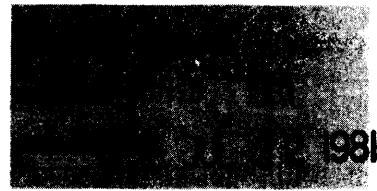


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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



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

1. Name

historic THE FORT

and/or common THE FORT

RECEIVED
JUL 18 1980
OHP

2. Location

Ash and Lincoln Sts.

SOUTHWEST
street & number CORNER OF ASH STREET AND LINCOLN STREET — not for publication

city, town TAFT 93268 — vicinity of congressional district 18

state CALIFORNIA code 06 county KERN code 02-9

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name COUNTY OF KERN

street & number 2601 "O" STREET

city, town BAKERSFIELD — vicinity of state CALIFORNIA 93301

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. RECORDER OF THE COUNTY OF KERN

street & number CIVIC CENTER

city, town BAKERSFIELD state CALIFORNIA 93301

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Point of Historical Interest has this property been determined eligible? yes no

Ker-005

date December 19, 1980 — federal state county local

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

city, town Sacramento state California 95811

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Fort , a massive adobe brick structure, stands majestically on North Lincoln Street, just northwest of the center of the City of Taft, California. The Fort covers nearly three acres of land and measures 360 by 200 feet. It approximates the form and plan of John Sutter's original fort in Sacramento, and is slightly larger than the reconstructed fort in Sacramento.

The great walls (some 14 feet high) are built of native Kern County adobe brick. The entire building is a warm brown earthtone and is capped with a mission tile roof. The giant gateway entrances, just as in the original Sutter's Fort (1839-44), are protected by massive gates constructed of huge timbers and are located on the north and east center elevations, creating the only accesses to the interior courtyards and office spaces. Poured concrete bond beams at the tops of the walls add stability to the adobe walls.

The physical layout of The Fort walls and inner buildings is similar to the original plan of Sutter's Fort. The two-story square bastions are found on the east side at the southeast and northeast corners, a departure from the Sacramento model which has the two towers at opposing corners. The central building assumes a commanding position from both gateways as did Sutter's main building which housed his office and clerks. (See plot plan enclosed.)

The remaining interior buildings were placed against the outside walls and house county, state and federal offices. In the Original plan, these spaces were used by Captain Sutter for shops and storehouses.

The interior court open spaces are planted with lawns and olive trees. The wide overhangs provide the walkways connecting all office spaces and the inner courts.

Only one major alteration has occurred since the original construction. Due to earthquake damage to the central building (auditorium) in 1952, it was necessary to reconstruct that building. In order to do the work as efficiently and economically as possible and still retain the design integrity of the structure, everything which could safely be salvaged and reused in rehabilitating the structure to state standards was used. The original roof was reused by raising the heavy top and carefully readjusting it into place after supporting walls were reconstructed. Rod bracing was added to the plane of the roof to strengthen the straight roof diaphragm.

(continued)

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED	JUL 22 1981

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

DESCRIPTION

7

2

Dimension and structural highlights, taken from the original plans, dated January 18, 1938, which we have in our possession, are as follows:

Structure

Constructed 1938-1940; one story

Areas

Main buildings	22,100 sq. ft.
1/2 inside corridor	2,700 sq. ft.
Maintenance lean-to's	1,300 sq. ft.
Parking structure	2,900 sq. ft.
Total	29,000 sq. ft.

Footings

Concrete; some reinforcing

Floor-Slab

Unreinforced concrete

Walls

Adobe block (unreinforced) with poured concrete bond beams at tops of walls; typical wood stud and plaster (auditorium only).

Ceiling

1/2" gypsum board

Roof

1 x 6 straight sheathing on wood trussed rafters at 30" o.c. with 1 x 2 stripping at 16" o.c. for ceiling.

Corridor Roof

1 x 8 T & G straight sheathing on 3 x 6 rafters at 30" o.c. 6 x 6 cont. beam. 6 x 6 columns at 10' 0" o.c.

Roofing

Mission tile (13 lbs. sq. ft.)

Parking Structure

Steel frame/corrugated steel roofing (north structure only)

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1938 - 1940

Builder/Architect

COUNTY OF KERN

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

FEDERAL WORKS ADMINISTRATION,
W. FRANCIS PARSONS, AIA

The Fort was one of the largest WPA projects in the San Joaquin Valley. Undertaken during the latter years of the Great Depression, it contributed substantially to the economic recovery of the local community. Not only did it provide jobs during the execution of the project, it also housed Federal, State and local offices which continued to administer local recovery programs. In addition, the project centralized medical care and other governmental facilities for the community. The Fort is a major statement of WPA architecture of the period; it is significant that a famous California landmark was recreated specifically in the late thirties to bring civic focus to a federal, state and community center in Taft, California.

As noted by author and architectural historian, David Gebhard, in his supportive letter attached ... (May 22, 1980), "the idea of reproducing a California landmark to be used as a government center is specifically and delightfully Californian. This is a perfect instance of the present (1940) commentary on the past (the original Sutter's Fort in Sacramento of 1839-44). Not only is this a revealing example of how California responded to historic imagery at the end of the 1930's, it is a structure which logically responded to the environment of the Taft region, and finally, it was self-contained and monumental so that it provided a much needed civic focus for the community. All of these assets add up to make "The Fort" an important building within the history of architecture in California" ... (end of quote).

The Fort was constructed jointly by the Federal Works Administration-Work Projects Administration and the County of Kern, and was dedicated by the Grand Officers Native Sons of the Golden West.

During the Depression years of the late '30's it represented one of the largest WPA projects executed in the southern San Joaquin Valley. The Fort has created its own historical significance to all residents of the area and is a tribute to the creative ability of WPA design and construction during the Depression years of the late 1930's.

The Fort created many new job opportunities for many crafts during a period of difficult economic times in the late 30's. The construction of The Fort during the Depression years played an important role in stabilizing the economic recovery of the Taft area and gave employment opportunities to many workers who would otherwise have been on relief programs.

The Fort is an exceptional property and a living monument to the dedication of the WPA program in providing badly needed facilities and job opportunities during the latter part of the Depression years.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE ATTACHED CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

AGREEMENT NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property 4.14 ACRES

Quadrangle name TAFT

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	1	2	7	5	4	4	0	3	8	9	2	3	3	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

The Boundaries selected define the original site acquired by Kern County in 1938.

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

state NONE code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title L. DALE MILLS - DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

organization COUNTY OF KERN

date JULY 14, 1980

street & number 2601 "O" STREET

telephone 805-861-2481

city or town BAKERSFIELD,

state CALIFORNIA 93301

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature K. M. Egan

title SHPO

date 5/24/81

For HCRRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is

Bob G...
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Patricia...
Chief of the...

7/22/81
7/22/81

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED JUL 22 1981

CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	PAGE
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES	9	2

Sutter's Fort
State Historic Park - California Department of Parks and Recreation

Sutter's Fort - Oscar Lewis

Sutter's Fort
State Historical Monument - California Department of Natural Resources

The Bakersfield Californian
"Taft Fort Dedication Set" - May 20, 1940

Dedicatory Ceremonies
"The Fort", Taft, California - May 22, 1940

Letter to Stanley Abel, Supervisor, Kern County, from J.W. Knowland,
President and Publisher of the Oakland Tribune - "Wording for Dedication
Tablet" - April 17, 1940

Daily Midway Driller
"The Fort Marks 20th Birthday" - May 21, 1960

State of California Letter to K. Morgan, Manager South Valley Area
State Parks, from Raymond E. Westberg, Manager Sacramento State Parks -
"Original Fort Walls" - July 25, 1978

Original Plans and Documents, Kern County Public Works Department -
January, 1938

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED	JUL 22 1981

CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	PAGE
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION	10	2

That certain parcel of land situated in the County of Kern,
State of California, and more particularly described as follows, to wit:

Beginning at a point 125 feet South and 30 feet West of the northeast
corner of Section 14, Township 32 South, Range 23 East, M.D.B. & M.;
thence N.49°35'40"W., 107.43 feet to a point which is 55 feet South of
the North line of said Section 14; thence S89°47'W., 318.24 feet;
thence S. 0°02'E., 458 feet; thence N.89°47'E., 400 feet to a point which
is 30 feet West of the East line of said Section 14; thence N.0°02'W.,
388 feet to the point of beginning; and containing 4.140 acres, more or
less.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION RELATING TO THE
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION,
WPA, IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FORT

The records of the newspaper, the Bakersfield Californian, have been searched for articles referring to WPA projects and operations for the period of May 1938 to May 1941. The following is a list, by dates, that refer to the articles that were found. On the list, an asterisk (*) indicates that that article specifically referred to the Fort.

* - Fort Mentioned Definatly (But There May Be Others)

DATE	BAKERSFIELD CALIFORNIA	PAGE	COLUMN
5/18/38		9	6
7/4/38		6	1
*11/11/38		6	3,4,5,6
1/1/39			
1/5/39		2	4
1/5/39		9	5
1/10/39		5	1
1/11/39		9	1
1/12/39		4	8
1/13/39		4	8
1/26/39		6	4
*1/31/39		5	3
*2/4/39		3	1,2,3
2/9/39		5	1
*2/10/39		7	1
2/18/39		11	3
2/22/39		5	5
2/24/39		4	8

DATE	BAKERSFIELD CALIFORNIA	PAGE	COLUMN
2/27/39		5	8
2/27/39		17	5
2/28/39		4	5,6,7
3/25/39		9	8
6/7/39		9	8
6/28/39		9	6
*8/2/39		4	4
*11/28/39		5	4
11/28/39		1	3
12/19/39		1	3
12/22/39		1	1
12/27/39		1	7
*1/1/40		2A	3
1/5/40		8	
*1/6/40		8	6
1/6/40		9	6
1/8/40		9	4
1/13/40		8	8
1/16/40		5	2,3,4
1/22/40		7	7,8
*1/23/40		9	8
2/6/40		9	6
5/4/40		9	6
*5/20/40		9	4
*5/21/40		9	6
*5/22/40		9	5
*5/23/40		15	3,4,5

DATE	BAKERSFIELD CALIFORNIA	PAGE	COLUMN
*5/23/40		6	3
5/28/40		9	3,4
6/3/40		1	4
6/6/40		5	7,8
6/11/40		3	2,3
6/11/40		9	4
6/17/40		9	3
6/18/40		8	6
6/20/40		6	3
5/1/41		10	4
5/5/41		9	8
5/6/41		7	2

The above list indicates that at the period of time of the construction of the Fort, WPA projects were of continual interest and significance to the County of Kern. In a May 22, 1940 article, there is a quotation by Mr. William R. Lawson, Northern California Administrator for the WPA, who was the principal speaker at the dedication services for the Fort. Mr. lawson said, "During its 4½ years of operation in Kern County, the Work Projects Administration has constructed 391 miles of highway roads and streets; 67 bridges and viaducts; 610 culverts; 41 miles of roadside drainage; 45 miles of curbs, gutters, sidewalks, guardrails and guardwalls. Two commercial airports were improved; 3 hangars with the capacity of 25 airplanes were built; one landing area was reconditioned and floodlighted, while at the same time, 25 new boundary light standards were installed."

While this quotation by Mr. Lawson does not speak directly to building, it does indicate that, at the period of time of construction of the Fort, there was considerable economic benefit to Kern County furnished through the WPA Program.

Projects such as road work, curb & gutter, sidewalks, and drainage are hard to identify today as WPA projects. The Fort is readily and easily recognized and will stand as a monument to WPA participation.

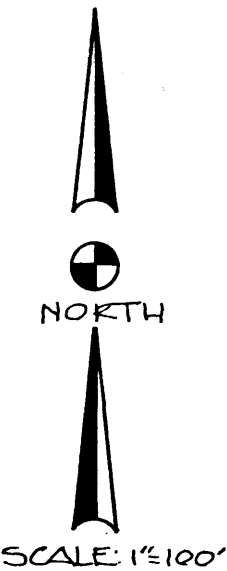
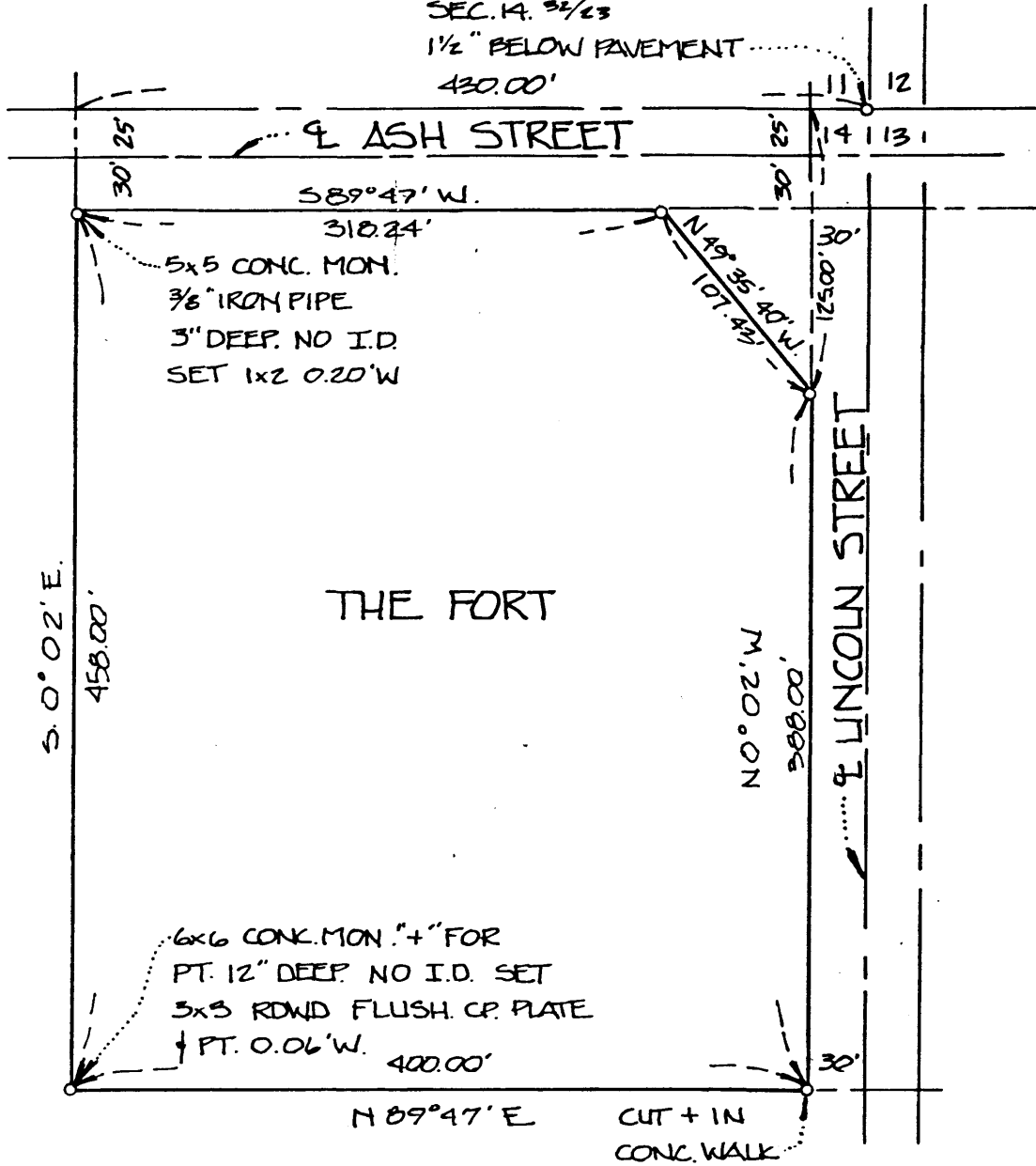
The article in the Bakersfield Californian of May 20, 1940, states "A daily average of 83 men worked on the project from its start on November 18, 1938 until the major construction was finished, May 18, (1940)." The cost to the County was \$51,701.60. Almost twice that amount, \$101,000, was paid out to WPA laborers by the Federal government.

This total expenditure was a major amount for a single WPA project in Kern County at that time.

Homer W. House, 706 Filmore Street, Taft, California 93268, has written and signed a statement that includes the following: "I have to apologize for not having kept a diary of the daily events at that time. It is very difficult for me to recall facts and specifications which I was familiar with 42 years ago. At that time, I was a builder of 16 years experience and a general contractor. I do not recall the circumstances that made me available at that time. But Supervisor Stanley Abel employed me for the County of Kern to supervise the carpentry work on the Fort. At the time I went to work for the County, the foundations were all poured, and the adobe walls were half laid. My only responsibility was directing the working men who were either on WPA or PWA, I don't remember which. Most of them were unskilled, too young to have any experience or too old to hold a job in competition

with younger men. However, they all worked together and accomplished a construction which would have passed inspection by a severe building inspector. I do not think there has been any failure in the carpentry part of the structure. It is hard to describe the pride the men took in their creation."

3" BRASS CAP NE COR.
 SEC. 14. 3 1/2 x 23
 1 1/2" BELOW PAVEMENT
 430.00'



PORTION OF SEC 14. T.32. S. R. 23E. M.D.M.
 COUNTY OF KERN
 ASSESSORS PARCEL 32-151-01

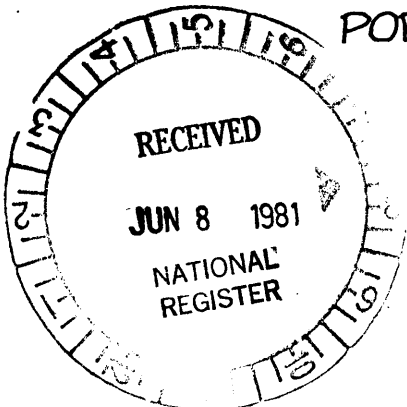
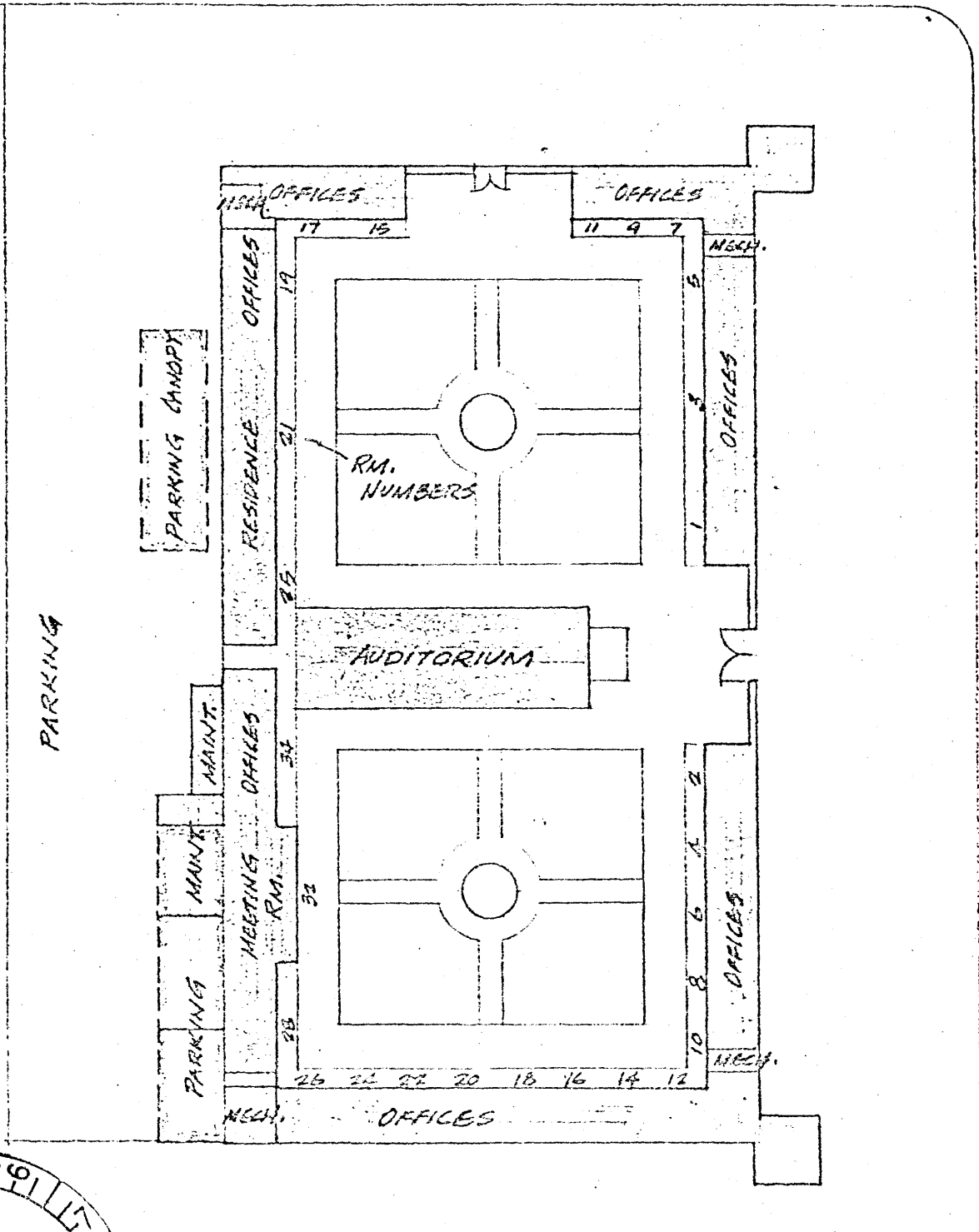


EXHIBIT 10.1

JUL 22 1981

ASH STREET (Co. RD. #1912)

NORTH 10TH STREET (LINCOLN ST.)



PLOT PLAN 1" = 60'

EXHIBIT 10.2

JUL 22 1981

"THE FORT"
 TAFT CALIFORNIA
 10.30.79/WM