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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. 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 San Bernardino County Court House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 351 North Arrowhead Avenue N/ not for publication

city or town San Bernardino N/ vicinity

state California code CA county San Bernardino code 071 zip code 92415

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 of certifying official/Title

Date

Wanda Almyra, Deputy 12-3-97
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 of the Keeper

Date of Action

Paul R. Ryan

1/12/98

Name of Property

County and State

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

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 4 | 2 | buildings |
| | | sites |
| | | structures |
| 5 | 9 | objects |
| 9 | 11 | Total |

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Government/government office,
courthouse, correctional facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Government/government office,
courthouse, correctional facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century
Revivals/Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Reinforced concrete
walls Reinforced concrete, hollow
clay tile, stucco, cast stone
roof Composition
other

Narrative Description

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

See Continuation Sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Politics/Government; Architecture

Period of Significance

1927-1947

Significant Dates

1927

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Jones, Howard E., Architect
Mitcham, Dewitt, Associate Architect
Wescott, R.W., Contractor

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

See Continuation Sheet

San Bernardino County Court House
Name of Property

San Bernardino, CA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 7 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

| | | |
|------|---------|----------|
| 11 | 473200 | 3773700 |
| 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 Robert Jay Chattel, President

organization Chattel Construction Corporation date July 30, 1997

street & number 13310 Valleyheart Drive South telephone (818) 788-7954

city or town Sherman Oaks state CA zip code 91423

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 Marie Alonzo, Director, Facilities Management, County of San Bernardino

street & number 200 South Lena Road telephone (909) 387-2227

city or town San Bernardino state CA zip code 92415-0055

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.

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San Bernardino County Court House
San Bernardino, CA

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7. Narrative Description

The San Bernardino County Court House property is approximately seven acres in size. There are four contributing buildings consisting of the 1927 Court House, 1937 Former Welfare Building, 1940 Former County Library, and 1940 Central Heating Plant. In addition to the extensive landscaping with several mature trees, there are five contributing objects including two architectural remnants of an earlier courthouse, a fountain, sundial, and plaque. These four buildings and five objects collectively contribute to the historic character of the property which retains integrity and a strong sense of time and place. There are two non-contributing buildings consisting of the 1939 Storage Vaults and 1959 "T-Wing" Addition. Nine objects, in particular two fountains, a sundial, and six other plaques and monuments are non-contributors. The non-contributing buildings and objects either lack integrity or were constructed after 1947, however do not detract from the historic character of the courthouse property.

Set in park-like, heavily landscaped grounds in the central downtown area of the City of San Bernardino, the courthouse is located at the eastern terminus of Court Street, set back 100 feet from the sidewalk on North Arrowhead Avenue (formerly C Street). The entrance block, on axis with Court Street, is framed by two rows of Mexican and California fan palms. A central fountain divides a concrete paved walkway which leads from the sidewalk in the east-west direction to three entrance doors; another concrete paved walkway runs adjacent to the building in a north-south direction for its entire length. The well-kept lawn is interrupted by formal beds planted with seasonal color and a wide variety of mature palm, cedar, ash, and other trees. The site was bounded originally by 3rd Street on the south and 4th Street on the north, where the building was set back 150 feet from the sidewalk. The 3rd Street set back remains landscaped open space, while 4th Street has been vacated and the landscaped area increased. The well maintained landscaping contributes significantly to the historic character of the property.

The courthouse is a four-story classically-inspired building constructed of reinforced concrete with monotone pink-beige cast stone and stucco cladding. Its principal facade, approximately 296 feet long, is oriented in the north-south direction facing North Arrowhead Avenue. Long and narrow in plan, the architectural design emphasizes the horizontal in elevation. The building is approximately 60 feet in overall height, with only three floors visible on the primary elevation; the fourth floor is hidden behind a tall parapet wall. Divided into five major vertical divisions, the principal facade is relatively flat

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with shallow projecting blocks at the center, and at the north and south ends. The end projecting blocks are three bays wide, the receding blocks are six bays wide, and the central projecting block is nine bays wide.

Each of the projecting blocks features two-story classically-inspired columns approximately 25 feet in height, running between the bottom of the second floor and top of the third floor. The columns are clad with monolithic cast stone shafts (specified in the original construction documents as cast-in-place "art stone") with modified Corinthian capitals featuring a central crest and flower. The first floor is articulated with rusticated cast stone masonry, separated from the smooth stucco finish of the second and third floors by a string course. Above the third floor is an entablature, with simple architrave and frieze courses and an elaborate cornice with dentils and modillions. While there is evidence of deterioration of reinforcing metal, particularly at horizontal projections, and several modillions are missing, the unpainted cast stone and stucco finishes are remarkably intact and well preserved.

Above the entablature at the roof line is a parapet. At the central and end blocks, the parapet consists of smooth surfaced stucco with a dentillated cornice, slightly higher than the areas between the central and end blocks. The areas between the central and end blocks are detailed with raised panels. The parapet at the central projecting block, directly above the entrance, displays 18-inch high bronze letters, "A D SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY COURT HOUSE 1926." Although this date and the date on the cornerstone, located north of the entrance, are given as 1926, the building was actually dedicated on April 30, 1927. (As the dedication ceremony was held well into 1927, the completion date of 1927 is used in this document). Behind the parapet, the partial fourth floor is set back approximately 30 feet from the principal facade. The flagpole located over the entrance is original to the building. By 1937, a 156-foot high skeletal steel frame radio tower rose from the center of the flat roof. This radio tower was removed in 1959. Two contemporary satellite dishes located at the southwestern edge of the central block roof are visible from ground level.

The windows are double-hung wood sash, each sash containing a single pane of glass. Windows at the first floor have no transoms, while windows at the upper two floors have transoms. The finish on window frames and sash appears to be original brown paint in deteriorated condition.

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The main building entrance faces North Arrowhead Avenue and features a group of three cast stone enframed doorways with marble steps. Two bronze dedication plaques are mounted on walls flanking the center doorway. Placed by the Native Daughters of the Golden West, the plaque on the north describes early uses of the property, including the first house in San Bernardino (1839) and the Mormon Stockade (1851). The plaque on the south lists the Board of Supervisors (noting Albert Glenn Kendall as Chairman), county clerk, architect (Howard E. Jones), associate (Dewitt Mitcham) and builder (R. Westcott Company). Minor alterations to the main entrance, including replacement of "chipped" glass with clear glazing, removal of cornices over door enframements, alteration of short piers flanking the entrance (for handicapped access) and elimination of decorative metal lamps on posts, do not detract from its integrity. Dates of these minor alterations are not known. Small concrete planters filled with sand serve as ash urns and appear to have been recently placed atop the short piers.

The name "courthouse" clearly belied the intended use of the facility as a county hall of administration with appurtenant courtrooms. Construction documents for the courthouse show the following uses on the first (ground) floor: county library, assessor's records, welfare commission, auditor's records, farm bureau, clerk's records, recorders records, surveyor, and sheriff; on the second (main) floor: assessor, tax collector, treasurer, auditor, recorder, and clerk; on the third (second) floor: three court rooms, superintendent of schools, law library, district attorney, and board of supervisors; on the fourth (jail) floor: jail cells (28 cells for males, seven cells for females, and two solitary cells) and ancillary kitchen, jailer and matron bedrooms.

As noted in two mechanical drawings dated April 6 and April 10, 1939, the 1927 Court House was altered to provide for additional heating, cooling, and ventilating systems. These are the first known alterations to the interior of 1927 Court House. Beginning in the mid- to late-1950's interior alterations of the 1927 Court House became extensive with the addition of several new courtrooms in spaces previously occupied by county administrative offices. The courthouse complex now contains 22 courtrooms; seven are located in the 1959 "T-Wing" Addition and 14--11 more than originally planned--are located in the 1927 Court House. County offices expanded into numerous facilities outside the courthouse. Unlike the original configuration of various county offices, only the jail and ancillary offices of the sheriff remain in use as adjunct to the courtroom facilities.

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The interior of the building features a cross axial plan with a double loaded corridor running in a north-south direction. The entrance lobby and central stair, opposite the entrance doorways, form a cross axis on the first floor. Two elevators on the north side of the entrance lobby serve the upper floor levels. Secondary building entrances are located at the north and south ends of the first floor corridor.

North and south building entrances are detailed with marble steps, ornamental door surrounds with marble clad vestibules, metal gates and decorative metal light fixtures. Two east entrance doorways remain intact. The northern east entrance provides access to a secure area for transport and circulation of prisoners. The southern east door provides access to the addition; at the upper floor levels access to the addition is gained by enclosed pedestrian bridges. Marble exterior wall surfaces at the north, south, and east entrances appear to have a discolored coating.

Interior finishes include grey hexagonal tile floors bordered in light grey marble, light grey marble wainscoting, coffered plaster ceilings decorated with hand painted classically-inspired designs, and oak doors, door jambs and cabinetry. While some of the corridor ceilings and most of the office area ceilings have been lowered with acoustical tile panels in metal grids (to provide for new heating and ventilating equipment) for the most part, original decorative finishes are either visible as in the entrance lobby and most corridors, or appear to be relatively intact above dropped ceilings. Several original ceiling light fixtures remain in use.

The central stair has marble risers and treads, and bronze railings with ornamental balusters and newel posts. At the third floor, a decorative back-lit stained glass ceiling panel illuminates the central stair. A skylight at the roof and light shaft at the fourth floor provide natural light to this ceiling panel. Three original court rooms on the third floor remain in pristine condition including decorative cabinetry, custom designed furniture, and other furnishings typical of the period of construction. Most office spaces and courtrooms added at a later date do not display period features, though the true extent of alterations are unknown. The restrooms are unaltered with marble partitions, oak paneled doors, and tile wainscoting. The fourth floor contains a jail which was not inspected.

The Storage Vaults constructed in 1939 and the Central Heating Plant (also known as the Central Plant) constructed in 1940 lie east of the courthouse below the asphalt-paved surface of the upper level parking area. These ancillary buildings are accessed from the lower level at a

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reinforced concrete retaining wall. The upper and lower parking levels were likely constructed in 1939-1940 concurrently with the Storage Vaults and Central Heating Plant.

The Central Heating Plant contains boiler, transformer and switch rooms, retains its architectural integrity, and contributes to the historic character of the property. It faces east and defines the western edge of the lower level parking area. Along the base of the building at the concrete walkway are a regularly spaced series of small planter pockets. The building is four bays wide, each bay defined by vertical piers. A stair leading down from the upper (roof) level parking is located south of the southernmost bay which contains a fire door covered in sheet metal. The northernmost bay contains two steel sash windows obscured by trees. The center two bays, separated by a pair of vertical piers, each contain a storefront-like arrangement of double wood doors flanked by steel sash windows. Above each window or door is a recessed panel oriented horizontally. Each door has a pierced metal grill in the uppermost panel, a four-light window and two solid lower panels. The monitors in the northern two steel sash windows have been removed and replaced with filters. Of the southern two steel sash windows, one is unaltered and a window air conditioner has been added in the upper portion above the monitor of the southernmost window. A pipe rail located above the concrete retaining wall is a later alteration.

Also located below the upper parking level and accessed from the east are the 1939 Storage Vaults. The Storage Vaults have a five-panel solid wood door located in the center of each bay defined by a vertical pier. This building was altered at both ends to accommodate construction of the 1959 "T-Wing" Addition and a fenced area enclosing a cooling tower was added immediately east of the building at a later unknown date. These alterations have impacted the building's integrity and therefore, it does not contribute to the historic character of the property.

A 1939 Sanborn Map shows an approximately 66-foot wide space between the Central Heating Plant and the Storage Vaults where the 1959 "T-Wing" Addition was constructed. This map also states that steam heat is carried to the county buildings via pipe tunnels.

The rectangular six-story "T-Wing" Addition (also known as the Court House Annex) constructed in 1959 is oriented in the east-west direction and attaches to the courthouse at the center of the east (rear) facade. Minimally connected at each of three floor levels, the 1959 "T-Wing" Addition does not contribute to the historic character of the property but does not detract from the integrity of the 1927 Court House. The "T-Wing" Addition has expansive stucco clad walls on the south, west and

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east elevations with glazing concentrated on the north elevation. The stucco finish appears to have been recently re-stuccoed and/or repainted. The blank walls of the "T-Wing" Addition are accented by tall palm trees, a solitary palm tree flanking each end of the south elevation and a cluster of palm trees at the east elevation. Access to the building is provided through the 1927 Court House and at minor doorways in the center of the south elevation at the upper parking level and in the north and south elevations at the lower level.

Two one- and two-story "U" shaped buildings, the Former Welfare Building at 340 North Mountain View Avenue (formerly B Street), and the Former County Library at 364 North Mountain View Avenue, were constructed at the easternmost edge of the property in 1937 and 1940. Both buildings fall within the period of significance, retain their architectural integrity, and contribute to the historic character and context of the property. The Former Welfare Building constructed in 1937, now the Department of Public Health, is located east of the 1927 Court House, facing North Mountain View Avenue. This one-story building is "U"-shaped in plan with the open end of the "U" oriented to the street. A divided concrete walkway leads from the street to the main entrance and the center space is planted with seasonal color. It is constructed of board-formed reinforced concrete with steel sash casement windows and wood doors. Shallow eaves form cove-shaped cornices and support the outer edge of hipped roofs covered in barrel-shaped red clay tile. The eaves have regularly spaced ventilation holes. Concrete walls are painted white with terra-cotta colored eaves, window and door frames. The main entrance is located at the center portion, recessed from the street. The single-story entrance block extends slightly forward and is flanked on the north and south by windows covered in open-work masonry grills with a diamond-shaped pattern. All three original arch-shaped doorways are intact. Constructed of oak and single-lights of glass, each doorway consists of a pair of French doors located below an arch-shaped transom which extends the full width of the doorway. The transoms are covered with wrought iron grills. A wrought iron guard rail in front of the center doorway matches the pattern of the transom grills and appears to be original. Extensions of the guard rail leading from the main entrance to the street appear to be later alterations. A bronze plaque located between the northern and center doorway credits construction of the building to the Works Progress Administration, "BUILT BY UNITED STATES WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION 1937." Decorative aluminum wall sconces are located between the arch-shaped transoms. At the center of the north wing is a group of three steel sash casement windows with transoms. The center of the group of three steel sash casement windows located in the south wing was altered to create a

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doorway. The few alterations noted do not detract from the intrinsic integrity of the building.

The Former County Library constructed in 1940 is located east of the 1927 Court House, facing North Mountain View Avenue. It currently serves as the Law Offices of the Public Defender. This two-story building is "U"-shaped in plan with the open end of the "U" oriented to the street. A divided concrete walkway leads from the street to the main entrance and the center space is planted with seasonal color. Constructed of board-formed reinforced concrete with steel sash casement windows and wood doors, the north and south wings of the "U" are single-story and the center portion is two stories in height. Shallow eaves form cove-shaped cornices and support the outer edge of hipped roofs covered in barrel-shaped red clay tile. The eaves have regularly spaced ventilation holes. Concrete walls are painted white with terra-cotta colored eaves, window and door frames. The main entrance is located at the center portion, recessed from the street. The single-story entrance block extends slightly forward, is flanked by masonry-grill covered windows with a rectangular pattern resembling running bond brick, and has a shed roof with clay tile. At the second floor above the entrance block are eight steel casement sash windows without transoms. Only the northern of three entrance original doorways remains intact, stucco infills the other two doorway openings. The full extent of this alteration is not known, however it does not detract from integrity of the building. The one original doorway is constructed of oak with single-lights of glass. The large transom is the full width of the doorway, below which is a center door flanked by side lights. A bronze plaque located on the southmost pier of the entrance block credits construction of the building to the Works Progress Administration, "BUILT BY UNITED STATES WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION 1940." Secondary entrances are located in the center of wings to the north and south of the center portion, each doorway is flanked by steel sash casement windows with transoms. The doorways consist of a transom, below which are eight-panel painted doors with clear panes of glass where solid panels would otherwise be located. Metal awnings which appear to be later alterations cover each of the doorways.

Various fountains, monuments and plaques are located throughout the property, those which fall within the period of significance contribute to its historic character. These objects include: the Kendall fountain located in front of the North Arrowhead Avenue entrance, a sundial located immediately west of the Kendall fountain, two carved sandstone finials from an earlier courthouse located northwest of the courthouse, and a plaque in memory of Charles Rich and Amasa Lyman located southwest of the courthouse.

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The Kendall fountain dedicated in 1929 consists of a tiled pool and bulkhead covered with cast stone copping. At the east end of the pool is free standing wall constructed of concrete. The wall is divided vertically into three parts. The center part is taller than the flanking sides. A bas-relief frieze of oranges is located near the base of the sides and near the top of the center portion. Above the water spout at the center of the wall are a bronze bas-relief portrait of Kendall and atop the wall, a bronze three-dimensional sculpture of an eagle. The tile inside the pool, on the wall, and at the bulkhead may be a later alteration. The concrete wall appears to have been recently skim coated with cementitious material. The fountain is dry and inoperable. On the east side of the concrete wall is a bronze memorial plaque dedicated to Albert Glenn Kendall (1849-1926), Chairman of the Board of Supervisors during planning and construction of the courthouse. The plaque describes the fountain as a gift of his family and friends.

The sundial immediately west of the Kendall fountain was dedicated in 1930 in memory of pioneer mothers by the Native Daughters of the Golden West. The sundial appears to be bronze and its vertical angle, used to tell time, is missing. It is supported on a concrete pedestal with a frieze of grapes just below the top. The pedestal is covered in tile below the frieze which appears to be a later alteration and the frieze appears to have been recently skim coated with cementitious material. A raised planter with a tile-covered bulkhead located between this sundial and the sidewalk was added after 1937 and possibly as late as the 1970s.

Contributing objects also include two carved sandstone finals salvaged in 1927 from the earlier courthouse and a plaque in memory of Charles Rich and Amasa Lyman placed by the Native Daughters of the Golden West in 1932. Rich and Lyman were honored as builders of the Mormon Council House in 1852, the first school, church and court house in the county.

Various other objects, while they do not detract from the historic character of the property, do not contribute to its significance. One non-contributing fountain, which may have been added in the 1950s, is located immediately opposite the south entrance of the 1927 Court House. This fountain contains water and is operating. A second non-contributing fountain, likely constructed in 1959, is located at the base of east elevation of the "T-Wing" Addition. This fountain has been infilled with a rose garden. A sundail honoring pioneer mothers (1967) is placed between the 1937 Former Welfare Building and 1940 Former County Library along North Mountain View Avenue. In addition to this sundail, there are six other non-contributing monuments and plaques including those honoring Jedediah Smith "pathfinder of the southern Sierras" (1951), Will C. Collett county planning commissioner (1964),

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daughters of Utah pioneers (1964), President Franklin D. Roosevelt "who established the Civilian Conservation Corps" (1993), various community leaders entitled "On Wings of Eagles" (sculpture, 1983) and victims of crime (undated). These objects do not fall within the period of significance of the property and therefore do not contribute to its historic character.

A building containing the Office of the District Attorney was added to the courthouse property in 1952 at 316 North Mountain View Avenue at the northwest corner of 3rd Street. By 1983, immediately northeast of the courthouse, construction of a new administration building was completed at 385 North Arrowhead Avenue. This construction required expansion of the courthouse property to include vacated portions of 4th Street. The landscaped area north of the courthouse was increased with fountains which serve as forecourt to the 1983 Administration Building. As shown on the sketch map, these two buildings are located outside the Proposed National Register Property Boundary.

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8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The San Bernardino County Court House property appears eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under National Register Criterion A for the role it has played as the seat of county government and under National Register Criterion C as the only extant example of Neo-Classical design in the City of San Bernardino. The period of significance starts when the courthouse was completed in 1927 and ends at 1947, the arbitrary 50-year cut-off. The main building is still in use today as a courthouse. The buildings and other objects on the property which fall within the context of county government and were constructed or added during the period of significance and retain their integrity contribute additionally to the historic character of courthouse property.

As evidence of original use of the courthouse, construction documents provide the following uses: county library, assessor's records, welfare commission, auditor's records, farm bureau, clerk's records, recorders records, surveyor, sheriff, assessor, tax collector, treasurer, auditor, recorder, clerk, three court rooms, superintendent of schools, law library, district attorney, board of supervisors, jail cells (28 cells for males, seven cells for females, and two solitary cells) and ancillary kitchen, jailer and matron bedrooms. The name "courthouse" clearly belied the intended use of the facility as a county hall of administration with appurtenant courtrooms. Since 1927, the courthouse property has served as the seat of county government. The services provided in the building were essential to the health and well-being of the county and its residents and contributed to the exponential growth the county experienced during the period of significance. As the county grew, many of these original uses expanded and moved elsewhere, either on-site, as in the welfare commission and county library, or off-site within the City of San Bernardino. Expanding court facilities filled space left behind by other county departments, and by 1959 the "T-Wing" Addition was constructed to accommodate the need for additional courtrooms.

Apparently damaged by an early 1920s earthquake, the earlier 1893 courthouse, constructed of red Mentone sandstone, was found unsafe. County supervisors engaged local architect Howard E. Jones to review alternatives including repairing the building and providing additional space for expanding county needs. After reviewing plans prepared by architect Jones for remodeling and additions to the unsafe earlier courthouse, county supervisors considered alternative sites for construction of a new courthouse.¹ Three sites were examined and the supervisors agreed to purchase a block bounded by 3rd Street on the

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south, 4th Street on the north, North Arrowhead Avenue (formerly C Street) on the west and Mountain View Avenue (formerly B Street) on the east. There was strong community support for the new courthouse, as described in a contemporary magazine article, "A very unusual and commendable circumstance connected with obtaining a site of the new courthouse was the donation to the county of \$70,000 by local business men for this purpose. Only \$20,000 additional was needed to pay for the ground, which now is worth two or three times its cost."² Court Street was extended one block east to open up access and a vista to the new courthouse site. In 1925, county supervisors purchased the North Arrowhead Avenue property and placed a \$450,000 bond for construction of the new courthouse on the ballot. Voters approved the bond issue and on November 17, 1925 the courthouse construction contract was awarded to Alhambra contractor R.W. Wescott.³ An article in the *Los Angeles Sunday Times* drew comparison between several significant public building projects underway in Southern California including the San Bernardino County Court House, Santa Barbara County Courthouse, Los Angeles City Hall, and Pasadena City Hall, "Inspired by civic movements in Los Angeles; many of the smaller Southland centers are building courthouses and city halls. In all cases these movements are being sponsored by citizens who recognize the growth and prosperity that is bound to attend the entire southern portion of the State during the coming months."⁴

Architect Howard E. Jones (1885-1966), a lifelong resident of San Bernardino, was responsible for design of the new courthouse. Interestingly, Jones did not attend a formal architecture school, rather received his training in architectural design and structural engineering through correspondence school courses.⁵ He designed a number of important local commercial buildings including the extant Harris Co. department store in downtown San Bernardino; other important commercial buildings, including the Platt Building, have been demolished.

When the courthouse was described in Modern Public Buildings of February 1928, the author stated, "Solidity and simplicity are the outstanding characteristics of the resultant building, which conforms to no special type of architecture, but resembles classical Roman and Italian Renaissance. In outside appearance it is somewhat like Los Angeles' new \$6,000,000 Hall of Justice, with its massive stone columns and rectangular windows, the former suggesting lofty ideals and the latter a square deal."⁶ The article further described that "principal buildings of this kind in California were visited and studied including halls of justice and records."⁷ Architect Jones drew inspiration for the courthouse from the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition and the City Beautiful Movement which popularized use of monumental, classically-inspired design as standard for civic buildings throughout

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the U.S.⁸ The courthouse takes the long, horizontal form and classically-inspired detailing of buildings which he likely saw in the souvenir photo books of the Exposition.⁹ While roots of its architectural style may date to more than a quarter-century before its design, the courthouse is the only extant Neo-Classical building in the City of San Bernardino. The courthouse is a staid example of the style by comparison to the exuberance displayed in the Beaux-Arts-influenced Riverside County Courthouse (1904). The important character-defining features of the San Bernardino County Court House which make it a significant reflection of the style are its classical columns, the rhythmic pattern of the fenestration, subtle projecting and receding blocks on the principal facade, and particularly the image of solidity and permanence these design features were intended to impart. The rich quality of the unpainted cast stone and stucco is also remarkable. There are few cases in Southern California where a large building of reinforced concrete construction--without a veneer of natural stone--has remained unpainted with original finishes still visible. The integrity of architectural finishes on the interior including hand painting, stained and leaded glass in the common areas, and furniture and furnishings in the three original courtrooms are quite unique for courthouses in Southern California.

As for comparable historic buildings in general, only a handful of potentially historic buildings remain in the City of San Bernardino today. The U.S. Post Office, Santa Fe Depot, St. Bernardette Church, Harris' Department Store (also designed by architect Jones), and a few representative examples of commercial office buildings, hotels and theaters are extant. These limited examples are remnants of a commercial core which thrived and was rich with quality architecture and design in the period 1927-1947. It is not clear how many buildings were constructed in the commercial core during this period, however it is known that only a handful exist today, and many of those are threatened by neglect and high vacancy. Within downtown San Bernardino, the courthouse continues to be a major source of economic vitality.

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Endnotes

1. Southwest Builder and Contractor, January 11, 1924, p. 49, col. 2. In a Report of the Grand Jury of the county dated March 5, 1924, a new location was recommended primarily for reasons of fire protection. They suggested a new site have 600 feet of frontage and 300 feet of depth, possibly 600 feet square. The budget for the new courthouse was estimated at \$850,000; the cost of an addition to the 1898 courthouse was estimated to be \$250,000. The jury recommended the larger bond issue and purchase of the new site. (Report of the Grand Jury, March 4, 1924, San Bernardino County Archives).
2. Barnhill, O.H., "San Bernardino's New Courthouse," Modern Public Buildings, Volume II, No. 2, (February 1928), p. 3.
3. Wescott outlined his vision of using San Bernardino County labor to construct a building that "[keeps] with the beautiful country in which we live . . . not thinking strictly in a local sense . . . [for] we are striving to do better things for the entire Southern California." ("Alhambra Man is Awarded Courthouse Contract," *San Bernardino Sun*, November 18, 1925, p. 11).
4. "New Municipal Enterprises Fostered in Progressive Communities: Southland Cities Build," *Los Angeles Sunday Times*, September 26, 1926.
5. Buie, Earl. "Late Architect's Many Achievements Recalled" (obituary), *San Bernardino Sun*, August 4, 1966, p. 2.
6. Barnhill, O.H. "San Bernardino's New Courthouse," Modern Public Buildings, Volume II, No. 2, (February 1928), p. 4. The Los Angeles Hall of Justice completed in 1926, designed by Allied Architects of Los Angeles (a collaboration of group of notable local architects assembled to design public buildings) also contained on its uppermost floors a jail.
7. Barnhill, O.H. "San Bernardino's New Courthouse," Modern Public Buildings, Volume II, No. 2, (February 1928), p. 3.
8. There may have been a delay in transplanting this revivalist style of architecture to Southern California, however it was not uncommon for monumental public buildings like the courthouse to be constructed as late as the 1930's and 1940's. Particularly in cities such as Washington, D.C., where more Modernist design proposals were given consideration but not constructed until after World War II, the

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monumental, classically-inspired designs based on the ideals of the City Beautiful Movement prevailed.

9. The Fine Arts Building at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition designed by Charles B. Atwood could have served to inspire Jones to design a long, horizontal building with five major vertical divisions. The Fine Arts Building was the only permanent structure at the Exposition. While Jones was only eight years old in 1893, he might later have traveled to Chicago and seen the Fine Arts Building.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The proposed National Register Property Boundary encompasses the majority of County of San Bernardino Assessor's Parcel No. 0135-171-03 as further described in the Sketch Map.

Boundary Justification

The proposed National Register Property Boundary encompasses the majority of County of San Bernardino Assessor's Parcel No. 0135-171-03 as further described in the Sketch Map. The boundary line was drawn to exclude major non-contributing features including the 1983 Administration Building (which substantially expanded the courthouse site) and the 1952 Office of the District Attorney at the northwest corner of Mountain View Avenue and 3rd Street.

Sketch Map (See page 16)

USGS Map (Original USGS Map enclosed, see page 17 for copy)

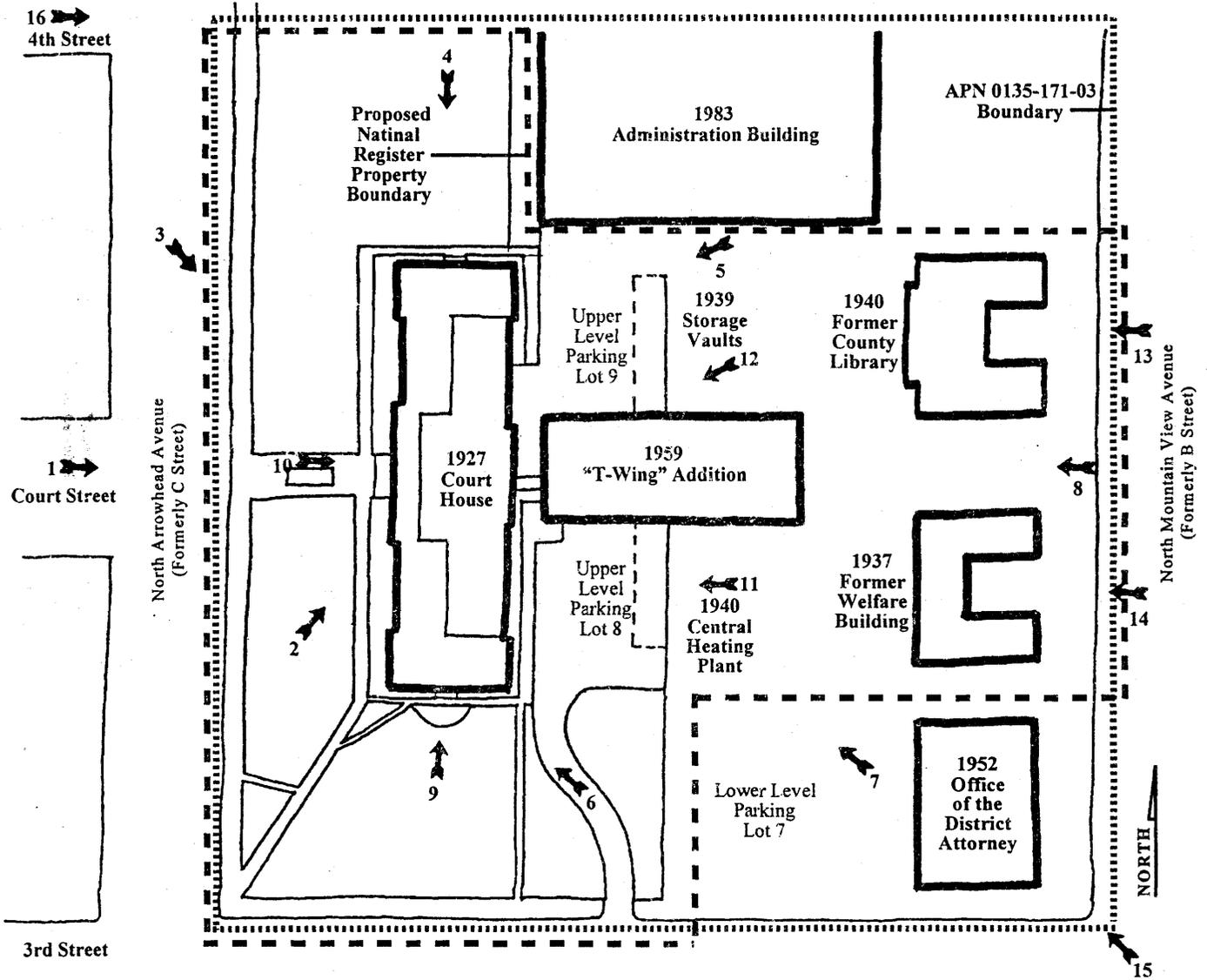
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Sketch Map



Approximate Scale: 1" = 100'

(Arrows show direction of contemporary photograph views)

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Photographs

All contemporary photographs were taken by Robert Chattel and the negatives are located as follows:

Chattel Construction Corporation
13310 Valleyheart Drive South
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423-3287
(818) 788-7954

All photographs were taken on July 6, 7 and 20, 1997.

Contemporary photograph descriptions (see Sketch Map):

Primary Views

1. View from west looking east at central entrance block, North Arrowhead Avenue facade (Negative No. 1824-2A)
2. View from southwest looking northeast at North Arrowhead Avenue facade (Negative No. 1823-30A)
3. View from northwest looking southeast at North Arrowhead Avenue facade, note mature trees in foreground (1824-29A)
4. View from north looking south at north entrance, landscaped grounds in foreground, arcade connector to 1986 Administration Building on left, 1959 "T-Wing" Addition in background on left (1824-36A)
5. View from northeast looking southwest at east (rear) facade, north facade on right, 1959 "T-Wing" Addition on left, Storage Vaults in foreground partially obscured by railing (Negative No. 1822-29)
6. View from southeast looking northwest at south facade on left, and east (rear) facade on right, note 1959 "T-Wing" Addition on right with enclosed pedestrian bridges (Negative No. 1823-17A)
7. View from southeast looking northwest at east (rear) facade on left and 1959 "T-Wing" Addition on right, Central Heating Plant in middleground at lower parking level (Negative No. 1822-11)
8. View from east looking west at east (rear) elevation with "T-Wing" Addition in middleground, Former County Library on right and Former Welfare Building on left in foreground (Negative No. 1822-20)

Supplementary Views

9. View from south looking north at south entrance with fountain in foreground (Negative No. 1823-21A)

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10. View from west looking east at column capital and entablature on North Arrowhead Avenue facade (Negative No. 1823-36A)
11. View from east looking west at Central Heating Plant, east facade of courthouse in background at upper parking level (Negative No. 1822-15)
12. View from east looking west at Storage Vaults, east facade of courthouse in background at upper parking level, north facade of "T-Wing" Addition on left, chain link fence enclosure for cooling tower on right partially obscuring additional vault doorways (Negative No. 1-36A)
13. View from east looking west at Former County Library and Offices, "T-Wing" Addition in left background, Administrative Building in right background (Negative No. 1-12)
14. View from east looking west at Former Welfare Building, east facade of courthouse in center background, "T-Wing" Addition in right background (Negative No. 1-8)
15. View from southeast looking northwest at Office of the District Attorney (Negative No. 1-7)
16. View from west looking east at Administration Building and entrance forecourt (vacated 4th Street), North Annex on left (Negative No. 1824-30)

Historic photograph descriptions (sources vary):

- A. Courthouse, view from southwest looking northeast at North Arrowhead Avenue facade on left and 3rd Street facade on right, c. 1928 (San Bernardino County Archives, contained in two boxes of construction-related documents).
- B. Courthouse, view from southwest looking northeast at North Arrowhead Avenue facade on left and 3rd Street facade on right, c. 1928 (San Bernardino County Archives, contained in two boxes of construction-related documents).
- C. Courthouse, view from southwest looking northeast at North Arrowhead Avenue facade on right and 3rd Street facade on left (photo appears to be printed backwards), c. 1928 (San Bernardino County Archives, contained in two boxes of construction-related documents).
- D. Courthouse, view from west looking east at North Arrowhead Avenue facade, c. 1928 (San Bernardino County Archives, contained in two boxes of construction-related documents).
- E. Courthouse, view from northwest looking southeast at North Arrowhead Avenue facade on right and north facade on left, 1928 (San Bernardino County Archives, from Modern Public Buildings, p. 9).

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- F. Courthouse, floor plans (San Bernardino County Archives, from Modern Public Buildings, p. 10).
- G. Courthouse, view from south looking north at south entrance (top) and view from west looking east at central block of North Arrowhead Avenue facade (bottom), 1928 (San Bernardino County Archives, from Modern Public Buildings, p. 11).
- H. Courthouse with radio tower, view from southwest looking northeast at North Arrowhead Avenue facade, 1937, S82 (San Bernardino County Museum, Steele).
- I. Courthouse with radio tower, view from west looking east at North Arrowhead Avenue facade, 1937, S17 (San Bernardino County Museum, Steele).
- J. Courthouse with radio tower, view from southwest looking northeast at North Arrowhead Avenue facade, July 26, 1939, A-008-511 4x5 (Security Pacific Collection/Los Angeles Public Library, Federal Writers Project of Southern California, from The San Bernardino Guide).
- K. Courthouse, view from northwest looking southeast at North Arrowhead Avenue facade, c. 1939, A-008-512 4x5 (Security Pacific Collection/Los Angeles Public Library, may be from Fiss, Walter., "Colorful Flower Gardens").
- L. Courthouse, view from northwest looking southeast at North Arrowhead Avenue facade, 1940, S145 (San Bernardino County Museum, Steele).