussed below.

Exterior

The massing of the building is extremely long and linear both in plan and in elevation. The change in width from forty feet in the north to sixty feet in the south occurs at the halfway point in the plan and causes a jog in the Santa Fe Avenue facade. Where the facade jogs, there are a few windows and doors formerly connected with a pedestrian entrance and a small office (interior partition walls for which was removed at an earlier date). This area is adapted as one of the entrances to the building, now that the approach on foot or by car has overtaken the approach by rail with the new use.

While the two long facades of the building are the major facades in terms of utility and size, the building has an architecturally embellished primary façade on East Third Street at the corner of Santa Fe Avenue. This façade has been altered. In early photographs as well as in Harrison's concept drawings it is a Beaux Arts style façade, a nearly square elevation bounded by broad piers to the sides and a parapet across the top. The square space framed by the piers and parapet has a double-height arch superimposed on it. A large keystone marks the top of the arch, above which was a clock surrounded by ornamentation set into the segmental arched parapet. This ornamentation was removed in 1947 when the Depot, like many older buildings throughout Los Angeles at this time, was "streamlined" to modernize its appearance. The arched profile of the parapet is now flat and the clock was removed. The basic shape of the arch within a square, highlighted by pronounced moldings and articulation, is intact though the details are gone. Within the arch on the upper floor are multi-light windows that were intact except for the glazing when the rehabilitation began. The ground floor has a central door set deep in the façade and flanked by rectangular windows. The current appearance of this façade reflects the 1947 modernization.

The long, utilitarian east and west facades of the building were designed for loading and unloading freight. Train cars would approach the building parallel to its west side. The freight would be transferred to (and from, prior to 1916) local transport such as carts and trucks along the east side, on Santa Fe Avenue. The west facade currently faces a

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 2

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

large vacant parcel of land. Adjacent to this side of the building are currently unused rail tracks following the historic route. Historically, the Santa Fe's 1916 Outbound Freight House (demolished in 1990) lay beyond these tracks, so that the tracks ran between the two parallel buildings.

The east and west side facades are punctuated by rectangular openings for loading along their entire lengths. Each opening forms a single bay. Above the door within each loading bay are three openings, from which the original wood frame windows were all missing when the rehabilitation started. Photographic evidence was used to create multi-light, metal frame window that approximates the appearance of the original fenestration. The large ground-floor openings are located at a constant distance from the ground level along the entire length of the building. For the northern one-quarter of the building's length, the upper part of the facade steps up to a greater height. This extra height accommodates the second floor. Along this taller portion of the building, the openings for the upper sash are taller, though their lower sill is at the same level as that of the other windows. The shorter, squarer windows that are not double-hung are tilt-in hopper windows. The cornice of the long east and west facades is a simple design with a squared profile.

The east facade, along Santa Fe Avenue, is fit with a canopy running the length of the building. The canopy is framed in steel and has wood rafters. The canopy is supported by curved steel beams that rest on a concrete corbel at the top of the post between each loading bay. Utilitarian light fixtures with wide, spun metal shades are affixed to the metal beams under the canopy. Similar fixtures were in place before the rehabilitation and were reused and left in place. The west facade does not have a canopy, and did not historically. The openings on both sides of the building are generally the same in their size and arrangement. The first-floor openings originally had roll-up metal doors. None of these doors remained at the time of the rehabilitation, but the current wall system echoes this arrangement: the solid panels in the wall where no opening was needed are metal infill panels that create the appearance of closed segmented doors. The remaining openings are spanned by solid glass panels to create the appearance of open doors. Thus, the pattern of loading bays is apparent on the façades.

Entrances to the building along the long sides utilize existing and new concrete terraces attached to the building. Metal railings with metal mesh side panels on the stairs and ramps are new.

The roof of the building is flat and surrounded by a concrete parapet. Historic features of the roof include wire glass skylights and an older metal billboard structure, which is visible from the building's surroundings. New air conditioning units also run the length of the roof, set back from the parapet so as to be less visible.

Interior

Prior to the rehabilitation, the interior of the building was a large, open space with no interior partitions. The spaces and the surfaces are defined by the rhythm of the concrete structural bays, including concrete beams, integrated corbels, and pilasters. The concrete was poured in place, and the surfaces have striations from the board formwork.

Plans from the 1940s show that the interior was re-partitioned repeatedly within the large, concrete shell for various tenants who housed their goods in the depot. None of those partitions remained in place when the rehabilitation began. The second-story mezzanine at the north end was also partitioned historically, and those partitions had been removed as well. The interior is currently anchored by the school's library at the north end; the main entrance, an

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 3

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

open studio space for students, and galleries near the center; and shop facilities at the south end that opens onto a loading dock.

Where new insertions were made for classrooms, galleries, and utility spaces, these new volumes were pulled back from the shell of the building where possible. As a result, corridors, studio spaces, and the library are left as open-plan spaces providing views that allow some of the overall length and volume of the building to be grasped. To retain the historic industrial nature of the building, the original concrete interior walls were left unfinished, and adjacent new walls are finished in painted drywall to distinguish them. Inserted stairs and catwalks are metal with metal mesh side panels. The original unfinished concrete ceilings are also for the most part untouched. Metal ducts are exposed and run along the ceilings to accommodate HVAC systems. Long fluorescent tube fixtures are suspended for lighting. Most floors throughout the building are concrete. The floors in some gallery spaces are salvaged wood boards, continuing the industrial theme. Where a second story was inserted, the ceiling of the rooms below is exposed steel decking. Several panels had been closed with concrete at an earlier date, though the outlines of the second-floor windows and loading door openings were preserved.

Integrity

Before the rehabilitation of the Freight Depot, the property had been abandoned for many years and suffered heavy deterioration, compromising its integrity. Much historic fabric had been lost, but the roof, long metal canopy, and concrete shell of the building remained intact.

The building retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance according to the seven National Register aspects of integrity: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The location has not changed, and the historic setting of the building is fairly intact. The immediate area no longer receives train traffic, but the surrounding buildings remain and are employed for a variety of industrial, warehousing, wholesaling and residential loft uses. A large parcel immediately west of the building (the former site of the corresponding Outbound Freight House) has been completely cleared and is now used for parking. Remnants of train tracks are present alongside the building.

The building's integrity suffered mainly in the materials, though the reinforced concrete that made the building a subject of interest at the time of its construction was undisturbed and remains the focus of the building's design. Nearly all of the doors and windows of the building are not original because they were missing at the time the rehabilitation began. Some metal roll-up doors remained in place in damaged condition, and from that evidence as well as early photographs, the metal infill panels were designed to replicate the historic appearance of the facades punctuated by roll-down doors. All of the second floor windows had been removed. Photographic evidence shows that the original fenestration on the second story of the north end of the building was multi-light sash. No photographs are available of the smaller upper windows located along both sides south of these, but contemporary accounts indicated that they may have been multi-light hopper windows so a compatible replacement was installed throughout this part of the building.

The design of the building is mostly intact, particularly along the 1200 foot long east and west facades. The east-facade canopy, the pattern of openings, and concrete surface continue to define the appearance of these facades. The

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 4

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

materials are very simple board-formed concrete finishes throughout the exterior and interior, and are also intact. The workmanship of the original concrete remains, although the earlier industrial fenestration and doors are missing.

The south end of the building, for a length of four loading bays, is shorter in height than most of the building, and it appears that it may have been a later addition to the south end, possibly in the 1940s or early 1950s. All of the street-side openings (four large loading bays the same as those to the north) in this portion of the building were filled in with concrete block.

The association of the building with both reinforced concrete construction and the railroad remains strong, since the distinctive size and shape of the building clearly identify it with the infrastructure of rail transport, and the structure and materials of the reinforced concrete shell, are visible on the interior and exterior.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

Section 8: Statement of Significance

Summary

The Santa Fe Freight Depot is a reinforced concrete rail depot from the period of early railroad history in Los Angeles. Constructed in 1906 and located in an industrial area of downtown Los Angeles, this quarter-mile long building served as the inbound and outbound freight house for the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway from 1906 until 1916 after which it was used for inbound freight only. The period of significance is 1906, the year of its construction, to 1922, when its function was transferred to another facility. The building has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It was rated a "2S2" after SHPO review of a Federal Transit Administration sponsored study. It was also determined eligible in a Part 1 review for the historic tax credit process in 2001. For decades the Santa Fe Freight Depot served as the primary depot for Los Angeles, and was the largest and most centrally located of its type. The Freight Depot exhibits local significance under Criterion A for its association with the railroad history of Los Angeles and under Criterion C for its association with the early use of reinforced concrete. The building's integrity was somewhat compromised by decades of abandonment, but the essential concrete shell and roof remained intact and the building has since been rehabilitated for adaptive reuse.

Significance Under Criterion A: Association with the Railroad History of Los Angeles

In 1886, the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad entered Los Angeles. In return for agreeing to assist the city in constructing a wooden embankment on the west side of the river to prevent flooding, the railroad was granted a fifty-foot right-of-way on the west bank for its tracks. Tracks were laid and by 1890 a new street named Santa Fe Avenue had been created, running parallel to the river south of 1st Street. In 1893, the Santa Fe constructed La Grande Station near the 1st Street Bridge over the Los Angeles River. The large, eclectic, Moorish-inspired station was one of two major Los Angeles passenger terminals along with the Southern Pacific's Arcade Station.

Soon after the Santa Fe's arrival, the city of Los Angeles began an exponential increase in population that transformed the city. Thousands of people migrated to Los Angeles attracted by promotional materials sponsored by the Santa Fe and its main competitor, the Southern Pacific. Competition between the railroads led to dramatic reductions in fares, including a one-day low of a one-dollar fare from points along the Missouri River to Los Angeles.

The population of Los Angeles grew from 11,090 to 102,479 during the twenty-year period between 1880 and 1900. By the 1920s, the city population was approximately 576,000, making it the fifth largest city in the United States at that time.

The railroads played a major role in the development of the economy of Los Angeles by connecting the city to the commercial port at San Pedro and the rest of country by rail. These linkages also had a major influence on the landscape of the area on the west side of the Los Angeles River. The area between Alameda Street and the river quickly developed into a warehousing, manufacturing, and industrial area. Land was subdivided, new streets were platted, and blocks were formed.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 2

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

Planing mills, foundries, lumberyards, food and beverage manufacturers, and warehouses sprang up where orchards and vineyards had been through much of the nineteenth century. In the 1890s, a lumberyard was located on the site where the Freight Depot would be constructed. A 1906 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows a planing mill, a packing company, a warehouse, a milling company, a pickle company, and a paper box manufacturing company located in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Freight Depot site.

The Santa Fe's freight business was growing rapidly just after the turn of the century. Freight earnings for the railway increased from \$47,400,000 in 1905 to \$56,500,000 in 1906 to \$65,500,000 in 1907. The Los Angeles to Chicago route became a major thoroughway for freight traffic. Company President Edward P. Ripley summarized the growth of the railroad in 1906 in the *Railroad Gazette*:

The year was one of extraordinary business prosperity. The rapid colonization of the southwest, the bountiful crops, the discovery and development of mineral deposits and the growth of miscellaneous business, due to the general increase in wealth, all contributed to the increase of traffic on your lines. At times the increase in the volume of traffic was so large that the company's equipment and other facilities were overtaxed...

It was in this context of rapid company growth that the Santa Fe decided to invest in a major new freight terminal in Los Angeles.

Banking on the continued growth of Los Angeles, the Santa Fe invested \$250,000 in a new freight depot to be constructed of reinforced concrete. The Depot was part of a major campaign initiated by the company around 1906 to construct six new concrete buildings in California and Arizona. The new buildings included, in addition to the Freight Depot, a combination passenger depot, hotel, curio store, and powerhouse at Ash Fork, Arizona and roundhouses at Bakersfield, Point Richmond, San Bernardino, and Williams, Arizona. Together these investments totaled approximately one million dollars, an amount that constituted close to ten percent of all capital expenditures for shops and buildings by the company between 1900 and 1909.

Reinforced concrete construction was durable, fireproof, and low-maintenance, making it perfectly suited to the expanding railroad company's needs. The new method decreased fire insurance costs for the railroad. It was especially useful in the construction of the Freight Depot at Los Angeles, a very large terminal with regional significance potentially storing a large amount of valuable goods at any one time.

The site for the new building was just south of La Grande Station. The company's main switching and transfer yards were located south of the passenger station between 1st and 4th Streets and east of Santa Fe Avenue. A roundhouse was located at the southwest end of the yards. The company consolidated two large parcels west of Santa Fe Avenue between 3rd and 4th Streets the company to create a new site large enough to accommodate the quarter-mile long Freight Depot.

In 1916 a second freight house was constructed parallel to the Freight Depot. Outbound freight traffic was transferred to the new building (now demolished) and the Freight Depot was used for inbound traffic only.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 3

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

The overwhelming bulk of residential, industrial and commercial development in downtown Los Angeles was eventually concentrated north and east of the intersection of San Pedro and East 7th Streets. It is during the two decades between 1900 and 1920 that the industrial area assumes an essentially urban character, and manifests some of the same diverse land uses apparent today. The streetcar system serving the area was finalized. Many wholesale produce industry companies moved from the 6th Street and Alameda area to East 9th and San Pedro, as large commercial and industrial buildings made their appearance.

This area eventually constituted an industrial triangle where foodstuffs, raw materials for manufacturing, manufactured products, lumber for paper and furniture manufacturing, and myriad goods were transported in and out of the depots to and from adjacent structures. A synergy formed among the Santa Fe complex and the surrounding warehouses, cold storage, and manufacturing facilities. The design of the quarter-mile long, state-of-the-art 1906 depot building, with platforms on both sides of the structure, ensured maximum efficiency and minimal transport distances to goods' destinations within this industrial area. In addition to the terminal establishing rail's fundamental role in the Los Angeles economy, the depot building also ensured that industrial transport would remain separate from passenger use and leisure travel, thereby enhancing the image of the Santa Fe passenger lines.

In 1922 the Santa Fe began plans for the construction of a major new facility four miles south of Los Angeles. New transfer and freight yards, a roundhouse, freight terminals, and other new structures were built. Many freight functions were transferred to the new area, and though the Freight Depot remained in use, it lost its central role in Santa Fe operations. The period of significance under Criterion A therefore ends in 1922.

Few of the original Santa Fe buildings in downtown Los Angeles remain. The original roundhouse was demolished in 1914. La Grande Station was demolished in 1946. The Outbound Freight House was demolished in 1990. Four remaining buildings can be found south of the Freight Depot in the area known as Redondo Junction, near Butte Street and the Los Angeles River. These buildings have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register as a historic district with an evaluation of "2D2" in the State Historic Resources Inventory. The Freight Depot was a significant part of the vast infrastructure of the Santa Fe in downtown Los Angeles and is one of the few remaining representations of this important context.

Significance Under Criterion C: Association with Early Reinforced Concrete Construction

The Santa Fe Freight Depot was constructed during the period in which reinforced concrete gained national attention as a significant technological innovation in building materials and construction. The building was recognized at the time of its construction as an important example of new building practices, and very few reinforced concrete structures existed during the first decade of the twentieth century. Its architect Harrison Albright and its contractor Carl Leonardt were independently recognized as experts in the construction of reinforced concrete buildings.

Although various forms of concrete construction had been in use for nearly two thousand years, concrete construction in the United States did not become widespread until the invention of reinforced concrete. Reinforced concrete was first developed in about 1860. Steel reinforcing bars increase the tensile strength of concrete, overcoming its relative weakness in tension. Roughly equal coefficients of thermal expansion and the bonding properties of cement to steel make reinforced concrete structurally efficacious. This innovation created the possibility of new uses for the material

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 4

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

in industrial building. The best known method of concrete construction was developed and patented by French engineer Francois Hennebique in the 1870s and became known as Hennebique method. After gaining acceptance in Europe it quickly spread to the United States. Innovations introduced beginning in 1880 eventually led to the acceptance of concrete most commonly made from Portland cement in the United States after 1900, according to the National Park Service brief on historic concrete.

Concrete is essentially a mixture of cement and water that ~~is~~ together bind inert aggregates into a hard, solid mass. The evolution of concrete's use and quality during the twentieth century was largely tied to delivery and concrete mixing methods. Prior to "ready mix" trucks that came into use during the 1930s, raw materials for concrete building in Southern California were delivered in dump trucks and the concrete was mixed on site. The quality of concrete and the results of using the material steadily improved after the ready mix concrete became available in the 1930s. Concrete building construction reached its peak in Los Angeles during the 1920s and 1930s.

In the beginning, however, discussions and debates in building trade magazines and other publications commonly focused on reinforced concrete construction as the methods and materials gained adherents and more such buildings were constructed. For example, *The American Architect and Building News* devoted an entire issue in 1907 to the subject of reinforced concrete construction and its increasing popularity. The Santa Fe Freight Depot was among the buildings profiled in that issue of *The American Architect and Building News*, along with the house of architect Albert Kahn in Detroit (Kahn was also an early proponent of concrete for industrial buildings) and the building of the Eastman Kodak Company in New York.

At the time that it was built, the reinforced concrete construction of the Santa Fe Freight Depot was a major source of interest in the building. To design and construct the Freight Depot, the Santa Fe selected two nationally-known experts in reinforced concrete construction: architect Harrison Albright and contractor Carl Leonardt. When the Los Angeles Express announced news of the construction of the Freight Depot on May 12, 1906, the building's materials were emphasized under the headline "New Santa Fe Depot to be Concrete." The article began, "The Santa Fe company pins its faith to Los Angeles and to reinforced concrete construction by awarding a concrete freight depot one-quarter mile long."

Architect Harrison Albright (1866-1933) was known both for his previous work in reinforced concrete and his promotion of the new material. Albright served as the State Architect of West Virginia and designed the West Baden Springs Hotel (1901, a National Historic Landmark), which featured what was the then the largest concrete dome in the world. In 1905 Albright moved to Southern California and designed one of the first reinforced concrete buildings in Southern California, the Homer Laughlin Building Annex in downtown Los Angeles. In December 1906 Albright addressed the Los Angeles Architectural Club on the topic of reinforced concrete.

In 1907 four of Albright's buildings, including the Santa Fe Freight Depot, were featured in *The American Architect and Building News*. He also published an article entitled "Reinforced Concrete Construction in Southern California" in *The Architect and Engineer of California* in January 1907 and a second article entitled "Reinforced Concrete and Why I Favor It" in *Southwest Contractor and Manufacturer* in January 1909. In that article, Albright wrote the following about the virtues of reinforced concrete:

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 5

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

... (T)he absolute fireproof features alone make it most desirable, as should the fact that it does not deteriorate with age but becomes stronger, making repairs unnecessary, which cannot be truthfully said of any other known building material. . . . There is hardly any one who will not concede that both concrete and steel are unexcelled building materials, hence a proper combination of the two materials, which makes reinforced concrete, must necessarily be all that can be desired.

The Santa Fe Freight Depot was featured in both of these journals demonstrating its importance among Albright's works in reinforced concrete. Albright's work for the Santa Fe Railway was profiled in the January 1909 issue of *Southwest Contractor and Manufacturer*, in an article entitled "Santa Fe Railroad Concrete Buildings". "Reinforced concrete for industrial buildings has found favor with the railroads," the article begins. It continues by describing the Freight Depot in detail.

Albright also built the U. S. Grant Hotel in San Diego, a mansion for the very wealthy San Diego businessman John D. Spreckels, and the Organ Pavilion at Balboa Park in San Diego. Spreckels, heir to the family sugar business, left San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and fire. Fearful of the devastating effects of earthquakes and fires, he commissioned a number of works in reinforced concrete by Albright, including his mansion and beach cottage.

Contractor Carl Leonardt (1855-1927) was also a nationally recognized expert in reinforced concrete construction. Leonardt designed, built, and owned what is thought to be the first reinforced concrete industrial building in Los Angeles, the Central Laundry Building (1903). The design of the building is representative of many of the later industrial buildings developed locally. Leonardt employed classically-derived notions of balance, symmetry, and structural detail (i.e., implied post and lintel construction systems, the base-shaft capital analogy in organizing the façade) in lieu of explicit classical detail. As of 1992, the building was still standing and Leonardt's name was visible in the tympanum in a rectangular panel. The building was surveyed in 1992 with an evaluation of "3S" and appears eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Leonardt was the also the builder of the Orpheum Theater, Pacific Electric, May Company (Hamburger) Department Store Building, the I. W. Hellman Building, and the Grant Hotel in San Diego. In 1915, Leonardt left the contracting business to become President of the Southwest Portland Cement Company described in the Los Angeles Eastside Industrial Architectural and Historic Resources Survey as a "pioneer building materials company of national significance."

Many early concrete buildings in the area have been demolished or substantially altered. Other nearby examples of industrial architecture and construction methods of the early twentieth century include the Barker Brother Factories and Warehouses complex, located directly south of the Santa Fe Freight Depot. The earliest extant buildings of this complex were constructed in 1905, and in 1917-1920, a second era of construction occurred, involving the construction of two concrete factory buildings, both four-stories, at the corner of Hewitt and Palmetto streets. The buildings adjoined the original warehouse buildings of the company and had a total floor space of 185,000 square feet.

Other remaining historic concrete industrial structures in Los Angeles are mostly singular buildings built by smaller corporate entities. Along with the Santa Fe Freight Depot, rare examples such as the early Barker Brothers reinforced concrete buildings represent an architectural history that is becoming increasingly uncommon in Los Angeles.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 6

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

Conclusion

The Santa Fe Freight Depot is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for its association with early railroad history in Los Angeles. The railroads are a singularly important factor in the transformation of Los Angeles into a major population center and industrial center, and the Depot stands as one of the largest and most significant remaining buildings associated with that context in the early twentieth century. Its immense size, nearly one quarter of a mile in length, stands as an indication of the tremendous amount of freight conveyed by rail in Los Angeles during this time. The Santa Fe railway, builder and user of the Depot, has a highly significant place in the development of Los Angeles for both passenger and freight traffic, and its facilities for both of these uses were anchors for the developing industrial areas of downtown Los Angeles. These associations connect the building strongly to “a ... historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a State, or the Nation” as required by Criterion A.

The Depot is also eligible under Criterion C for its association with the early use of reinforced concrete. As new methods of industrial construction were developing in the early part of the twentieth century, the railroads, and particularly the Santa Fe, were pioneers in the testing and use of reinforced concrete. The Depot was widely published and discussed at the time of its construction as an example of an innovative and developing construction technique, and its architect and builder were recognized experts in the propagation of the new method. Therefore the building “embodies distinctive characteristics of a ... method of construction” as required by Criterion C.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

Section 9: Bibliography

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 2

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 1

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

Section 10: Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The current site is a very long, narrow parcel 1228.71 feet in length from north to south. The northern portion of the site is 657 feet in length and 61 feet in width. Below this, the western boundary extends further west, making the southern 541.68 feet of the site approximately twice the width of the northern portion, measuring 125 feet wide from east to west.

Verbal Boundary Justification

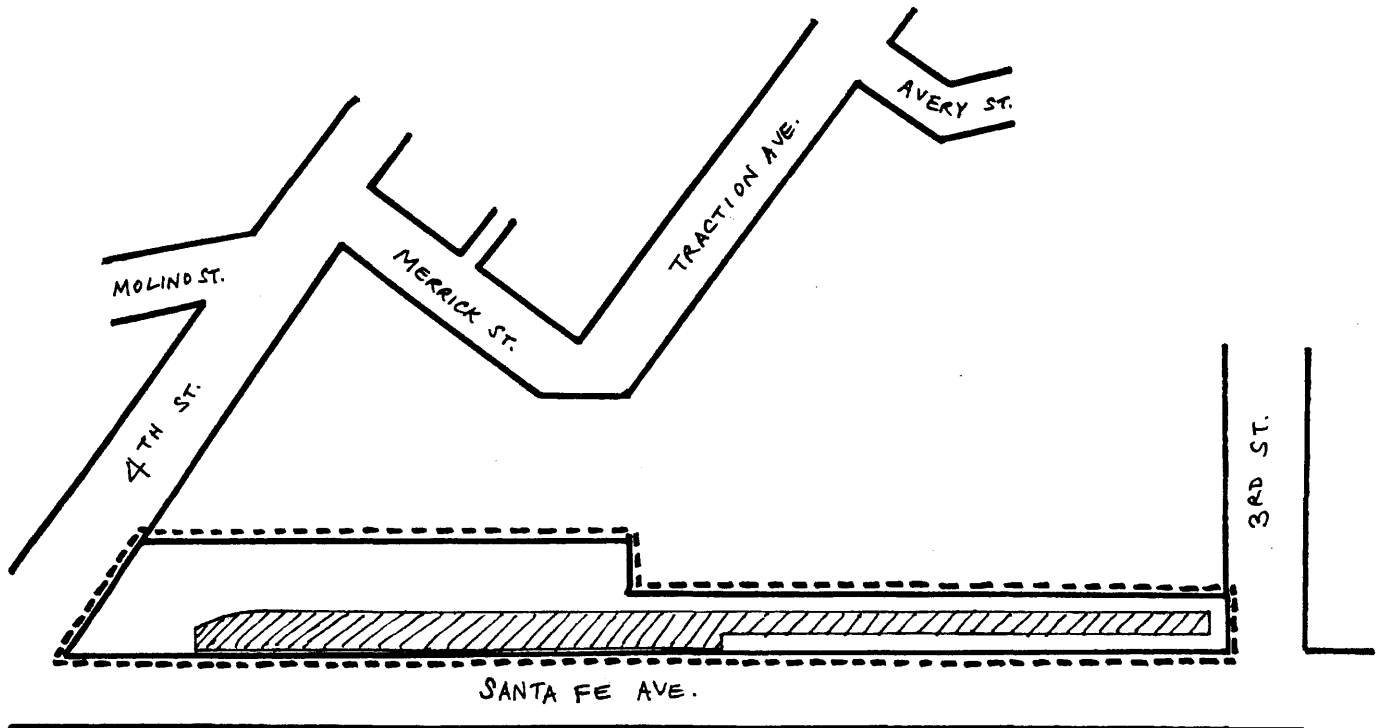
During the period of significance, the Santa Fe Railroad possessed a much larger parcel of land between 3rd and 4th Streets, of which the current property comprised the eastern edge. Merrick Street and Traction Avenue, seen on the sketch map on the following page, partially formed the northern boundary. Today, the northern part of this larger parcel is vacant. In December of 2003 the parcel map of the original property was amended to legally separate the above-described portion from the rest of the property. The legal boundary of the new parcel contains the Santa Fe Freight Depot. No associated buildings or features remain on the western section, which was separated from the section containing the Depot in 2003. This eastern section of the larger parcel, now legally a separate parcel, is the location of the Depot and is the boundary of the site for National Register purposes.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

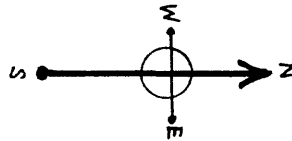
Section 10 Page 2

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

Sketch Map



--- Site boundary
▨ Santa Fe Freight Depot



Not to scale

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Photographs Page 1

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

Additional Documentation: Photographs

Name: Santa Fe Freight Depot

Location: 970 E. 3rd Street
Los Angeles County

Photographer: Carly Caryn

Date of Photographs: May and June 2005

Location of Negatives: Historic Resources Group
1728 Whitley Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90028

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Primary (north) façade | View: south |
| 2. Primary (north) façade and west facade | View: southeast |
| 3. Primary façade and east side façade in Santa Fe Avenue context | View: southwest |
| 4. Canopy on east facade | View: south |
| 5. Underside of canopy on east façade | View: southwest |
| 6. Detail of east façade: loading bays and canopy | View: northwest |
| 7. Portion of east façade | View: northwest |
| 8. Canopy on east façade | View: south |
| 9. Corner of canopy on east façade | View: southwest |
| 10. Canopy detail on east façade | View: west |
| 11. East façade | View: southwest |
| 12. Underside of canopy, east façade | View: north |
| 13. South and east façades | View: northwest |
| 14. Detail of light fixture and support bracket, east facade | View: south |
| 15. West façade | View: northeast |
| 16. New entrance ramp and terrace, west facade | View: northeast |
| 17. West façade, change in elevation | View: southeast |

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Photographs Page 2

Santa Fe Freight Depot
970 East 3rd Street
Los Angeles County, California

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 18. Original mezzanine space converted to library | View: north |
| 19. Original mezzanine space and skylight | View: southwest |
| 20. Open-plan studio in center of building with original volume and openings | View: south |