

**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 City Hall

and/or common City Hall

RECEIVED
MAY 27 1980

2. Location

OHP

street & number 2134 Grove Street not for publication

city, town Berkeley vicinity of congressional district Eighth

state California 94704 code 06 county Alameda code 00/

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" 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 City of Berkeley (2134 Grove St. was leased by the City on 7/30/79 to the Berkeley Unified School District for 30 years. District Administrative offices are now located in the building)

street & number 2180 Milvia Street

city, town Berkeley vicinity of state California 94704

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alameda County Courthouse

street & number 1516 Oak Street

city, town Oakland vicinity of state California 94612

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title California State Historical Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date March 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records California State Office of Historic Preservation

city, town Sacramento vicinity of state California

①

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Berkeley City Hall is a Beaux-Arts building in the French Renaissance tradition. Known as Old City Hall since city offices were moved to 2180 Milvia Street in 1977, the building is two stories high, with additional attic and basement, and is built of steel-reinforced concrete and finished with stucco. It is basically u-shaped, with a semi-circular stair-bay in the rear. A symmetrically composed building, it is divided into three parts: a central element flanked by two smaller elements or end pieces, which jut forward to the north and south of the central element.

The principal facade faces east and is the most impressive. The building is set back from the street about 30 feet and is surrounded on east and south by a landscaped garden with lawn, shrubbery, trees and curving flower beds. The main entrance is approached via a spreading central stairway, which leads to a broad balustraded terrace spanning the front of the central element.

The central portion of the building (86' by 66') is divided into five bays. The ground floor has round arch openings with molded architraves. The wood framed sash has a triple horizontal and vertical division. The windows have shallow balconies faced with classical balustrades. The keystones of the arches abut shallow balconies that project from the rectangular windows of the second floor. These second floor windows have aluminum sash (replacing the original wood) that retains the original double vertical division and triple horizontal division.

The two main floors rise from a raised fenestrated basement. The central facade has six engaged giant order-length columns with ionic capitals which support six projecting cornice elements that serve as bases for ornamental dentils and monumental urns. Behind the urns is a blank frieze terminating in a secondary cornice molding, with a cartouche in the center. The central portion has a raised, hipped roof with ornamental flames at either end of a mental capped ridge.

The climactic moment is a 60' lantern and spire. The lantern rises from the roof with a paneled base terminating in a high metal balustrade around an open colonade. The colonade supports a classic entablature crowned by a narrow dome with engaged piers capped with finials. Atop the dome is a beveled spire on a base of graduated moldings.

The two wings (each 31' by 77') of the building are identical and are set perpendicular to the central portion. The details of the wings are much the same as those of the central portion. The ground floor of each wing has round arch openings. These are framed by cartouches topped with lion masques from which rise brackets supporting the second floor balconies. The three rectangular windows on the second floor of each wing are smaller than those of the central portion. One balcony spans all three of these windows and is faced with a metal balustrade. Each end piece has a hipped roof, capped with a metal ridge with ornamental flames at either end.

The stucco of the building is painted light brown. The lantern and spire are painted dark brown, as is the sash.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET 1

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE



Item 7 -- Description (continued) p.2

There have been few alterations to the building since it was completed in 1909. The only change in the main facade has been the replacement of the original wooden sash with aluminum, but the pattern of the window divisions has been retained. The major exterior alterations occurred in 1950, when the rear of the building was extended on each side of the stair-bay to create additional office space. Unfortunately, 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. This alteration had no effect on the main facade, and the architectural integrity of the front of the building has been retained.

The most striking feature of the interior is a broad u-shaped stairway that leads up to the second floor. This grand two-flighted stairway has a banister of wrought iron, similar to the railings of the exterior balconies, which is decorated gold-colored medallions. The rest of the grandeur is a skillful illusion. What appear to be walls of dressed stone and a ceiling of tooled leather and brocaded tapestry are a product of expert craftsmanship. While the marble wainscoting of the main floor hallway is real, the rest is a trompe d'oeil. The two columns at the base of the stairway look like marble, but are actually scagliola, a combination of gypsum, glue and coloring that imitates marble. The walls and ceiling of the stairwell itself are not stone, leather or tapestry, but are actually plaster that has been painted in tones of red, olive, green, cream and gilt to resemble these more expensive materials. All of this decorative work is original and has not been altered.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1907

Builder/Architect Bakewell & Brown

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Berkeley City Hall derives its architectural significance as a notable example of Beaux-Arts design and as an early work by a firm that became well-known as a leader in the Beaux-Arts design tradition. The building was designed in 1907 by John Bakewell and Arthur Brown, Jr. Both men had graduated from the University of California in the 1890's and went to Paris to complete a course at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. They established a partnership in 1906. The Berkeley City Hall was one of their earliest commissions. Other work by the firm includes the San Francisco City Hall (1912-1916), the San Francisco Opera House (1932), and the Federal Triangle in Washington, D.C. (1933) for which Arthur Brown gained international recognition. With the exception of the John Galen Howard designed buildings on the University of California campus, the Berkeley City Hall is the outstanding example of Beaux-Arts design in the East Bay. It employs in a direct and pleasing manner the Beaux-Arts principles of symmetry and classic decoration. The decorative techniques exhibited in the scagliola columns at the base of the main stairway and in the trompe d'oeil painting of the walls and ceiling of the stairwell are perfectly preserved examples of a type of decoration that was popular in public buildings at the turn of the century. The combination of the building's Beaux-Arts design and this decorative work make both the interior and exterior significant. In addition, the building derives its historical significance as the home of Berkeley city government from 1909 to 1977, and City Council and School Board Meetings are still held here.

The design of the Berkeley City Hall was derived from the Town Hall at Tours, France, designed in 1901 by Arthur Brown's teacher at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, M. La Loux. Bakewell and Brown's interpretations of La Loux's design was selected as the winner of a 1907 competition to replace the original Town Hall (Samuel and J. C. Newsom, 1884), which had burned to the ground in 1904. The replacement on the same site reflected Berkeley's growth from a town to a city. The new "Town Hall" began in June of 1908 became the "City Hall" in August, 1909. In addition, it proclaimed the city's new image as the "Athens of the West" due to the Hearst Plan for the University of California campus and the magnificent new buildings that were rising there.

The City Hall is also the keystone of the Berkeley Civic Center, which was inspired by the concepts of the "City Beautiful Movement", emphasizing broad vistas and important public buildings grouped around a central open space or park. Although the Berkeley Civic Center did not become a reality until 1941, because the city was slow in acquiring the land necessary in the block bounded by Grove, Milvia, Allston and Center Streets, the completion of the classic City Hall in 1909 provided the inspiration for the first of many Civic Center plans. The City Hall has added significance

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see Continuation Sheet #2

10. Geographical Data **UTM NOT VERIFIED**

Acreeage of nominated property 434

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle name Oakland West

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	0	5	6	4	0	0	0	4	1	9	1	4	0	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

From the north west corner of Grove Street and Allston Way, 180 feet north on Grove Street, 105 feet west on Allston Way (see sketch map)

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

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Patricia Hawthorne, Chairperson

organization Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Commission

date April 14, 1980

street & number 1962 Yosemite Road

telephone (415) 527-4672

city or town Berkeley

state California 94707

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. Ellen

title SHPO

date 7/31/81

For HCRC use only

I hereby certify that this property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

William H. ...

date 9/1/81

for Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Patricia ...

date 9/10/81

Chief of Registration

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

CONTINUATION SHEET

2

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

in the history of city planning in Berkeley because it is an integral part of the existing Civic Center complex, as well as being the inspiration for the complex itself.

The City Hall looks east toward downtown Berkeley and to the University and hills beyond. The City Hall spire, like the University's campanile, is a landmark visible for great distances, and Center Street, which begins east of Grove to the north of the City Hall, forms an axis linking town and gown visually as well as symbolically. For 68 years, the City Hall has represented the City of Berkeley to many people, and although city offices are now located a block away and the school district administrative offices occupy the old City Hall, the building continues to symbolize civic Berkeley and remains a source of great civic pride to Berkeley citizens.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED	SEP 1 1981

CONTINUATION SHEET

3

ITEM NUMBER

9

PAGE

1

Item 9 -- Major Bibliographical References

1. The Berkeley Gazette: July 3, 1907, p.1; June 27, 1908 p.1.
2. The Berkeley Gazette, May 23, 1979, "Berkeley's Architectural Heritage: City Hall a Neglected Landmark", by Anthony Bruce
3. Documentation prepared for City of Berkeley Landmark Status for City Hall, 2134 Grove Street, by Janet Silber, December 1975
4. State Historical Resources Inventory, form on City Hall, 2134 Grove St. prepared by Betty Marvin, 1977
5. Berkeley, California, William Warren Ferrier, 1933, p. 172-174
6. Report on a City Plan for the Municipalities of Oakland and Berkeley Werner Hegemann, 1915
7. Original paper blueprints of City Hall by Bakewell and Brown (1907) Records Vault, City of Berkeley, Department of Public Works, Engineering Division, Civic Center Building, 2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, 94704
8. Permit File on 2134 Grove Street includes dates, cost and description of exterior and interior alterations to the building; City of Berkeley Department of Housing and Development, Codes and Inspections Division, Civic Center Building, 2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, 94704
9. Berkeley: The Town and Gown of it, George A. Pettitt, 1973, p.84-86

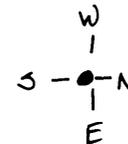
Item 10 -- Geographical Data (continued)

The Assessor's Number for this property is 57-2017-16-1.

The City Hall, 2134 Grove Street, and its adjacent grounds occupy only a portion of the property indicated by this number, which refers to the entire block bounded by Grove Street, Allston Way, Addison Street and McKinley Avenue. The entire block is owned by the City of Berkeley and has not been broken down into separate parcels since all the property is tax-exempt. The Assessor's Number is therefore accurate, but not specific enough since other buildings are included in it. This nomination applies only to 2134 Grove Street and the garden to east and south of the building, and not to any of the other buildings on that block or to the rest of the property included in the above Assessor's Number. (See Sketch Map)

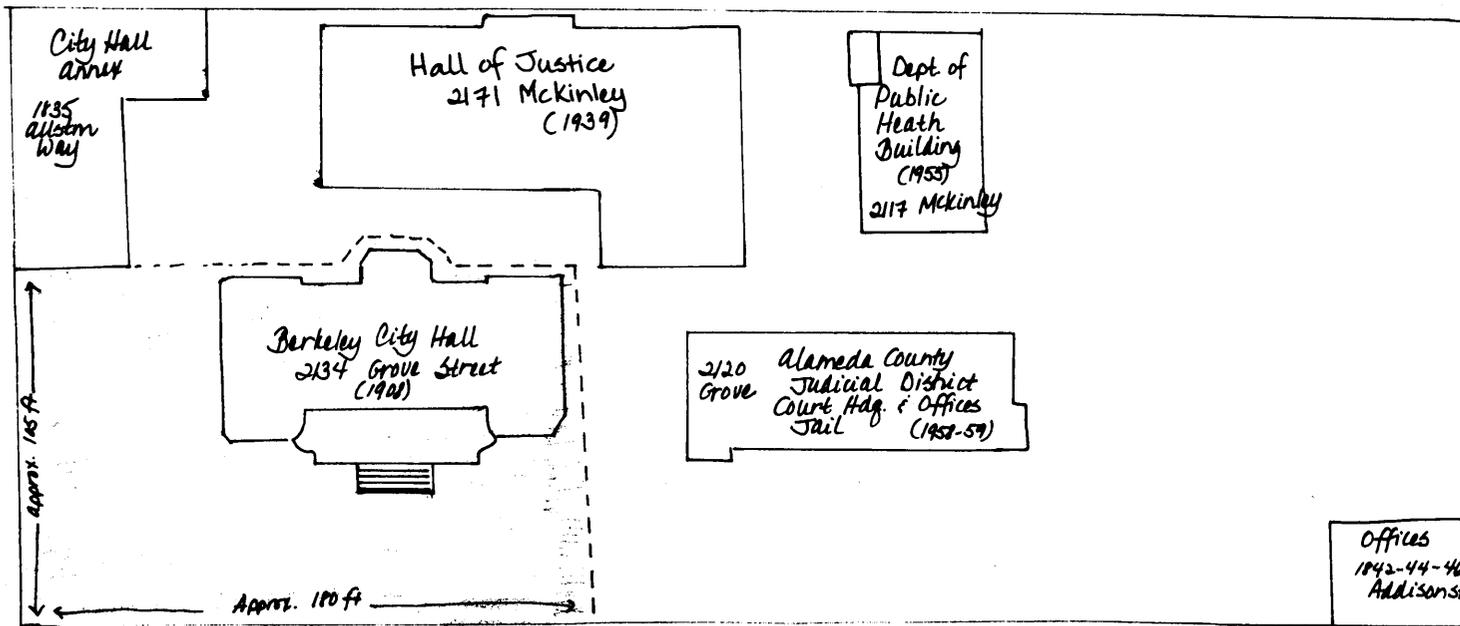
2134 Grove Street and its adjacent grounds are a portion of the McGee Tract, Block #1, Lots 10,11,12, and a portion of lots 13,14,15, and 16.

Sketch Map of Berkeley City Hall and Surrounding Property

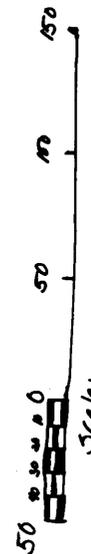


McKinley Avenue

Allston Way



Addison Street



Grove Street

Civic Center

= 2134 Grove Street and garden Area Nominated