

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

RECEIVED No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

OMF

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 any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

=====

1. Name of Property

historical name Cedar Avenue Complex

other names/site number County Government Center

=====

2. Location

street & number 44843 (44855); 44845; 44851 Cedar Avenue; 606 Lancaster Blvd; and Old Jail (no address) not for publication NA
city or town Lancaster vicinity NA
state California code CA county Los Angeles code 037
zip code 93534

=====

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Stade R. Craig

Aug 25, 1993

Signature of certifying official
California Office of Historic Preservation

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

 Signature of commenting or other official Date

 State or Federal agency and bureau

=====

4. National Park Service Certification

=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

~~entered in the~~
National Register

- entered in the National Register Delores Byers 9/30/93
 ___ 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 of Keeper Date
 of Action

=====

5. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>4</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
---	sites
---	structures
---	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Government	Sub: court house
	correctional facility
	government office
Health Care	clinic
Recreation and Cultural	auditorium

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Government	Sub: government office
Recreation and Cultural	auditorium

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Moderne

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	CONCRETE
roof	ASPHALT
walls	STUCCO
other	BRICK

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

The Cedar Avenue Historic District encompasses five governmental buildings including a Memorial Hall and Office Building, Sheriff's Substation and Garage, Jail Building, and County Health Center. The architecturally compatible structures are located in a cohesive grouping on contiguous government parcels on the southwestern corner of Cedar Avenue and Lancaster Boulevard (formerly 10th Street) along the original main street in the commercial area of the community.

The complex is owned by the City of Lancaster. The city purchased the complex from the County of Los Angeles in 1987.

1. Memorial Hall. 1938. Art Deco. Architect, Brett, Edward C. M., Chief Architect for the Mechanical Department of the County of Los Angeles. The building consists of two wings forming an "L". The building fronts on Cedar Avenue with a two story wing and the two main entrances to the building.

The main entry on Cedar Avenue is projected forward three and a half feet. Three tile and brick steps lead up to recessed double doors. The steps are flanked by low concrete buttresses. Each door contains a single large

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pane of glass. A large transom window spans the doors and a flat sheet metal canopy with three horizontal bands extends out from the facade above the transom window. On either side of the entry, three sets of stucco bands extend vertically up the facade to the heads of three sets of double hung windows centered over the entry door. Above the door is a raised circular medallion.

Decorative windows with opaque glass are aligned vertically and set in pre-cast concrete on both sides of the entry.

The north, west and south facades have more functional entryways. On the east a handicapped access ramp leads to the former entrance to the County Branch Library and Antelope Health Center. The second floor facade above the entry has two decorative windows with case concrete screens. The south entry is similar. On the west facade a steel staircase runs from the second floor to grade.

The facades are of painted stucco. They form a three part vertical composition including a "base" which projects a few inches out from the "shaft" or wall surface above. A cornice of three horizontal bands circles the building. Each is slightly narrower in width than the band below. Above the tops of the second story windows is a ten inch wide horizontal band which projects a few inches and circles the building.

A tall one story wing on the west contains the Assembly Room, and a small one story kitchen is located on the south.

Interior. The ground floor has not changed since the building was constructed. The main entry to the south provides access to the Assembly Room which now serves as the "Cedar Street Theater". The lobby has a north staircase leading to the second floor and the north entry leads into the former Health Center.

The second floor originally served as the County Court with two offices, a Jury Room, Clerk's Room and Judge's Chambers. The northwest corner of the building contained the Court Room which was approximately 46 feet long and 26 feet wide. The Court Room was divided into several offices for the County Mental Health Center. Six rough hewn beams originally spanned the Court Room and are still intact and in place. The Jury Room and Clerk's Office have each been divided into two offices with temporary partitions.

The interior finishes are simple and intact. They include wood baseboards, stile and rail doors, plaster walls and ceiling with painted finishes. The ceilings in major rooms have a stepped plaster cove at the ceiling and are in good condition.

Materials. The building is of wood frame construction with stud walls,

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and joists which support flooring, ceilings and roof. Carpenter trusses support the roof over the Assembly Room. The foundations and two basement areas are constructed of reinforced concrete. The foundations and structural system all appear to be in excellent condition.

2. Sheriff's Substation. 1938. Art Deco. Architect, Brett, Edward C. M., Chief Architect for the Mechanical Department of the County of Los Angeles.

Exterior. The one story building is constructed of rectangular block. The facades are symmetrical and include a base, shaft, and cornice with stucco bands similar to those of the Memorial Hall and Office Building. The main entry on Cedar Avenue, and the windows are also similar in design to the Memorial Hall and Office Building.

The west and south facades are asymmetrical with windows and doors located in relation to the functions of the rooms on the inside. The west facade has a door to the exterior and a rectangular stucco flue for the boiler room in the basement. Stairs along the south facade lead down to the boiler room below the building.

The roof is concealed behind a parapet wall and has a gentle pitch.

Interior. The front entry opens into a small lobby with a central corridor leading through the building to the rear door. The front office and a counter, a Squad room, small office and kitchen open off the north side of the corridor. Four offices, and a small bathroom open off the south side of the corridor. The interior has not had modifications. The building is currently used for storage. The original trim is painted. The rooms and corridor have a shallow stepped cove at the ceiling of plaster and three of the offices have the original central pendant light fixtures.

Structural System. The structural system is the same as the Memorial Hall and Office Building with wood frame and concrete foundations and basement area. The roof is supported on joists as are the ceilings. The building shows little sign of settlement or cracks. There is no evidence of any earthquake damage.

Mechanical and Electrical Systems. A basement is present on the southwest corner of the building. A gas furnace and blower has been recently installed. A telephone panel is also located in the basement. All wiring appears to be original knob-and-tube wiring.

3. Sheriff's Garage. 1938. The Sheriff's Garage is located to the south of the Sheriff's Substation and was built at the same time. The garage is a small rectangular one story building of wood frame construction covered with painted stucco. Originally, the building had two large openings with garage

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doors on the north facade. These were closed with wood but have been reopened and expanded. An addition has also been added to the front facade and large metal over-head doors installed. There are two double hung four-over-four windows on the south facade. The east and west facades each have one window similar to the south facade. The design of the garage is similar to, but less detailed than, the Sheriff's Sub-station. The garage has been significantly modified by the addition, and the large metal doors, and is no longer a contributor to the district.

The building is currently used for city office space, and finishes inside reflect the new office uses. Window mounted air conditioning units are located on the east, south, and west facades.

4. Jail Building. 1920. The jail is located behind the Sheriff's Substation on the west. It is a one story rectangular building built of concrete with a concrete slab roof that overhangs the walls on each side by six inches. The roof pitches slightly up to the west.

Exterior. The building is a simple rectangle with few openings. The east facade has a large rolling metal door that takes up one half of the facade. This door can be rolled to the north providing access into the building. The north and south facades each have two round headed windows with heavy horizontal and vertical bars. The sills are six feet above the ground. The west facade has no openings.

A shed roofed corrugated metal addition was added to the south of the jail. The addition has corrugated roofing supported on wood rafters.

Interior. The interior of the Jail has two cells on the north side and and storage area to the north. The building is currently used for city storage. The interior is simple with concrete floor, walls, and ceiling.

Structural System. The footing, floor, walls, ceiling and roof are concrete. All appear to be in good condition.

Mechanical and Electrical Systems. There is no mechanical system and the electrical power for lighting and outlets is supplied by the main electrical panel described for the Memorial Hall and Office Building.

5. Health Center. 1930. The Health Center was constructed prior to the Memorial Hall and Office Building. It is a one story brick building facing north on Lancaster Boulevard.

Exterior. The exterior is a very simple design with little ornamental detailing. The Lancaster Boulevard Facade is symmetrical in design with a central door flanked by a single window on each side. The windows are six-over-six double hung sash set deep into the brick facade. A brick lintel of vertically placed bricks spans the doorway and above this is a simple row of dentils, formed by projecting bricks.

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The other three facades each have two windows and the rear facade has a central door into the building. The windows on the sides and rear facades are single light.

The flat composition roof is concealed behind a brick parapet.

The front entry leads into a hall that runs from the front of the building to the rear. Off of this hall are four major offices located in the corners of the building. To the rear of the corridor is a bathroom and storage room. All of the finishes in the building are original and in good condition. A new partition wall was added in one of the offices but no other modification are apparent.

Structural System. The building has brick exterior walls with wood stud interior partitions. The walls are supported by a concrete foundation. Floors, ceilings and the roof are supported on wood joists. All of the structure is in good condition. There is no evidence of settling or cracking in the brick walls.

Mechanical and Electrical Systems. The building has a small basement that houses the gas fired furnace and telephone panel. The furnace is connected to gravity vents in the floors and interior walls of the building. An electrical sub-panel is located on the west wall of the corridor of the building. The wiring is knob-and-tube.

Modifications to the Buildings. The architectural period of significance of the 1938 buildings is 1938, and there are no subsequent alterations which have gained historical, cultural, or architectural significance in their own right.

There have been non-structural alterations, primarily interior partition and fixture alterations in each decade since construction. However, the 1938 buildings have a great deal of architectural integrity, both exterior and interior, from that original construction. Exterior walls, windows and door openings, sash, and signage are substantially unchanged.

Some interior partitions have been added, but can be feasibly removed to restore original spaces. There is little interior ornamentation. However, interior wood and plaster trim is largely intact and in good condition including cove moldings, window and door casings and trim, doors and transoms, chair rails, bases, stairs and stairway balusters.

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8. Statement of Significance
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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

 X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant

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contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)
Criterion A Politics/Government

Criterion C Architecture
Period of Significance 1920-1943

Significant Dates 1938

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) NA

Cultural Affiliation NA

Architect/Builder Brett, Edward C., Chief Architect for the Mechanical
Department of the County of Los Angeles

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property)

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on one or more continuation sheets.)

The Cedar Avenue Historic District is being nominated under National Register Criteria A and C. Under criterion A the district is significant for its association as the County Government Center for the Antelope Valley from 1920 to 1943. It served the agricultural, aviation and mining based communities that existed within the Antelope Valley during the early part of the twentieth century until 1962. Under criterion C the district is significant for the Modern design of the major buildings and the construction as a Public Works Administration (PWA) project designed by the Edward C. Brett, Chief Architect for the Mechanical Department of the County of Los Angeles.

Criterion A.

Development of the City of Lancaster began in 1876 when the Southern Pacific Railroad (SPRR) constructed a station. In 1884 the city was registered as a townsite with the county. The railroad provided transportation and encouraged homesteading under the Homestead Laws in the sparsely populated Antelope Valley. Agriculture and ranching grew under the Dry Farming Homestead Act and the Desert Land legislation. Agricultural products included nuts, fruit, wheat, oats, barley, alfalfa and cattle ranching and production of poultry. Agriculture was a major economic activity through the 1970's when pumped water became extremely expensive due to depletion of the groundwater basin.

Prospecting for gold and silver started during the 1880's and mining continues to be a part of the present economy of the Antelope Valley.

The first military activities took place north of the city at in 1929, and the first land in the area was acquired by the military in 1939. Muroc Army Air Field was established north of the City of Lancaster in 1946. From 1939 to 1961 the military acquired 300,000 acres surrounding Muroc. This is currently the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards Air Force Base. In addition, the Air Force acquired several hundred acres of land near the southern city limits and constructed Air Force Plant 42 for the manufacture and testing of aircraft. Many important manufacturing and test activities have taken place at the Edwards Air Force Base, and Air Force Plant 42. The military continues to be an important employer and contributor to the areas economy.

The use of the Cedar Avenue Historic District site for community purposes has a history extending from 1910 to 1993 with major use taking place from 1938 to 1962. Lancaster was a very small rural community with a population of 250 (the whole Antelope Valley had a population of approximately 500 families) in 1910 when the first documented use on the site is shown on the 1910 Sanborn Insurance Map. The two story wood building on the northeast corner of the site was owned by the Women's Independence Club and was used between 1907 and 1918 for Antelope Valley Union High School classes, a motion

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picture theater and a dance hall.

The County of Los Angeles initiated the county government center use of the site when a lot was purchased in 1919 and a jail was constructed in 1920. This building is still standing. The County purchased additional lots on the site in 1921 and 1922 and removed the Women's Independence Club building. By 1923 the County had constructed a large steel tank for the Los Angeles County Water Works facility south of the Jail, and a new concrete block building on the northeast corner of the site for the Justice Court and Los Angeles Country Branch Library.

During the 1920's the Antelope Valley grew from a population of 3,000 to 9,000 and the County Library building was functioning as the operations headquarters for the 23 Los Angeles County Libraries serving the Antelope Valley by 1929. The County Health Center was added to the site east of the library in 1930.

The Antelope Valley was still growing during the depression years of the 1930's and larger County facilities were needed. In 1936 the County found funding through Public Works Administration (PWA) monies to construct an auditorium, larger library and other County offices. A fire destroyed the library and courthouse in 1937 while the plans for expansion were being studied.

Three modern new structures were designed by Edward C. M. Brett, County Architect, and the Memorial Hall with Library, Courtroom and Offices; Sheriff's Substation and Garage were completed by October 1938. Two hundred community members and distinguished guest speakers enjoyed a celebration dinner served by Explorer Scouts in a Memorial Hall decorated by the Rainbow Girls.

Many community groups used the building, and the 500 seat Memorial Hall, from 1938 to 1962, and lesser use of the facility continued to 1993. The Memorial Hall served as the location for dances, parties, recreational classes and meetings. Groups using the facilities on a regular basis included the Kiwanis Club, Lancaster Women's Club, and Future Farmers of America. The Red Cross began food and clothing drives and local relief efforts in the facility with the onset of World War II in 1941. Other community entertainment such as the concerts, plays and exhibits of the Women's Chorus were provided there as well.

As the County Administrative Center the Cedar Avenue Historic District facility provided the residents of the Antelope Valley with Sheriff's Department, Health Center, County Clerks Office, Water and Building Departments, Assessor's Office, Justice Court and Branch Library.

The Cedar Avenue Historic District defined Lancaster as the Antelope Valley center for County business and services until the 1960's. Accelerated growth increased the population in the Antelope Valley from 23,000 in 1950 to

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70,000 in 1960. In order to provide expanded services, a larger library was constructed off-site in 1950 and the former County Library facilities were occupied by the Los Angeles County Health Department.

Los Angeles County constructed a large new Antelope Valley Administrative Center in 1962 and moved the County offices into the new facility. The County Health Center and Veterans Mental Health Center continued to use the complex until the late 1980's. The Cedar Street Theater (a community theater group) used the facility from 1979 to the spring of 1993. The Sheriff's Substation, Jail, and Garage are currently used by the City of Lancaster Department of Public Works as offices and for storage. Antelope Valley Ledger--Gazette. Various articles, 1919-1993.

Criterion C.

David Gebhard, Professor of Architectural History at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and prominent author, describes the Memorial Hall and Office Buildings as "near-perfect examples of what we have come to call PWA Moderne, ie. a popular version of the Modern which was frequently employed for public buildings throughout the country during the Depression years of the 1930's". The Sheriff's Substation was constructed simultaneously in the same style.

These structures provide the only known representative of this style in the Antelope Valley. The following features of the buildings are representative of the PWA Moderne.

- a. Repeated simple parallel geometry which is found in the vertical stepping back of the elevation which flanks the main entrance and the horizontal multiple shallow setbacks of the exterior wall at the parapet.
- b. Overall horizontal emphasis in massing and detailing which is observed in the building base, raised band at the head of the second floor windows, setbacks at the parapet, and "streamlined" reveal fascia trim at the "eyebrow" canopies at entrance doors.
- c. A medallion centered on a major building element, which is in this case simply a raised plaster disc.
- d. A suggestion of classicism appropriate to a symbol of government, including a balanced composition of building mass, window screens, simply molded horizontal window hoods, and a clear division of the building top, middle, and base.
- e. Prototypical "thin" entry canopies with metal trim revealed to form horizontal striping along the fascia.
- f. Cleanly rendered metal details, including the entry canopy

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fascias, metal and glass lanterns flanking the entrances, and architectural signage consisting of distinct art deco typeface (san serif, simple geometry, thin horizontal strokes).

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

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

Architectural Resources Group. *Cedar Avenue Buildings Renovation Report*. San Francisco, California, 1988.

Computer Sciences Corporation. *Environmental Planning and Analysis Program Historic Resource Overview and Management Plan*. 1991.

De Witt, William. H., ed. "A History of the Antelope Valley". *Journal of the West Antelope Valley Historical Society Volume 1*, 1988.

Gebhard, David (Professor of Architectural History, Curator Architectural Drawing Collection, University of California, Santa Barbara, and author with Robert Winter of *A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California*, 1977). Letter to Payton Hall regarding architectural significance of the Cedar Avenue Complex, 1 April, 1993.

Hall, Payton (Architect, Member Los Angeles Conservancy). Information from personal communications regarding the architectural significance of the Cedar Avenue Complex, April and July 1993.

Kern-Antelope Historical Society. Information from personal communications, 1993.

Sanborn Map Company. Sanborn Insurance Maps for Lancaster, California, 1910-1927.

Settle, Glen A., Ed. *Lancaster Celebrates a Century 1984-1984: A Pictorial History of Lancaster, California*. Centennial Committee of the City of Lancaster, Lancaster, California, 1983.

Von Wormer, Stephen; James D. Newland and Susan D. Walter. *Historical and Architectural Assessment of the Old Lancaster County Center or Cedar Avenue Buildings*, March 1993.

West Antelope Valley Historical Society. Historical information from personal communications with various members, 1993.

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

___ previously listed in the National Register

- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Antelope Valley Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	11	395700	3		
2			4		

See continuation sheet.

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

Los Angeles County-Blk.10/Lancaster/M.R. 5-470-471 all of Lots 6,7,8,and 9.

The northern site boundary extends 100 feet west from the southwest corner of Lancaster Boulevard and Cedar Avenue, and the eastern boundary runs 295 feet south along Cedar Avenue.

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

The site boundary includes the four lots, encompassing slightly less than 1 acre, that comprised the area occupied by the original county administrative buildings. These buildings are contiguous, architecturally compatible, substantially unmodified from the original condition, and have retained much of the original landscaping. Visually and aesthetically they present a small island of the Lancaster of the 1920's and 1930's.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sonja Wilson
 organization West Antelope Valley Historical Society date March 22, 1993
 street & number 43520 Gadsden #277 telephone (805) 949-7854 or (805) 277-9186
 city or town Lancaster state California zip code 93534

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Lancaster
street & number 44933 N. Fern Avenue telephone (805) 723-6000
city or town Lancaster state California zip code 93534

=====
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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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Cedar Avenue Complex, Los Angeles Co., CA

All photos taken February, 1993

Photographer: Sonja Wilson

Negative: West Antelope Valley Historical Society
43520 Gadsden #277
Lancaster, CA 93534

- Views:
1. Sheriff's Substation (left), Memorial Hall and Office Building (right)
Eastern elevations
 2. Memorial Hall and Office Building
Southeast entrance
 3. Memorial Hall and Office Building (left), County Health Center (right)
North elevations
 4. Sheriff's Substation
East elevation
 5. Jail
 6. Sheriff's Garage

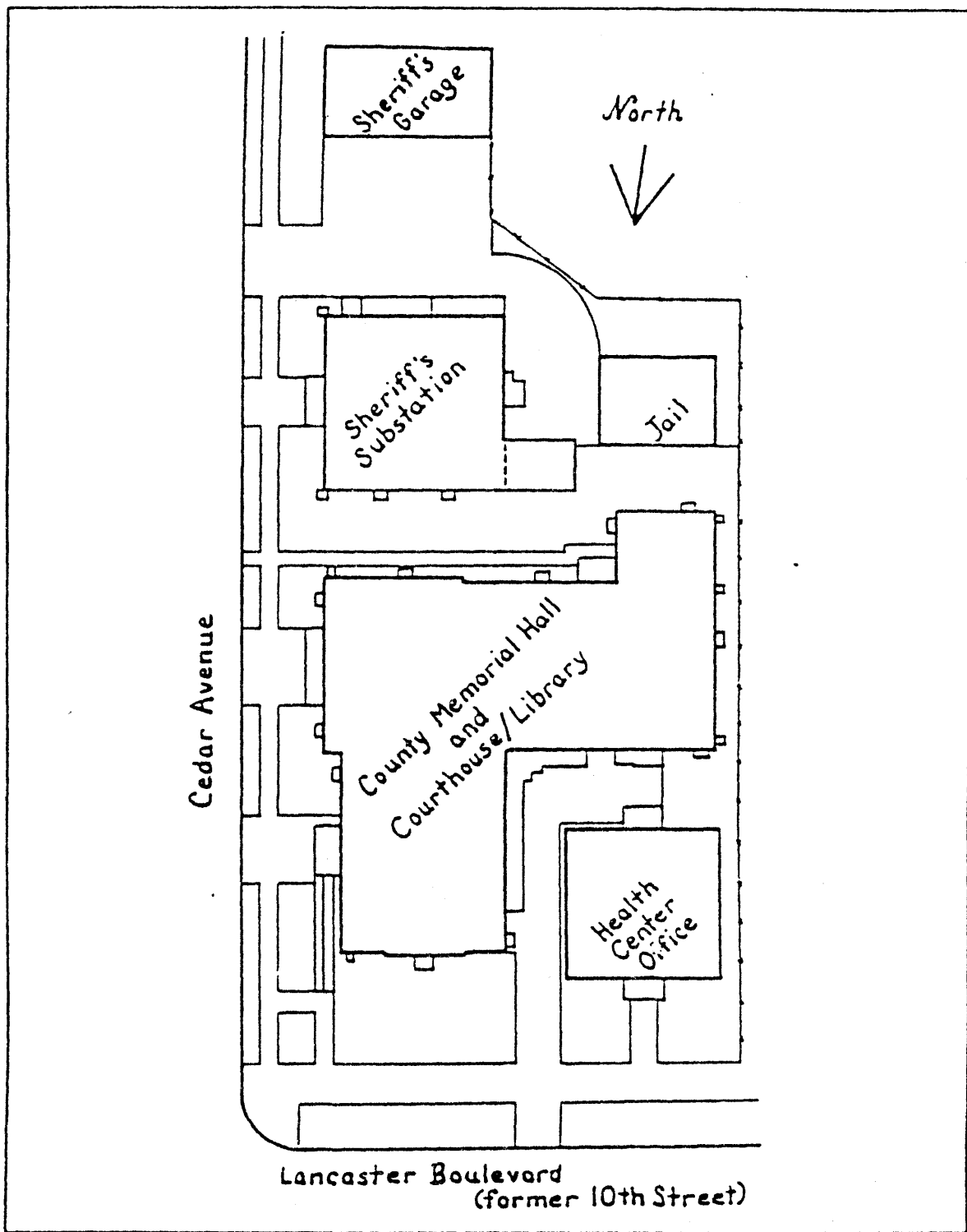


Figure 1. Cedar Avenue Historic District Site Plan

Los Angeles Co. Calif.