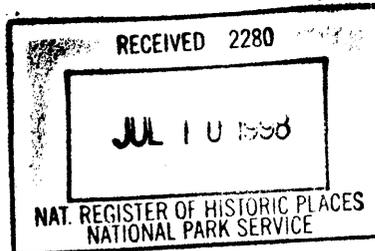


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



963

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 Berkeley Historic Civic Center District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number N/A N/A not for publication

city or town Berkeley N/A vicinity

state California code CA county Alameda code 001 zip code 94704

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

[Signature] June 29, 1998
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State Historic Preservation Officer
State of 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 official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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): _____

[Signature] 12/3/98
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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 the count.)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
7	3	buildings
1	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
9	3	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

N/A

2

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

(See attached continuation sheet)

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

(See attached)

- foundation _____
- walls _____
- roof _____
- other _____

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

(See attached)

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (See attached)

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Documentation checkboxes: preliminary determination, previously listed, National Register, National Historic Landmark, Historic American Buildings Survey, Historic American Engineering Record.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Politics/Government

Social History

Architecture

Community Planning

Period of Significance

1909 - 1950

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Bakewell, John R.; Brown, Arthur, Jr.; Corlett, William, Sr.; Gutterson, Henry Higby; Maybeck, Bernard Ralph; Morgan, Julia; Meyers, Henry H.; Plachek, James W.; Schnier, Jacques; Howard, Robert Boardman

Primary location of additional data:

- Location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State agency, Federal agency, Local government, University, Other.

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property (Under 10 acres) _____

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 0	5 6 4 1 8 0	4 1 9 1 3 8 5
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

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 Susan Cerny/Arch'l Historian; Jerri Holan/Arch'l Historian; Linda Perry/
Historian

organization Berkeley Architectural Heritage Assoc. date March 2, 1998

street & number 2318 Durant Avenue telephone (510)841-2242

city or town Berkeley state CA zip code 94704

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 (Varies - please see attached)

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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 listings. 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 20503.

BERKELEY CIVIC CENTER DISTRICT
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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6 Function or Use

Historic Functions

Current Functions

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. 2134 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way
GOVERNMENT/city hall | EDUCATION/administrative |
| 2. Allston-MLK Jr. Ways-Center Street
LANDSCAPE/park | LANDSCAPE/park |
| 3. 1931 Center Street
SOCIAL/civic | SOCIAL/civic |
| 4. 2180 Milvia Street
GOVERNMENT/banking | GOVERNMENT/city hall |
| 5. 1930 Allston Way
EDUCATION/CULTURE/theater | EDUCATION/CULTURE/theater |
| 6. 2001 Allston Way
SOCIAL/civic-recreational | SOCIAL/civic-recreational |
| 7. 2000 Allston Way
GOVERNMENT/post office | GOVERNMENT/post office |
| 8. 1947 Center Street
COMMERCE/business | COMMERCE/business |
| 9. 1835 Allston Way
GOVERNMENT/city hall annex | EDUCATION/administrative |
| 10. 2171 McKinley Street
GOVERNMENT/police-jail | GOVERNMENT/police-jail |
| 11. 2117 McKinley Street
GOVERNMENT/health services | GOVERNMENT/fire station- headquarters |
| 12. 2110 Martin Luther King Jr. Way
GOVERNMENT/court house | GOVERNMENT/court house |
| 13. 2111 McKinley
HOUSING/private | HOUSING/public |

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BERKELEY CIVIC CENTER DISTRICT
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Section number 7 Page 1A

7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

Architectural Classification

EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Beaux Arts Classicism

Moderne

Art Deco

Materials

foundations-concrete

walls-painted concrete-stucco

roof- hidden behind parapet, slate, clay tile

other:

painted sheet metal cupola

ART/bas relief sculpture

terra cotta decorative elements

marble columns

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Section number 7 Page 1

7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

CIVIC CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT: GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Berkeley, California's Civic Center Historic District comprises portions of a five block area surrounding Martin Luther King Jr., Civic Center Park, the district's central feature. The area is located approximately a 1/4 mile to the East and South of the physical center of the city, and one block west from the center of downtown. The area is bordered on the west by McKinley Street, on the east by Milvia Street, on the south by Allston Way and on the north by Center Street.

The district provides predominantly public services. Thirteen buildings, one site and one structure are in the district. There are nine contributing buildings, one contributing site and one contributing structure, there are four noncontributing buildings. Civic Center Park is located on the west side of the block bordered by Allston Way, Center Street, Milvia and Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. This block is 315' x 590'. The civic center's four major contributing buildings are located on an axis with one another, forming a cross axis at the center of Civic Center Fountain located in the park. The four buildings which form the cross-axis are: "Old" City Hall, on the west, across Martin Luther King, Jr. Way; the former Federal Land Bank Building, located on the eastern third of the park block; the Veterans Memorial Building, located on the north, across Center Street; and the Berkeley Community Theater located on the south, across Allston Way. The architectural styles of contributing buildings are representative of the period of significance 1909-1950. The buildings range from one to six stories. "Old" City Hall (1909), in the Beaux Arts Classic style, and the Post Office (1914), in the Classic Italian Renaissance Style, are among the earliest buildings and the most decorative. Six contributing buildings date from 1928-1950 and are variations of the simpler Moderne Style. All share a high degree of workmanship, materials, quality of design, decoration, and are painted in a compatible palette of pale golds, greens, rose, blues, grays and cream.

The block on the west, across Martin Luther King Jr. Way, where the "Old" City Hall stands, is owned by the City. There are seven buildings on this block. Three are contributing buildings and four are noncontributing buildings. The three contributing buildings include "Old" City Hall and are on the south end of the block and were built to house civic functions. The County Court House and the Fire Department Headquarters, generally in the center of the block, were built after the period of significance. Most of the north third of the block is a surface parking lot and includes two noncontributing buildings which were originally private dwellings but now owned by the city.

Berkeley's Civic Center area is bordered by the downtown commercial and retail district on the east and north, and residential neighborhoods to the west and south. Characteristics that distinguish the Civic Center are achieved by the presence of the park with its tall green background of mature trees, and the siting of contributing buildings back from the sidewalk with some planted landscape features in front or next to them. Major landscape features are present in Civic Center Park and in front of "Old" City Hall. The elements that make up these major landscape features include concrete paths, lawns, mature evergreen trees and Civic Center Plaza and Fountain.

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7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

The creation of a clearly defined civic center required more than three decades of planning and land acquisition to achieve. Despite the decades of planning, and the separate nature of each individual project, a cohesive ensemble was created. The appearance of the district retains a high degree of integrity because there have been few changes since the district achieved significance when the Berkeley High School Community Theater was completed in 1950, after 11 years of construction. However, since the district evolved over more than three decades, significant changes did occur between 1909-1950. For example, the land for Civic Center Park, the Veterans Building and the Old City Hall block was purchased from private owners; buildings were removed for the park, parking lots, the Community Theater, Veterans Building, and County Court House. The general condition of the buildings is good to excellent and there have been no significant alterations to the park or individual contributing buildings.

No known archeological resources have been recorded. Strawberry Creek, which once flowed through the park has been culverted and there is no evidence of the creek today. However, creekside areas often contain evidence of indigenous people. All features of the district are manmade. There are no natural prominent features. Vegetation, even large trees, were planted. The topography gently slopes to the west.

1. City Hall - Contributing Building **2134 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way** **John Bakewell & Arthur Brown, Jr.** **1908-9**

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

City Hall is located on the west side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Way across the street from Civic Center Park, facing east towards the park. City Hall is an example of early 20th Century Revival Beaux-Arts classicism, using decoration derived from Greek and Roman sources in a symmetrically composed three part arrangement. The design of the Berkeley City Hall was inspired by the Town Hall at Tours, France which was designed in 1901 by Arthur Brown's professor at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Victor Laloux. John Bakewell and Arthur Brown's design was selected as the winner of a 1907 competition. The center of the facade is on axis with the center of Civic Center Park.

City Hall is a rectangular shaped building containing two main floors over a raised concrete basement. The surface of the building is blue/gray painted plaster over concrete; the window trim, wrought iron balconies and the cupola is painted a grayed blue/green. The building is set back from the street approximately 30'. Three concrete pathways lead to the entrance staircase; approaching from the south and north the pathways form a semi-circle and there is one in the center. These pathways surround a lawn. Large redwood trees on either side of the building create a green backdrop. A central concrete staircase rises in two sections. The wide three-sided lower staircase rises from the pathways at ground level. The center portion of this staircase is the widest side. The lower staircase rises to a wide landing enclosed by classic balustrades on the north and south. The upper section of the staircase

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7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

terminates at the entrance. The entire composition of the entrance staircases is wide at the bottom and progressively gets narrower towards the top.

The central element on the east side is recessed, contains the entrance and is flanked by two projecting side bays that are smaller, decoratively simpler and shorter than the dominant central element. The central element is 86'x 66" and is divided into five equal sized bays with the entrance in the center. Each bay is separated by engaged Ionic styled columns that rise the full two stories and support six projecting cornice elements that serve as bases for ornamental dentels and monumental urns. Behind the urns is a blank frieze terminating in a secondary cornice molding, with a cartouche in the center. The columns stand on large square bases that are approximately 5' on each side. Each base is separated by Classical balustrades below each arched window. The central portion has a raised, hipped gray slate roof, which provides a large attic storage space. There are ornamental flames at either end of the metal capped ridge. At the center of this hipped grey slate roof is a lantern styled 60' cupola and spire constructed of painted sheet metal on wood frame. The cupola was restored and the building painted original pale blue/gray colors in 1991. There are two small bulls-eyed dormers on the lower portion of the roof, above and between the central bay.

The fenestration of the central section consists of one large window (almost a full floor tall) in each bay, on both floors. The windows on the first floor are arched and framed by an arched molding fabricated from the same concrete plaster as the walls. This window molding is bisected in the center of the arch by a decorative volute keystone element. The central arched opening contains the entrance. On the second floor the windows are framed by rectangles. Both have keystone elements in the center of the window frames. Under the first floor windows is a Classic balustrade and under the second story windows are individual balconies with decorative iron railings, supported by brackets. The two wings (each 31' x 77") are identical and are set perpendicular to the central portion. The details and materials of the wings are the same as the central section, but treated more simply. Under their second floor windows, on the south and north sides, are balconies, supported by large curved foliated brackets. which run the entire length of the windows; they have the same decorative iron railings as on the main facade. These wings have hipped roofs, capped with a metal ridge with ornamental flames at either end. The interior is also significant for the decorative techniques exhibited in the painted columns at the base of the main stairway and in the trompe l'oeil painting of the walls and ceiling of the stairwell. These are perfectly preserved examples of decoration that was popular at the turn-of-the-century.

There have been few alterations to the building since it was completed in 1909. The only change on the main facade was the replacement of the operable sections of the original wood sash with aluminum, but the pattern of the window divisions has been retained. The major alteration occurred in 1950 when the rear of the building was extended about 10' on each side of the stair-bay to create additional office space. The windows on either side of the stair bay were enclosed as part of this work so that the main staircase is now much darker than it was originally. The building retains a high degree

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7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

of integrity and was designated a City Landmark in 1975. It is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

2. Civic Center Park - Contributing Site

Civic Center Fountain - Contributing Structure

2100 Block of Martin Luther King Jr. Way

Henry Gutterson, Chair of the Design Committee

Bernard Maybeck, Julia Morgan, John Gregg,

East side between Allston Way and Center Street

1938-1942

Martin Luther King, Jr., Civic Center Park occupies the western 2/3 of a block. The land slopes gently to the west. The park is composed of seven major elements: Fountain Terrace, Christmas Tree Terrace, Civic Center Fountain, large open lawn area, shuffle board court, playground and flag pole. All original elements date from the completion of the park in 1942. At the east side, the park ends at the Farm Credit Building and its driveway/parking lot. Between the formal park spaces and the Farm Credit Building, is a green backdrop created by groves of trees, including redwood, deodar cedar, and magnolia. Sheltered in the groves were two concrete restroom structures; the southern structure remains, but the northern bathroom was removed in the 1970s. Between the groves of trees is a raised terrace with original concrete perimeter walls; in the center stands Berkeley's "Municipal Christmas Tree", a Giant Sequoia (approximately 90' tall) lit with colored lights during the winter holiday season. This terrace forms the narrow eastern end of a hardscape area that widens out in the center of the park into Fountain Terrace. Fountain Terrace is a circular flagstone terrace. Half the terrace is surrounded by tile covered concrete walls with five openings to paths. The original wall was reconstructed to display the brightly colored hand painted tiles of the Peace Wall in 1987. The location and size of the reconstructed walls replicate the original perimeter walls of the terrace with the exception of a new opening on the west side, but the colors of the tiles are not compatible with the creamy colors of the district. The Fountain is in the center of this terrace. It is a 50 foot diameter circular concrete fountain composed of a large outer pool with two tiered levels that step up to a cylindrical core where water jets and colored lights were once mounted. It has not been determined when the fountain water jets and lights were removed. The cross-axis formed by the district's four major buildings (City Hall to the Farm Credit Building running east-west, and north-south from the Veterans' Memorial Building to the Community Theater) is located here. All of the fountain structure is original, as is the flagstone terrace surrounding the fountain. The fountain is Moderne in character, constructed of unadorned concrete with the original board marks still showing. West of the fountain terrace is a large lawn surrounded by wide paths in their original configuration, and most in original concrete. The lawn is the open centerpiece of the park, intended for large gatherings and recreational use. West of the lawn is a narrow, linear hard surfaced area, flanked by trees and shrub plantings, along the Martin Luther King, Jr. Way frontage of the park. The southern end of this area was intended for the elderly, and retains

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7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

shuffleboard courts, although in damaged condition. The northern portion is a children's play area, which is its original use, although the play equipment is modern. Between the play area/shuffleboard courts and the central lawn is a flagpole, the first feature installed in the park during construction. Surrounding the park are a number of original light poles, although their heads have been removed and replaced with modern fixtures.

Most of the plantings in the park, including an array of camphor trees flanking the central lawn and western end, are original. Original elements of the park furniture still remain, including a number of concrete and wooden benches. Although Civic Center Park was not completed until 1942 it was anticipated as early as 1908 when "Old" City Hall was designed. Bonds were finally approved in 1940 making \$125,000 available to buy and develop the land. A committee was appointed to design the park. The chair was architect Henry Gutterson, with architects Bernard Maybeck and Julia Morgan and Landscape Design Professor, John Gregg Henry Gutterson, with William Corlet, Jr., designed the Community Theater in 1937, and had located the theater on axis with the Veterans Building. As chair of the park design committee it is not surprising that the major significant element in the cross axial plan is the Civic Center Fountain. Civic Center Park is a Berkeley Landmark, designated in 1997

3. Veterans Memorial Building - Contributing Building

1931 Center Street

Henry H. Meyers

1928

The Veterans Building is an example of the Classic Moderne style. The facade is a simplified, horizontal three-part vertical composition, two stories with a raised concrete basement as the base, a two-story shaft, and parapet entablature above a simple cornice molding. The building is constructed of reinforced concrete-plaster, painted cream with pale rose and blue accents, and is T-shaped in plan. Overall the building is 180' wide and 120' deep. The central entrance section is recessed and slightly taller than the wings. Each wing is about 40' feet wide and articulated into 3 bays by 4- two-story fluted pilasters. There is one window between the pilasters on each floor with ornamental spandrel panels. The parapet has panels with a scrolled tendril motif and projecting acanthus leaf cornice at the top. The words "Veterans Memorial" are incised in the frieze between the seals of the United States and the State of California. The building has not been altered. A disabled ramp was added on the east side of the entrance in 1990, which removed some planting, but this is not a significant alteration, and it was retrofitted and repainted by the City in 1996.

Most of the interior is finished in dark wood paneling and smooth plaster. The main lobby has a tile floor and polychrome tile baseboard. Display cases with contain momentos of veterans organizations. Tile faced staircases with wrought iron handrails rise to the second floor at either end of the lobby. In the center of the building is a large two-story auditorium. The building was designed by Alameda County Architect Henry H. Meyers and architects Mildred Meyers, his daughter, and George R. Klinkhardt. The building was designated a City of Berkeley Landmark in 1985.

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Section number 7 Page 6

7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

4. Federal Land Bank - Contributing Building

2180 Milvia Street

James W. Plachek

1938

The Federal Land Bank building is a classic WPA Moderne style with a symmetrical three part composition repeated around the building in different ways. The building was designed by James W. Plachek. On the Milvia Street side the main entrance to the building is in the center of a slightly recessed central section. On the west side of the building, overlooking Civic Center Park, the building is a deep U-shape with two towers, one containing stairs and the other containing the elevators, that create an exaggerated Art Deco zigzag design. Above the central section is a penthouse, containing mechanical equipment, with a hipped roof. Windows are grouped in threes and these groups are separated by wide bands of concrete-stucco. On the north and south sides the window groups are again treated in a three-part composition. The five-story building has understated, shallow decoration incised into its concrete-stucco siding. The building is painted gray with pale blue/green and rose beige accents. The blue/green color is also used for the window trim. These are colors are believed to be original. Most of the interior remains intact and the exterior of the building has not been altered. The entrance lobby is notable for its original Moderne details. The building became Berkeley's new City Hall in 1977 and was designated a City of Berkeley Landmark in 1985.

5. Berkeley High School Community Theater 1937, completed 1950 and Little Theater 1937/40 -Contributing Building

1930 & 1920 Allston Way

Henry H. Gutterson and William Corlett, Sr., Architects

Robert Howard, Sculptor-1937-50

The Florence Schwimley Little Theater and Berkeley High School Community Theater along with associated classrooms, offices, storage and shop rooms, are located on Allston Way in the center of the block bordered by Martin Luther King Jr. Way on the west, and Milvia Street on the East. The entire composition is nearly symmetrical in plan with three major divisions: the large four story theater proper in the center, the 2 1/2 story west wing containing the Little Theater, and the 1 1/2 storey east wing containing the music and drama classrooms and offices. On the north side of the building overlooking Civic Center Park, the stage area of the Community Theater is expressed as the tall central portion of this composition, set above a rectangular one-story base. In the center of this is a deeply carved bas-relief of seven figures, designed by sculptor Robert Howard, depicting from the bottom to top, sculpture, painting, music, dance, poetry and drama. The center of this work of art is directly on axis with Civic Center Fountain and the entrance to the Veterans Building on the north side of the park.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

On the flanking wings are two bas relief heralds, one female and the other male, also by Robert Howard. The Little Theater is the high school's old auditorium, built in 1907, which was extensively remodeled and incorporated into the plan. It has a broad entry staircase to an open entrance balcony on its west side, it is approximately 1/2 a story higher than on the east wing.

The south side of the theater complex faces into the school campus on axis with the entrance to the main classroom building (the "C" building) across an open courtyard. The entrance vestibule and exhibition halls are contained in a one-story section which is set in front of a second story section so that the height and mass of the theater is minimized on the interior of the campus. On either side of the entrance are two panels with bas-reliefs also by Robert Howard; the one on the west is a figure representing drama, dance, music and the figure on the east represents poetry, sculpture and painting.

The seating area of the Community Theater is circular. The rectangular stage, with a slightly curving north wall, is located on the north side. The Little Theater is on the west side of the Community Theater and the classrooms, shops and offices are on the east side. On the south side of the Community Theater, curving around approximately 3/4 of the seating area, is the entrance vestibule flanked by two exhibition halls. The School Board Journal Vol. 122 #1, 1951 further describes the interior: "The interior diameter of the main theater is 160 feet, with an orchestra floor of 2406 seats and a balcony of 1091 seats, a total of approximately 3500 seats. The stage is 100 by 55 feet and the proscenium opening is 50 feet wide and 30 feet high. The orchestra pit, which is raised and lowered by electrically operated screws, accommodates 84 musicians with their instruments. This orchestra pit may also be raised to stage a height to enlarge the stage apron....The Little Theater seats 628."

Its basic method of construction is steel and reinforced concrete, made up of pre-fabricated rectangular panels hung on a steel frame. The repetitive rectangular shapes created by these panels are decorative as well as functional. The Moderne/Art Deco styled building is sheathed in cream-colored concrete-plaster; window trim and doors are pale pink. The colors are original. The building express a hierarchy of space through the use of simple geometric volumes emphasized by the decorative and artistic bas-relief murals and other surface embellishments molded or carved into the concrete-stucco walls. Decoration also includes: lettering and stripes carved into the concrete-stucco exterior surfaces; fluted pilasters and columns; rounded bays and corners; curved overhangs over some entrances; and concrete and brick-faced planter boxes.

Berkeley High School moved to a newly built school building located at the corner of Martin Luther King, Jr. Way and Allston Way in 1901. By 1934 three additional buildings had been constructed along Allston Way. Two of the older building were demolished for the construction of the Science Building and the Community Theater in 1934. As noted above, the auditorium building was remodeled and incorporated into the theater building.

The Berkeley High School Community Theater was dedicated June 5th, 1950 twelve years after the school board entered into an agreement with architect William Corlett Sr. and Henry Gutterson "for the preparation of plans and specifications for the erection and construction of a new auditorium at Berkeley High School and for the remodeling of the old auditorium" (Minutes of the

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 1 Page 8

7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

School Board January 31, 1938) Construction of the theater was begun in late 1940, and by December 1941 the steel frame of the almost circular building was nearly complete when the United States entered World War II and construction came to a standstill. It was not until 1949 that construction resumed. The open steel-frame theater stood for almost a decade and became known as the "bird cage".

The Berkeley High School Community Theater is oriented with its back to the Civic Center and its entrance from the interior of the school campus. However, a sketch of a "General Scheme of Expansion and Development" dated October 1937 shows the auditorium facing a Civic Center Park, which didn't yet exist. School Board minutes of November 1, 1939 report that "Architects Corlett and Gutterson presented sketches of a new idea for the orientation of the auditorium unit for Berkeley High School previously approved June 28, 1939. The architects pointed out that on further study, the required high scene house, as originally located opposite the north front of the academic Building, would be, in their judgment over-powering in mass and an obstacle to the openness and unity of the courtyard and that the reversal of the plan...would eliminate that difficulty. Other advantages cited: direct access to the auditorium by the students, lower cost of the vestibule, more space between "C" building and auditorium, less glare, avoidance of traffic hazard on Allston Way and removal of heating plant to separate building. Architects stated that the new front on Allston would be adequate and appropriate for the proposed Civic Center. "

The theater building retains a high degree of integrity. The exterior of the building, its color, windows, brick side walks, retaining walls and planter beds, stairs and pathways, have had little modification or alteration, and are present in photographs for the theater's opening celebrations. Even some plant material has been partially retained. Most of the major interior spaces are also original including upholstery, drapery and rugs. The Florence Schwimley Little Theater and Berkeley High School Community Theater were designed as an ensemble of high school related buildings in 1937 and include the Shop and Science Buildings located to the west, and buildings to the east that were never built. For purposes of the Civic Center Historic District Application, only the Community Theater and the Florence Schwimley Little Theater are included in the Civic Center District application because of their community uses. The Florence Schwimley Little Theater, Berkeley High School Community Theater and Shop and Science Buildings are City of Berkeley Landmarks, designated in 1992.

6. Young Men's Christian Association - Contributing Building **2001 Allston Way** **Benjamin G. McDougall** **1910**

The Young Men's Christian Association building is a four story rectangular building above a raised basement. The building sits flush with the sidewalks at the north east corner of Allston Way and Milvia Street. The main entrance is on Allston Way with a secondary entrance on Milvia Street. The building is a three part composition vertically and horizontally on both sides, with the entrances in the

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7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

center of the composition. The walls of the raised basement and first floor are cream colored concrete plaster, formed to look like stone, and serve as the base of the composition. The walls of the third, fourth and fifth floors are faced with dark red brick. The "shaft" of the composition, the third and fourth floors, is separated from the "base" by a horizontal belt course; the fifth floor is also separated by a horizontal belt course and is capped by a heavy cornice supported by dentils. A parapet completes the composition. All decorative elements are cream colored concrete plaster. Quoins, also of concrete plaster define the corners and separate the central sections from the sections on either side. The central element on the Allston Way facade contains a recessed entry, with marble floors and kick-plate, framed by Tuscan columns; and above is a classic Palladian styled window. The entrance on the Milvia street side is framed by an arch of concrete plaster made to look like stone. Above the central element on the Allston Way facade, under the cornice are the words "Young Men's Christian Association" in gold lettering. The style of the YMCA building is Early 20th Century Revival/Colonial/Georgian.

The YMCA building has had two additions of almost equal size to the original building. Both these additions are on the east side of the building, along Allston Way.

The first addition was constructed in 1960 in a style consistent with mid-century utilitarian architecture in cream colored concrete plaster. The second addition was constructed in 1992 and is sheathed in red brick.

It was designated a City Landmark in 1990.

7. United States Post Office - Contributing Building
2000 Allston Way
Oscar Wenderoth
1914

Listed on The National Register of Historic Places

The elegant facade of the Post Office could be described as a "free adaptation of Brunelleschi's Foundling Hospital" in Florence with its arcade high round arches on plain Tuscan columns gracing its facade. The style of the Post Office is referred to as Second Renaissance Revival. The two story, raised basement rectangular shaped building is set back from the sidewalk about 15 feet. The building faces Allston Way. A series of entrance doorways are recessed behind the entrance loggia of eleven vaulted arches extending almost the full width of the building. Marble Tuscan columns support the arches. Concrete plaster made to look like stone define the corners of the building. The arches are outlined in molded terra cotta. A wide terra cotta belt-course, with dentils, swags, medallions, and wave patterns, visually separates the ground floor from the second floor and continues around the whole building. A smaller terra cotta frieze, with other Classical motifs, tops the second-story just below the eaves. The corners of the facade are heavily rusticated with cast blocks simulating stone. The roof is hipped, red tile over wood sheathing, and has a wide overhang with two rows of curved wooden brackets framing rectangular panels. The arches on the exterior are repeated on the inner wall of the loggia and again in the wall between the lobby and the workroom. These arches are identically

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7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

glazed. The Postmaster's office door is framed in carved wood, similar to the vestibule, and in the arch around the door is a mural of figures from the Spanish and pioneer period of Berkeley's history, painted in 1936-7 by Suzanne Scheuer for the Treasury Relief Art Project. A 130' addition was constructed in 1931/2 at the rear of the original 35' deep building, along Milvia Street. This addition has a flat-roof and is one-story plus basement. It has the same wall, cornice and window motif as the facade, even on the sides facing the driveway and loading dock. The Berkeley Main Post Office is well preserved and its fine materials have endured well. The Post Office was designated a City of Berkeley Landmark in 1980 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

8. State Farm Insurance Companies Building-Contributing Building

1947 Center Street

James Plachek

1947/8

The State Farm Insurance Company Building is a six-story, 115,000 square feet, steel-reinforced concrete structure in Classic Moderne style. The building is divided horizontally and vertically into three sections. The recessed entrance opening is two stories high in the center of the facade. The central section, which contains a group of three windows on each floor projects several feet from the side sections. The side sections contain two groups of three windows on each floor. The corner element, set back about 4 feet, has a single window on each floor. The base of the building is rose colored polished stone and the rest of the building is concrete stucco painted pale rose. The building has not been significantly altered. A huge neon sign, which sat on the roof of the building, was removed in 1963 when the company sold the building.

9. City Hall Annex - Contributing Building

1835 Allston Way

James W. Plachek

1925

The building is a one story stucco-sided building with a red tile roof. It is located on the corner of Allston Way and McKinley Street. The roof line repeats and continues that of "old" City Hall and the fenestration follows the same simple elongated vertical lines which are evenly spaced around the building. Small hipped ventilation dormers are set into the roof. It is a free standing building set apart from the City Hall. From Civic Center Park the building is not visible behind bushes and trees. The interior was alterationed in 1983, but the the exterior of the building has not been altered and retains its integrity .The building was designated a City of Berkeley landmark in 1988.

10. Hall of Justice - Contributing Building

2171 McKinley Street

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7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

James Plachek

1938/39

Groundbreaking for Berkeley's Hall of Justice, commonly known as the police station, was March 28, 1938 and the building opened November 12, 1939. The building is a three-story L-shaped building with its horizontal facade facing McKinley Street, and the end of the L facing east to Center Street. It is constructed of re-reinforced concrete. The building is larger than "old" City Hall approximately 130' long x approximately 75 feet deep, with an "L" on the north/east side approximately 40' x 25'.

On the McKinley street facade the building is a three part composition with the entrance in the center of a projecting bay, which is approximately 1/2 the width of the flanking bays. This central element has a slightly rounded corner element. Vertically the building is a two part composition, with the first floor treated like a raised basement with two main floors above. On the ground floor of the entrance bay is a single doorway opening. On each of the two floors above the entrance there are three windows. At the cornice in the center is an incised sign proclaiming: "Hall of Justice". The two bays flanking the entrance have five windows on the ground floor; and on the two main floors there is a single window next to the central bay and then four large windows divided into three sections except for the north second floor where there are only three "slits" for windows (where the jail is located) These slit windows are probably an alteration; early drawings for the building show the fenestration the same on both sides and this would be more consistent with the Classic Moderne style of the building. The windows contain three lights each resulting in an overall horizontal composition.

Stylistically the building is simple Moderne, with subtle overtones of classic revivalism popular in the early 20th Century. Except for the slit windows and some small additions at the rear, the building has not been altered.

11. Berkeley Public Health Building - Noncontributing Building

2117 McKinley Street

Michael Goodman

1955

Berkeley Public Health Building, now the main administrative office building for the Fire Department, is a two story rectangular building with a cut-out, recessed entry on the south side of the building creating a small L. The building is faced with rose colored concrete blocks. Window frames are rusticated concrete block to look like stone one block wide. Window frames are brown steel divided into three parts; upper and lower sections are the same size, fixed, narrow and horizontal; the center section is taller and divided in the center with two operable windows. The windows are evenly spaced around the building and are the same size on the two floors. : six on the south sides, 2 on the south facing wall of the entry, four across the front, and 8 on the north side. The entrance, on the south-west side of the building, facing McKinley Street, is sheltered by a simple, tar-roofed awning supported by steel poles that are very typical of the building's period. There is a gray concrete sided

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7. DESCRIPTION Architectural Classification and Narrative Description (continued)

utility box on the roof. Two dwellings were demolished for this building. The building has not been altered and retains integrity. The building is a noncontributor because it was built after the period of significance.

12. Alameda County Court House - Noncontributing Building

2120 Martin Luther King Jr. Way

John Hudspeth

1958/9

The Alameda County Court House, dedicated June 30, 1959, is a two story rectangular building facing Martin Luther King Jr. Way and is located to the north of "Old" City Hall. The two story recessed glazed entrance is on the south side of the building approached under a projecting two story porch. A string course of windows along the first floor are set above blue tile panels and wrap around the south corner of the building. The second floor string course of windows are centered in the center half of the building. The exterior of the building has had little modification, only a small addition to the north side was added in the 1980s and is very compatible with the original design. The building appears to be in good condition and retains its integrity. It is a noncontributing building because it was constructed after the period of significance.

13. McKinley House - Noncontributing Building

2111 McKinley

c1925/moved to site in 1950s

Three story multi-unit dwelling, rectangular in shape. The narrower side of the building faces McKinley Street. The ground floor is treated like a raised basement. The two main floors are treated identically: a pair of French doors with three lights each, open to a very narrow wrought iron balcony on the north side; on the south side on each floor is a large window with a single pane central section flanked by side panels with three lights each. The entry is on the south side in the center of the building. It is covered by a small entry porch with a clay tile roof. A single row of clay tiles decorate the front parapet. The walls are gray textured plaster painted gray, with white painted simulated quoins at the corners. The "raised" basement walls and quoins are painted a darker gray than the main floors. It is a representative example of a 20th Century Revival Italianate Style. It is a noncontributing building because it was moved to the site after the period of significance.

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8. Statement of Significance

Narrative Statement of Significance

BERKELEY'S CIVIC CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

The solemnity and seriousness of democratic community government, the jubilation and pageantry involved with public festivals and other cultural events taking place in the civic center complex and a bit of the grandeur and pomp inevitably associated with formal aspects of government anywhere. . . are expressed within Berkeley's Civic Center as a whole. . . From its earliest and most primitive beginning amongst neolithic cultures, the civic square or park was the center of community activity, whether the activity was play, pageantry, religion, government or commerce. As time passed, structures arose around it to house one or more of these functions. So in a very real sense, the central square or park should remain the dominant element of a governmental center. As a key element in Berkeley's civic center complex, the park, then, is an important place and the means by which the expression of local civic character can be achieved.

-Lawrence Halprin, Halprin & Associates, Landscape Architects
"Report on Master Plan for Berkeley Civic Center Park"
January, 1964, pp. 1-3

I. SUMMARY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA A AND C

For almost one hundred years, Berkeley's civic center district has served the needs of its government and small community. Beginning in 1899 when the first City Hall building was strategically relocated to its current site, the district took over a half century to plan and develop. It embodies the political trends of the nation as well as the region and the city during the district's period of significance, 1909-1950. Both World Wars, the Depression, and local politics influenced the district's development. The district also represents the town's importance as an agricultural center for the surrounding region due to the influence of the first state university, the University of California, Berkeley.

The civic center district includes federal, regional, and local government buildings, along with a community theater, a YMCA, and a Veteran's Memorial Building all surrounding a central park. These diverse community buildings, located in Berkeley's most important public space, reflect significant social aspects of Berkeley's history, important to the citizens' health, safety, and welfare. The park plan and its collection of civic buildings illuminate the variety of architectural and design influences (the City Beautiful Movement, Beaux Arts and Art Deco/Moderne) that prevailed during the first half of this century. The park layout and its buildings were executed by renowned designers and fortunately the district is largely unaltered and retains a high degree of integrity. As a result, Berkeley's Civic Center is locally significant as an ensemble of harmoniously planned buildings and as a collective body of civic architecture.

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8. Statement of Significance

Narrative Statement of Significance (contin.)

II. AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

A. Politics/Government/Social History

By its very nature, Berkeley's Civic Center District has been intimately intertwined with the political and social history of the city. The land was acquired, and the buildings designed and constructed, with public approval and funding. Every significant government decision in Berkeley, from 1899 onwards, occurred somewhere in the Civic Center District. The enactment and administration of laws by which the city was governed, and most activities related to political processes, took place within the district's buildings. In addition, the community's most cherished public service, its renowned police department, resides in the district. From its elegant Old City Hall to its streamlined Community Theater, the district has survived almost 100 years of local politics amazingly intact. From festive Christmas celebrations at the fountain to solemn Memorial Day gatherings with the Veterans, Civic Center Park has been the center of a democratic community's pattern of life. Not surprisingly, the district has been -- and still is -- the most important site in Berkeley's history.

Berkeley incorporated as a city in 1878 in order to prevent annexation by the neighboring City of Oakland. The process also identified a need for better law enforcement: settlers from the Gold Rush had brought commerce as well as shiftless characters. Consequently, law enforcement was an important concern for the City's early residents which has continued to the present day. While uniting its different communities, the incorporation was an uncomfortable union of contrasting interests: the University at one end and commerce at the other, separated by farmers who were reluctant to have their land made part of the town in the first place. Tensions were reflected in civic decision-making and the location of the Town Hall became a chronic source of controversy. Initially, Berkeley did not have any civic buildings and Town Trustees met in rented or borrowed buildings, trying to adjust their meeting place from east to west and back again to satisfy both parts of town. In 1884, a Hall was built at Sacramento and University Avenues which was used for twenty years. It satisfied neither district and was difficult to get to. This Hall, in 1895, witnessed the adoption of the Town's Charter. By 1897 considerable community sentiment for removal of the Hall to the eastern part of town was evident and in 1899, Trustees decided that the Hall would have a new home on Grove Street (now Martin Luther King Jr. Way). The new building site was reasonably centered in town enough to avoid the claim that any one district had been disadvantaged by the relocation.

In 1900, after two unsuccessful tries, Berkeleyans approved a bond issue to build an adequately-sized public high school. A permanent site was purchased on an adjacent block southeast of the Town Hall site. The school was built in 1901 and, in combination with the Town Hall, the two municipal functions formed the beginnings of Berkeley's historic Civic Center district.

In 1904, the Town Hall burnt down and the city's volunteer fire department was transformed into a full-time paid force. In 1905, August Vollmer (1905-45) was elected as Town Marshal and over the next forty

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8. Statement of Significance

Narrative Statement of Significance (contin.)

years, with much support from the Berkeley community, he developed one of the most highly respected police departments in the United States. In 1906, with community support, the Berkeley police developed the first electric signal light system in the United States.

At this time, the city entered a new era, politically, socially and economically. A spirit of political reform was abroad in the nation and California. The "Progressive Era" was well underway: industrial trusts were being attacked, government corruption exposed and reform proposed, the power of the individual citizen strengthened through direct primary elections and the initiative process, and far-sighted enterprises in the public interest were created or expanded. The 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco brought a flood of new residents to Berkeley and the town was becoming one of the leading cities in California. The University of California was flourishing, with enrollment rising and grand new permanent buildings of the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Architectural Plan completed on the campus nearly every year. New residential subdivisions were being planned on all sides, the business district was prospering and busy, and municipal facilities were growing. In 1903, Berkeley housed its Public Library Building (at Kittredge and Shattuck) in a substantial Carnegie-sponsored building designed by University Architect John Galen Howard. The newly minted high school campus, adjacent to the proposed new City Hall, was a source of community pride.

As a result of these forces, the City Beautiful Movement was introduced to Berkeley's civic-minded leaders as a fitting way to design Berkeley's most important and public building, the new Town Hall. Built in 1909, the new Hall marks the formal beginning of Berkeley's progressive political history. It was the first civic building constructed in the district's Period of Significance. In 1909, citizens amended their City Charter to make Berkeley a city, not a town, and the "Town Hall" became "City Hall."

Located in traditional proximity to City Hall, Berkeley's first federal government office, the Post Office, was authorized in 1910 but not completed until 1915. Across from the Post Office, built with funds raised by civic leaders in 1910, the YMCA was located catty corner from the high school and was one of the community's most beneficial social organizations. Lodges and fraternal orders such as the YMCA and the Elks Lodge were important in America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They were centers of community life where 'prestigious' citizens socialized. Not surprisingly, most early civic leaders were associated with one organization or another. In the early 1900s, as there were not a lot of public facilities available, these buildings provided an important service for the community. In Berkeley, a number of large buildings were erected to house such groups, the largest being the Elks Lodge next to the Post Office. Because many of the groups were socially active, they were usually involved with controversial issues and in Berkeley, they were an integral part of the city's early political history. The YMCA was especially significant because it was not exclusive and open to the general public, including women.

About the time the YMCA was being completed, the Police Department, firmly established in the basement of new City Hall, was competently overseeing the safety of its community. Berkeley became the first American city to put all of its officers on bicycles. Later, in 1912, the force became the first completely

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motorized department in the country with motorcycles. In 1914, the entire force was equipped with cars. In 1915, Dr. Albert Schneider of the Berkeley Police Force created the nation's first scientific crime detection laboratory. That same year, the first Junior Traffic Police Force in the country was organized by Berkeley's police force in cooperation with its public schools in order to prevent crime among juveniles.

Contemporaneously, efforts to improve cities and apply the lessons of the new planning profession were changing communities throughout the nation. The "White City" of the Chicago's Columbian Exposition of 1892 and the City Beautiful Movement had awakened civic-minded leaders to the concept that America's increasingly crowded, dirty, and disorganized urban centers could be transformed into pleasant, attractive, healthful communities. Public-spirited citizens brought Chicago's Daniel Burnham to San Francisco just before the 1906 earthquake to plan its civic areas. His designs widely influenced government planning throughout the region. In the midst of the many important public buildings being constructed in Berkeley, city officials in 1911 and 1915 commissioned master plans for the City's growing civic center. Influenced by the City Beautiful Movement, the plans were intended to transform the messy area into a healthy, rationally-organized park district which would improve urban life, uplift the spirit and inspire civic pride and good citizenship. The plans denote a central park surrounded by harmoniously designed civic buildings. At about this time, to bolster public interest, the city initiated an annual fair in the civic center district and promised to include a children's playground in developing the park.

The same public spirit, in 1911, elected Berkeley Mayor J. Stitt Wilson who became the first Socialist Mayor elected in the United States. For purposes of civic betterment in 1923, after many years of debate, Berkeley also became one of the country's first cities to adopt a "City Manager" type of government. This meant closer collaboration between legislative and administrative branches of city government, budget control, greater efficiency, and integration of municipal departments. It was intended to reduce corruption and waste in the provision of municipal services. Similarly, Berkeley's Police Force was gaining recognition at the time under its progressive Chief August Vollmer and was beginning experiments in "scientific policing." In 1923, lie detectors were invented at the University of California in Berkeley and the first practical model was used by the City's police force. In addition, as a result of extensive training programs, Berkeley's police department recruited the first college-trained woman police officer in the United States.

World War I interrupted further development of city government and the Civic Center. Not surprisingly, the first civic building to be constructed in Berkeley after the War was the Veterans' Memorial in 1928, an important part of the civic center's development. An ambitious statewide building program was passed by the state legislation in the 1920s reflecting the political and social influence of World War I veterans. It enabled counties to include in their tax rate a certain portion for construction of memorial buildings dedicated to war veterans. As a result, Alameda County contains an impressive collection of veterans' memorial buildings, including Berkeley's, still in use today.

The Depression stifled Berkeley's grand plans for a government center and funding for "the civic park"

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8. Statement of Significance

Narrative Statement of Significance (contin.)

was slow in materializing. It was not until federal relief programs of the late 1930s that a second phase of civic improvements began. Because the university was a land grant college and the center of agricultural education and research in the state, Berkeley was, by 1917, one of twelve regional locations in the United States for the Federal Land Bank. After the Depression, the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933, required the Farm Administration, through the Federal Land Bank, to refinance farm mortgages in order to help farmers reestablish themselves. As part of President Roosevelt's "New Deal" policies, universities were to educate farmers to farm more efficiently in order to better feed the millions of hungry people. Because the School of Agriculture and Extension Services at the University of California in Berkeley were the center of agricultural education in the state, the Federal Land Bank, in 1937, needed to build new regional headquarters in Berkeley to administer the federal relief program and implement its policies. Strategically, the city sold the land it had acquired for the eastern portion of civic park to the Bank for its headquarters and then used income from the sale to purchase private parcels on the rest of the block for the rest of the park.

The further development of the civic center is also related to the Federal Land Bank. From the 1920s through the 1950s, the State Farm Insurance Company sold insurance to county Farm Bureaus throughout the country. Based in Illinois, the company typically positioned itself in medium-sized university towns and located its offices in civic or city centers, very often close to Federal Land Banks. In the 1940s, the company expanded its insurance to include auto and life. As a result, in 1946, it built its new offices across the street from the Federal Land Bank, its largest client, while other similar business located in Berkeley's downtown business district on Shattuck Avenue.

In order to continue serving citizens with a top-notch police force, in 1939, the city built new headquarters for its most popular branch of city services. The force moved out of the basement of City Hall and into the new Hall of Justice, located directly behind City Hall, in close proximity to other municipal services. The Hall of Justice contained a dual radio/telephone switchboard installed by telephone engineers and police technicians and the department became the first in the country to use radios in its police cars.

Ironically, by this time, all of Berkeley's civic buildings were in place surrounding the central park, but the City had yet to acquire the remaining private parcels for the civic district's central park.

In 1939, the Golden Gate International Exposition opened on Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay. Glowing in the center of the Bay and clearly visible from Berkeley, it provided a fantasy city of designs and attractions. Berkeley residents flocked to the Exposition which held 'Berkeley' and 'University of California' Days. Perhaps it was the threat of impending World War, or perhaps it was the appeal of preserving memories of Treasure Island in the form of a civic fountain centerpiece, whatever the cause, Berkeley citizens finally approved a bond measure in 1940 -- after rejecting a few other measures beginning with one in 1914 -- that enabled the City to purchase the remaining land for its civic center park. The park was one of the last park projects undertaken by the Works Progress Administration which assisted the City with construction.

Once approved, the development of Civic Center's park moved rapidly forward. Civic leaders, local

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organizations, and the WPA all contributed to the Park's realization by donating funds, flagpoles, benches, memorial trees, and the promised children's playground equipment. In the midst of World War II, in 1942, the park was completed, over 30 years after its original conception by City Beautiful planners. It culminated three decades of public effort to create a formal open space in Berkeley's civic core. It was one of the community's most important events. The new park was dedicated on Memorial Day, 1942, with patriotic pageantry appropriate to a nation at war. Crowds ringed the central lawn. Soldiers in World War I uniforms proceeded a young woman in flowing white dress and crown (presumably Lady Victory), borne by Boy Scouts, through the park. An orchestra performed on a temporary stage and speeches were made. Photographs of the event reveal Berkeley's definite small-town character, with young children scurrying around on the lawn to get the best view of the parade, people of all ages, and knots of spectators gossiping on the margins of the crowd. In the 56 years since the Park was dedicated, a broad array of political, cultural, and other events have taken place in the park enriching the physical space with social and historical associations.

At about the same time that the Federal Land Bank was being constructed, Berkeley's school system was also being affected by President Roosevelt's New Deal policies. The school administration, in 1937, planned an expansion of the high school facing the central park. The school was a great source of civic pride and the expansion was to take up the whole block directly south of the park. The expansion not only included the typical science and math laboratories, but the planners also included a performing arts facility because such arts were an integral part of education. Furthermore, the sophisticated Berkeley community -- where amateur drama had been popular since the turn of the century -- lacked a good facility for performing arts. The idea to merge the community's need for a theater with the philosophy of broad education seemed to suit the nature of Berkeley's growing civic center. When proposed in the late 1930s, the theater building was conceived with the spirit that a school should be a community center, not a blackboard jungle. It was part of the 1930s Model City Program which envisaged, among other things, an exemplary school system and a Civic Center complex for Berkeley.

Because the building trades were badly affected during the Depression, Roosevelt created the Works Progress Administration, commonly known as the WPA. Because of a WPA grant in 1939, construction for the theater began in 1940 and was rushed to avoid conflict with the national defense program of World War II. But with the attack on Pearl Harbor, construction stopped and was not resumed until 1949. For an entire decade, the auditorium sat an unfinished skeleton on the local skyline and was known familiarly as the Bird Cage. The Community Theater was finally completed in 1950, the last civic building constructed during the Civic Center District's Period of Significance (1908-1950).

In October, 1949, the local school board decreed the name of the facility would be the Berkeley High School Community Theater. Local veteran groups favored a name which would commemorate the 137 student who died in World War II. After a prolonged debate which considered such suggestions as a beacon light atop the auditorium and even an eternal light within, the board decided instead to incorporate a Memorial Court into

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the project. It should be noted that in January, 1965, the adjacent Little Theater became officially the Florence T. Schwimley Little Theater in honor of a long-time drama teacher at the High School.

The Berkeley High School Community Theater was formally dedicated on June 5, 1950. With a program devoted to the history of Berkeley, then Governor Earl Warren spoke at the opening ceremonies. On June 10, 1950, the local Lions Club sponsored a presentation of Art Linkletter's "People Are Funny" radio show in the theater as a charity. For years, the Berkeley Community Theater was one of the best-equipped theaters in the Bay Area and was rivaled only by the War Memorial Opera House in San Francisco. In the early 1950s, it was lauded as Berkeley's "Temple of Beauty" or as the largest indoor auditorium on the Pacific Coast and one of the largest in the country. In an article published in the 1951-52 (23rd Edition) of the American School and University, Superintendent Nelson reported that George Ford, manager of the *Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo*, called this one of the finest theaters in the world. Since then, it has been eclipsed by such facilities as UC-Berkeley's Zellerbach Hall and the Center for the Performing Arts in San Jose -- just as it superseded the once popular and heavily used Greek Theater on the UC-Berkeley campus.

As the anchor for the community's performing arts, the Berkeley High School Community Theater has been a mainstay for the cultural life in Berkeley and the East Bay. It was -- and is -- supported by Berkeley's adjacent downtown district which contained a variety of entertainment venues, restaurants, and the like. The Park, too, was the site of many community festivities, city-wide gatherings, and cultural events of importance. It was -- and is -- used for a wide range of civic purposes including celebrations, rallies, fairs, holiday celebrations, and concerts. In combination with the Berkeley Community Theater, the park has been the stage for a broad array of performing events all of which express the diverse lifestyles of Berkeley citizens.

The Civic Center District has continued to serve Berkeley's government and community until the present day. Between 1955-63, the City purchased the northern half of the City Hall block and in 1958, the Alameda County Courthouse was built on this block. Later, Berkeley's Fire Department built its headquarters here and other city services have located in smaller buildings on this block. The City Council outgrew its quarters and moved the City Hall into the Federal Farm Credit Buildings in the 1970s and the School Administration moved into the Old City Hall. Lastly, in the 1980s, a "Peace Wall" was constructed to celebrate peace with the Soviet Union and Hiroshima. The Wall was among the first of its type and has led to similar memorials throughout the world.

By its very nature, Berkeley's Civic Center District has been intimately intertwined with the political/social history and welfare of the city. Every civic and social function within the district promoted the welfare of citizens. The district is significant for efforts during the first four decades of the twentieth century to establish good public parks and buildings -- not only as a way to beautify communities, but as a means of fostering public-minded behavior and good citizenship. Currently, many civic projects, large and small, are being considered for the district. A county courthouse, a public safety building, a new high school building, and a replacement fountain have all been proposed for Berkeley's historic Civic Center District.

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8. ~~Statement of Significance~~ Narrative Statement of Significance (contin.)

II. AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

B. Architecture/Community Planning and Development

Berkeley, California's Civic Center Historic District is significant locally for its ensemble of civic buildings which are characteristic of architecture and city planning during the period of significance 1909-1950. The district embodies the distinctive characteristics common to many early 20th-century civic centers inspired by the City Beautiful movement and Beaux Arts classicism popularized by the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. Such civic centers often have a central park or plaza area surrounded by a group of compatible or harmonious buildings whose functions are primarily civic. Individual buildings are symmetrically designed and usually form an axis or axes with one another. A Beaux Arts plan for Berkeley's civic center was published in 1914 illustrating a central park with a fountain in the center and surrounded by a harmonious group of buildings. These characteristics are present in today's Civic Center District.

Old City Hall (1909) and the Post Office (1914) were built before the First World War and are representative of Beaux Arts classic revival styles with richly decorated, but harmonious, facades. Three major contributing buildings and the park were built between 1928-1950, and are representative of the artistic values and economic restraints of Classic Moderne. All contributing buildings have the symmetrical facade arrangement typical of classicism, and four of these buildings create a cross axial composition running east-west (from Old City Hall to the Farm Credit Building) and north-south (from the Veterans' Memorial Building to the Community Theater) which meets in the center of Civic Center Fountain. The area conveys its significance through the spatial relationships between these major features that were created by conscious community planning beginning in 1909 and culminating in 1950. Despite the length of time it took the city to assemble the property and construct the buildings, the resulting district is a clear expression of aesthetic ideals and preferences at the turn of the century.

The major contributing site (the park) and fountain, and individual contributing buildings reflect historic and current functions which remain essentially the same and have retained a high degree of integrity. All are located on their original sites; few, if any, physical alterations or changes have been made to the individual buildings or the park; the original harmonious colors of the buildings have been retained; most of the interiors are intact. The relationship between contributing buildings, the downtown and the park has not been changed since the area achieved significance.

When Old City Hall was completed in 1909, its design, scale, and elegant silhouette reflected Berkeley's growth from a town to a city. Its design was a conscious community planning decision because it proclaimed the city's new image as the "Athens of the West" in keeping with the beautiful neo-classic buildings being built on the University campus under

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8. Statement of Significance	Narrative Statement of Significance (contin.)
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University architect, John Galen Howard. Despite the ambitious plans published in 1914 for a grand colonnaded, tile-roofed ensemble of buildings, the citizens of Berkeley repeatedly rejected bond issues for its construction. While the larger and more fully realized Beaux-Arts University of California Campus was being built between 1902 and the late 1920s, Berkeley's Civic Center remained uncompleted.

1. Old City Hall, 1909, was the first building to be constructed in what would become Berkeley's more fully developed civic center. It set the stage and became the keystone for the future civic center. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of Beaux Arts Classicism, a significant style of architecture for primarily institutional and civic buildings during the late 19th and early 20th-centuries. It was designed by John Bakewell and Arthur Brown, Jr. who studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, after graduating from the University of California in the 1890s. They established a partnership in 1906 and the Berkeley City Hall was one of their earliest commissions. Other works by the firm include the more elaborate San Francisco City Hall (1912-1916), and the San Francisco Opera House (1932). Their design was selected as the winner of a 1907 competition to replace the original Berkeley Town Hall (Samuel and J. C. Newsom, 1884) which had burned in 1904. As the keystone to the future Civic Center and in anticipation of a larger complex, the "new" City Hall was constructed a few feet to the north of the previous building so that it was on axis with the block to the east. Thirty-three years later Civic Center Park was built on this block

Old City Hall is an expression of aesthetic ideals and preferences during the period of significance and is a characteristic example of a particular time. The building illustrates the physical features that occur in Beaux Arts Classicism by the form and proportion of the structure, its plan, style and materials. The building is reinforced concrete over a steel frame, a method of construction typical of large buildings during this period. Its decoration is derived from Greek and Roman sources in a symmetrical arrangement.

The building retains a high degree of integrity. There have been few alterations to the building since it was completed in 1909. The interior exhibits decorative techniques used at the time for the painted columns at the base of the main stairway and in the trompe l'oeil painting of the walls and ceiling of the stairwell. These are well preserved examples of decoration and representative example of a period.

The only change in the main facade has been the replacement of the operable sections of the original wood sash windows with aluminum, but the pattern of the window divisions has been retained. The major alteration occurred in 1950, when the rear of the building was extended about 10 feet on each side of the stair-bay to create additional office space, but this can not be seen from any public right-of-way. The windows on either side of the stair bay were enclosed as part of this work, so that the main staircase is now much darker than it was originally.

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8. Statement of Significance

Narrative Statement of Significance (contin.)

2. Martin Luther King, Jr., Civic Center Park and Fountain, 1938-1942, are the physical centerpieces of Berkeley Civic Center District. Although the second-to-last part of the Civic Center complex to be completed, the park was anticipated in 1908 when City Hall was designed. Its acquisition and construction culminated more than three decades of planning and attempts to achieve a unified civic center of public buildings arranged harmoniously around a central park/plaza. The park retains a high degree of integrity. Most of its original features, and almost all of the park hardscape and most of its permanent landscape plantings have survived intact.

The park is significant because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a civic center park conceived in the early 20th century as an expression of the City Beautiful movement which emphasized the creation of parks and other public amenities as a way to beautify communities and inspire public-minded behavior. These characteristics include: a symmetrical plan; an open lawn space for public gatherings and relaxation; two raised performance spaces, one above the lawn and another above the fountain plaza; a water element in the form of a fountain; the community Holiday Tree; and paved pathways, benches and trees. It also displays distinctive stylistic characteristics in the form of physical features such as the fountain, steps and walls that use Streamline, Art Deco or Moderne design themes from the 1930s when the park was constructed. The park is associated with regionally and nationally significant designers including Henry Gutterson, Bernard Maybeck, and Julia Morgan (all studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris) and university Professor and landscape architect John Gregg.

The park is associated stylistically with the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition (on Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay), a major cultural and design milestone in regional history. The inspiration for a large, lighted fountain and the actual plumbing and pumps of the fountain came from the Exposition, which closed in 1940 while the park was being planned. It is likely that the direct model for the fountain was the Exposition's monumental "Fountain of Western Waters" in the "Court of Pacifica" which had a closely similar arrangement of circular basins, water jets, and colored lights. All of the fountain structure remaining is original, as is the flagstone terrace surrounding the fountain and an underground concrete vault where the pumps were located. The fountain is Moderne in character, with symmetrical circular and curved elements and constructed of unadorned concrete with the original board marks still showing.

3. The Veterans Memorial Building, 1928, is an important part of the development of the Civic Center and expresses the community's desire to create a cohesive unity. The building is a characteristic example of the Classic Moderne Style: while it lacks the highly decorative plastic qualities of Beaux Arts classicism, it retains the symmetry and classic references of that style in a simpler and less three-dimensional manner. Its classic colonnaded recessed entry refers to both Old City Hall and the Post Office, and to three High School buildings (now gone) which were in the classic revival style and standing at the time this building was built. The building exemplifies a simplified handling of classicism that was popular for civic buildings between 1920-1950. This

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8. Statement of Significance

Narrative Statement of Significance (contin.)

form of classicism has not been highly regarded and is sometimes referred to as "stripped" classicism. It was not a style associated with avante garde design at the time, but the style was appropriate for the area and supported the Beaux Arts concept of a harmonious grouping of buildings and its function as a Veterans Memorial Building. The building is the work of a regionally noted architect who designed other Veterans buildings in Alameda County, and with his daughter, who was also an architect.

4. The Federal Land Bank Building is significant for its contribution as a major element in the district's axial plan: it is the east element on the east/west axis through the park to Old City Hall and shows the conscious planning decisions made by the community to organize the civic center space. Used as Berkeley's City Hall since 1977, the building exemplifies its heritage as a Federally sponsored Depression era building project through its restrained classic ornamentation and symmetrical three-part classical composition. Its most notable exterior feature is the exuberant zigzag design of the twin elevator towers, which are both practical and decorative, flanking the west entrance to the building and emphasizing the axial composition with Old City Hall. The interior is also intact and distinctive for its Art Deco detailing, especially in the lobby. It was designed by locally prominent architect James W. Plachek in 1938. The building retains a high degree of integrity.

5. The Berkeley High School theater complex building: Florence Schwimley Little Theater, 1937, and Berkeley High School Community Theater, 1937-50, is a significant component of the Civic Center District. The center of the 1/2 block long 1 to 2 1/2 story building is the four story Community Theater. In the center of its north facing exterior wall, overlooking Civic Center Park, is an exuberant three story bas relief sculpture which rises above the stage door. The center of this is the south element of the north/south axis of the Civic Center District. The building was designed by Bay Area architects Henry H. Gutterson and William Corlett Sr. Architect Henry Gutterson was a 1907 graduate of the University of California at Berkeley and had studied at the Ecole Des Beaux Arts in Paris. Gutterson was appointed chair of the Civic Center Park project in 1937. He and Corlett created the north/south axis by designing the center of the theater building on axis with the Veterans Building with the fountain in the center. The building is also a characteristic example of the Art Deco/Moderne style popular after the 1925 Paris fair entitled "Arts Decoratifs et Industriels." The bas relief sculptures by Robert Howard are examples of a Depression era federally funded public work project. This building, along with the Shop and Science Buildings on the Berkeley High School Campus, are significant as the only planned ensemble of Art Deco styled buildings in the city. The theater building complex, both on the exterior and interior, has had little modification or alteration and retain a high degree of integrity.

6. The Young Men's Christian Association Building, 1910, embodies the distinctive characteristics of the early 20th century revival style in the form of the Georgian Colonial type. It

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8. Statement of Significance

Narrative Statement of Significance (contin.)

is the work of noted local architect Benjamin McDougall. It is an expression of the aesthetic ideals of the period as illustrated by its materials and form of decoration. This building is related to the Civic Center by its semi-public function as a social, cultural and recreational center.

7. The United State Post Office, constructed in 1914, embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Beaux Arts Classic Renaissance Revival style. The building is an expression of the aesthetic ideals of the government to "educate and develop the public taste and eventually elevate it to a higher plane" and was designed by the Treasury Department Supervising Architect's Office headed by Oscar Wenderoth. The building conveys its significance through its colonnaded recessed entry, ornamentation and materials. The Post Office is related to the Civic Center by its location, function, date and style. The building retains a high degree of integrity of materials and workmanship; and has not been significantly altered since a 130 foot addition was constructed in 1931/2 at the rear of the original 35 foot deep building, along Milvia Street, which has the same wall, cornice and window motif as the facade.

8. The State Farm Insurance Companies Building, 1947/8, relates to the Civic Center through its architectural design. Built by a private company, but located in the Civic Center District, the building was designed by James Plachek who built the Federal Land Bank Building a decade earlier. Designed to appear as part of the Civic Center, the building, through its method of construction, style of architecture, form, proportion, materials, fenestration, color and details, clearly relates to the Civic Center. The building retains its integrity of materials, workmanship, association, location, and design and has not been altered on the exterior.

9. City Hall Annex, 1925, is related to the Civic Center by its function, location, date and style. It is an expression of an aesthetic ideal and a preference to build a modest, but pleasant addition for city functions. It was also designed by local architect James Plachek. It is residential in scale, showing a preference to be compatible with the residential neighborhood that it faces. The building retains its integrity of materials, workmanship, feeling, association, location, and design. It has not been altered or changed.

10. The Hall of Justice was constructed in 1938 and is characteristic of a utilitarian building (a police department and jail) constructed of reinforced concrete, with sparse decorative detailing found only on its entrance bay. Designed by James Plachek, it is stylistically representative of the period in which it was built and is in a less visually prominent location behind Old City Hall. It is related to the civic center by its function, location and date.

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UNPUBLISHED RESOURCES

Individual Landmark Applications

Civic Center Park, recorders: Steve Finacom, Linda Perry, Gale Keleman, 1997

Berkeley High School, recorder: Susan Cerny, 1992

YMCA, recorder: Charles Bucher, Jr. 1989

Veterans Memorial Building, recorder, Betty Marvin, 1985

City Hall Annex, recorder: JoAnn Price, 1983

United States Post Office, recorder: Betty Marvin, 1980

City Hall, recorder: Trish Hawthorne, 1980

Federal Land Bank, recorder: Richard Ingersoll, 1977

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Landmark applications can be obtained from the Secretary to the Landmarks Preservation Commission, Zoning Department, City of Berkeley

The archives of the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association; The Berkeley Historical Society; Berkeley Public Library: Swingle Collection; The Bancroft Library, University of California; and the Documents Collection of the Environmental Design Library, University of California, Berkeley.

_____ Oral Histories Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley: Jacques Schnier

Public Records: Berkeley School Board Minutes 1938-40

_____ John Galen Howard Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California

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Section number PROPERTY OWNERS Page 1

Mailing Address	Property Location
Mayor Shirley Dean Members of the City Council James Keene, City Manager City of Berkeley 2180 Milvia Street Berkeley, California 94704	(1) 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way Berkeley, California (2) 1835 Allston Way (Annex) Berkeley, California (3) Civic Center Park Berkeley, California (4) 2180 Milvia Street (City Hall) Berkeley, California (5) 1931 Center Street (Veterans Bldg.) Berkeley, California (6) (DELETED) (7) 2111 McKinley Street Berkeley, California (8) 2121 McKinley Street (Fire Department) Berkeley, California (9) 2131 McKinley Street (Police Department) Berkeley, California (10) 2120 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WAY (ALAMEDA COUNTY COURTHOUSE) BERKELEY, CA

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Mailing Address	Property Location
Larry Bush, President and CEO Board of Directors Berkeley YMCA 2001 Allston Way Berkeley, California 94704	(1) 2001 Allston Way Berkeley, California
Jack McLaughlin, Superintendent Berkeley Unified School District 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way Berkeley, California 94704	(1) Berkeley Community Theater 1930 Allston Way Berkeley, California (2) Florence Schwimley Little Theater 1920 Allston Way Berkeley, California
United States Postal Service c/o George Banks, Postmaster 2000 Allston Way Berkeley, California 94704	(1) 2000 Allston Way Berkeley, California
G. Bakar Partnership 201 Filbert Street, #700 San Francisco, California 94133	(1) 1947 Center Street Berkeley, California

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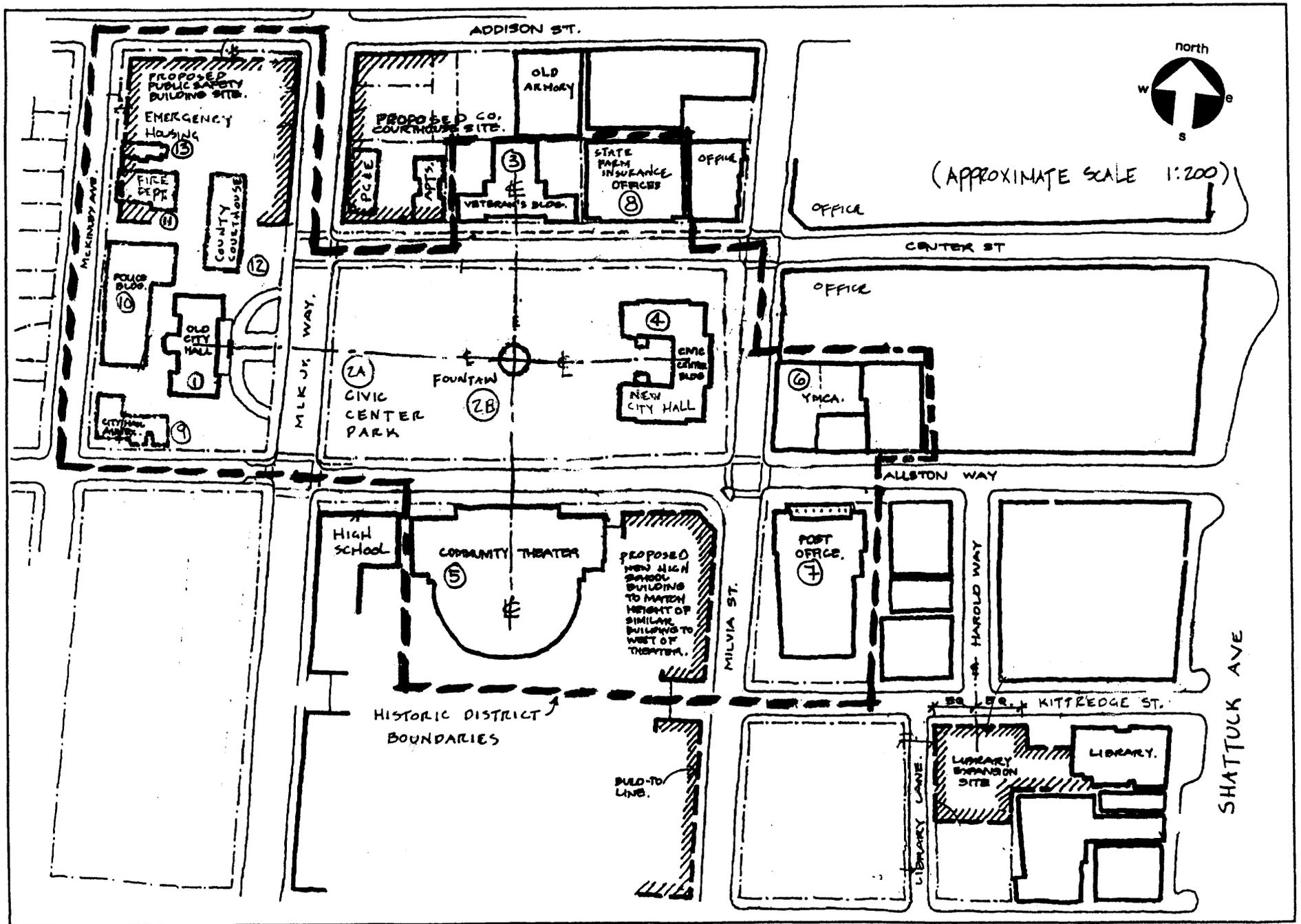
Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property includes the entire block bounded by McKinley and Addison Streets and Allston and Martin Luther King Jr. Way. It also includes the adjoining block bounded by Center Street, Milvia Street, Allston Way and Martin Luther King Jr. Way. North across Center Street is included the Veteran's Building at 1931 Center St. and the State Farm Insurance Building at 1947 Center Street, both to the rear property line. To the East, at the NE corner of Milvia St. and Allston Way is included the Berkeley YMCA at 2001 Allston Way and at the SE corner is the Berkeley Post Office at 2000 Allston Way. The property at the SW corner of the intersection of Milvia and Allston and the Berkeley Community Theater/Florence Schwimley Little Theater at 1930/1920 Allston Way are included. The final piece of the boundary of the nominated property contains the structure at the SW corner of Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Allston Way, at 2200 Martin Luther King Jr. Way

Boundary Justification

The proposed district boundaries were determined by the civic function of the individual properties surrounding Civic Center Park.

SKETCH MAP



BERKELEY CIVIC CENTER DISTRICT

ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

BERKELEY CIVIC CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

BERKELEY CIVIC CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

Table of Photos*

PHOTO #	BUILDING NAME/ADDRESS	VIEW DESCRIPTION/DIRECTION
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2	Old City Hall, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way	Front elevation looking west
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4	Old City Hall, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way	Side elevation looking north
5	Civic Center Park	Aerial view looking east over park w/Veterans Bldg., Civic Center Bldg., and Community Theater
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Berkeley Civic Center District, Berkeley, Alameda County, California

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20	Berkeley Community Theater, 1930 Allston Way	North elevation w/ sculptures overlooking Civic Center Park
21	Berkeley Community Theater, 1930 Allston Way	North elevation w/ sculptures overlooking Civic Center Park
22	Florence Schwimley Little Theater, 1920 Allston Way	North elevation w/ sculptures overlooking Civic Center Park
23	Florence Schwimley Little Theater, 1920 Allston Way, and Berkeley High School Science Building	North elevations of the Little Theater and Berkeley High School [the High School is not in the proposed civic center district] fronting Civic Center Park
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31	Veterans Memorial Building, 1931 Center Street	View from Old City Hall to Veterans Bldg., looking northeast.
32	Veterans Memorial Building, 1931 Center Street	Front/south elevation of bldg. from Park
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53	Municipal Employees Federal Credit Union, 2200 Martin Luther King Jr. Way	Front/east and Side/north elevations of Credit Union Building, looking southwest

***Notes:**

- 1) All buildings are located in the City of Berkeley, Alameda County, California.
- 2) All photographs were taken by Jerri Holan, Director, BAHA.
- 3) All photographs were taken February 27, 1998.
- 4) The original negatives are located at the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (BAHA) Office, 2318 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704 (Phone: 510/841-2242).