

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

RECEIVED

AUG 27 1981

historic

and/or common Civic Center Financial District

OHP

## 2. Location

street & number grouped at the intersection of  
East Colorado Blvd. and Marengo Ave. — not for publication

city, town Pasadena — vicinity of congressional district 22nd

state California code 06 county Los Angeles code 037

## 3. Classification

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

## 4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership - see continuation sheet

street & number

city, town — vicinity of state

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Assessor, County of Los Angeles

street & number 300 East Walnut St.

city, town Pasadena state California

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Pasadena's Architectural and Historical Inventory has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

date 1979 ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☒ local

depository for survey records Urban Conservation Section of the Department of Housing and Community Development

city, town Pasadena state California

(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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CONTINUATION SHEET

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1. Security Pacific Building  
230-34 East Colorado Blvd.  
(230) 1/1/82: 1D; (231) 1/1/82: 1D  
Cahuenga Associates  
707 Wilshire Blvd. #5400  
Los Angeles, CA 90017
2. Citizens Bank Building  
225 East Colorado Blvd./  
18 North Marengo Ave.  
1/1/82: 1D  
Citizens Commercial Trust and  
Savings Bank of Pasadena  
18 North Marengo Ave.  
Pasadena, CA 91101
3. 231-243 East Colorado Blvd.  
(231) 1/1/82: 1D; (240) 3D  
Ray Riley  
233½ East Colorado Blvd.  
Pasadena, CA 91101
4. MacArthur Building  
24-26 North Marengo Ave.  
(24) 1/1/82: 1D  
Nicolas and Mountaha Jaidar  
4452 Hobbs Dr.  
La Canada, CA 91011
5. Mutual Building  
28-30 North Marengo Ave.  
(28) 1/1/82: 1D  
Howard J. Wooton  
30 North Marengo Ave.  
Pasadena, CA 91101
6. Crown Building  
32-38 North Marengo Ave.  
(32) 1/1/82: 1D  
Howard J. and Paul L. Wooton  
30 North Marengo Ave.  
Pasadena, CA 91101

Status also indicated  
on individual  
Description sheets

## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" 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 Civic Center Financial District consists of six architecturally significant buildings constructed between 1905 and 1928, grouped at the intersection of East Colorado Boulevard and Marengo Avenue. The eight-story Security Pacific Building (southeast corner) and the seven-story Citizens Bank Building (northeast corner) anchor the district. Extending east and north from the Citizens Building are four two-story structures: 231-243 East Colorado, along with the MacArthur, Mutual, and Crown Buildings on North Marengo. Several adjacent buildings beyond these to the east and north are omitted; although comparable in scale and use, they are architecturally undistinguished. Beyond these excluded buildings are the YWCA and the main Post Office, both part of the National Register Civic Center Historic District. On the remaining sides, the Civic Center Financial District is surrounded by new construction. To the west are block-long office structures, while a shopping mall extends south and east from the Security Pacific Building.

Architecturally, the District includes Neo-Classical, Second Renaissance Revival, Beaux Arts, and Art Deco/Moderne buildings. Despite alteration to storefronts and the Security Pacific banking room, the district retains its architectural integrity. Attention has also been devoted to preserving interior spaces: the Citizens Building banking room and corridors of the office floors remain intact; repeating interior detailing unifies the retail shops in 231-243 East Colorado; and skylights, used in several buildings, are combined with elements such as staircases and pressed metal (Mutual Building). The work of several noted architects is displayed in the District, including Curlett and Beelman of Los Angeles, along with Garrett Van Pelt and Leon C. Brockway of Pasadena.

1. Security Pacific Building  
230-234 East Colorado Blvd.

1/1/82: ID

Historic Name:	Pacific Southwest Building	Acreage:	0.5
Date:	1924	Verbal Description:	
Architect:	Curlett and Beelman		book 5722/page 25/parcel 25

Eight-story Second Renaissance Revival bank and office building. Two-story high design of main banking room reflected on exterior in round-headed windows, separated by Composite pilasters on dual north and west facades. Arcaded entrance loggia of square piers with Composite capitals on Colorado Blvd. (north facade), topped by entablature. First story of facades are terra-cotta in imitation of pink granite. Renaissance

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detailing includes rustication, consoles, marble door enframements with entablature, rondelles, cartouches, twisted columns, and ornamented friezes. Entrance corridor to upper stories, at northeast corner, panelled in marble and contains painted, plaster Florentine ceiling.

U-shape seven-story office portion of building, facing west, of variegated tan brick. Double hung sash windows remain only on sixth and seventh floors. Balcony at fifth floor center of north facade. Terra-cotta corner pilasters end in entablature below attic story. Ornamented terra-cotta panels between attic story windows, along with bold bracketed cornice. Penthouse on east portion of roof repeats materials and design motifs of building. Exterior alterations include ground floor awnings, addition of walk-up banking window on ground floor south elevation, and use of easternmost round-headed window on south elevation as entrance to Marengo Ave. pedestrian bridge of the Plaza Pasadena shopping mall.

On interior of rectangular banking room, wooden wall panelling, as well as marble flooring and trim, remain. Original painted ceiling and four stained glass skylights now covered.

2. Citizens Bank Building  
225 East Colorado Blvd./18 North Marengo Ave.

11/82: ID

Historic Name: Citizens Savings Building Acreage: 0.2

Date: 1914 (1906 - *basement and first story*) Verbal Description:

Architect: John Parkinson and Edwin Bergstrom book 5723/page 26/parcel 15

*(Charles Whittlesey, 1906)*

Neo-Classical seven-story bank and office structure, with dual south and west facades. Richly ornamented first story faced in cream terra-cotta. Doric pilasters with ornamented recessed shafts located between large, almost square, plate glass windows and topped by entablature. Simple, marble, trabeated entrance on Colorado Blvd. (south facade), with doorway surrounded by Doric pilasters, sidelights, and transom. Entrance to upper stories, on Marengo Ave. (west facade), intricate terra-cotta, having Composite pilasters, flanking richly molded elliptical arch doorway, supporting ornate entablature.

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Six-story office portion of building of light gray stone, containing single-light, double-hung, sash windows. Attic story has "bundled rod" molding below windows and raised field panels between windows. Building surmounted by bold bracketed cornice with classical moldings and cresting of alternating swags and shields. Square metal clock (erected 1926, restored 1980) overhanging sidewalk at southwest corner of structure. Ground floor awnings added 1939.

Interior of building virtually intact. Main banking room retains mosaic tile floor, chamfered piers, and marble and brass trim; acoustical tile and fluorescent light fixtures added to large, square, recessed ceiling panels. Marble stairway full height of building. Each corridor has mosaic tile floor, marble wainscot, and wooden trabeated office entrances with cast glass sidelights, transom, and door glass.

3. 231-243 East Colorado Blvd.

(231)  
1/1/82: ID(240)  
3D - no date

Date: 1928

Acreage: 0.25

Architect: Garrett Van Pelt, Jr.

Verbal Description:

book 5723/page 26/parcels 16,17

A notable Pasadena example of Art Deco merging into Moderne. Two-story stone retail and office building, divided into six bays by piers. On first floor, angular fluted piers topped by cast stone urns overflowing with abstract fruit and flower forms. Second floor, stepped back several feet, has piers, notched at corners, extending above parapet roof. Second floor windows, recessed in secondary wall plane, have metal framed casements with three rectangular panes (center fixed) topped by three smaller square panes (center fixed). Additional ornamentation includes band of stylized forms at top of each story (first: fruit; second: animal heads) and stylized human faces in upper portion of each second story pier. First floor storefronts altered. Also, original trapezoidal panels of either marble or iron grilles on upper section of first floor now covered. Interior of each store has pilasters spaced along length of each wall. Skylights illuminate first floors of #235 and #239.

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4. MacArthur Building  
24-26 North Marengo Ave.

1/1/82: ID

Historic Name: Equitable Savings and  
Loan Association

Date: 1926

Architect: Benjamin G. Horton

Acreage: 0.07

Verbal Description:

book 5723/page 26/parcel 20

Neo-classical, two-story, brick structure with beige terra-cotta facade, originally used as a bank and offices. Temple-like design of two-story engaged Ionic columns and Doric corner pilasters flanking central doorway containing transom and entablature. Entablature across facade above second story topped by roof parapet with projecting pediment. Single-light, double-hung, sash windows on second floor. Doorway to upper story on north side of first floor. Two skylights. South wall (facing Brainard Alley) has tripartite windows with massive stone lintels and sills. Noticeable exfoliation of terra-cotta in facade parapet.

5. Mutual Building  
28-30 North Marengo Ave.

1/1/82: ID

Historic Name: Wolfangle Building

Date: 1905, 1909

Architect: W. B. Edwards

Acreage: 0.04

Verbal Description:

book 5723/page 26/parcel 21

Two-story office building of buff brick in stretcher bond pattern. Altered first floor of wood and stucco with square post and recessed entryway. Northern section consists of windows in various pane sizes and doorway at angle to street. Southern section contains wooden double doors to upper story, each with large, oval, beveled light. Alternating sections of plate glass and glass block across first story of facade obscured from view by awnings. Second floor contains double-hung windows, four panes in upper sash and one in lower, along with corbelled brickwork below sill. Rectangular recessed panel extends across facade near roof-line. Interior of second floor retains original pressed metal ceilings and woodwork surrounding doors and windows. One skylight.

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6. Crown Building  
32-38 North Marengo Ave.

1/1/82: ID

Historic Name: Crown Building -  
Loan Association  
Date and Architect: 1907:C. F. Driscoll  
1928:Leon C. Brockway

Acreage: 0.15  
Verbal Description:  
book 5723/page 26/parcel 22

A two-story brick building constructed in 1907, altered to a terra-cotta facade in 1928. Ornate Beaux Arts second story in symmetrical composition. Wall surface of cream terra-cotta, with row of four over four sash windows. Tan terra-cotta paired pilasters separating each window, located between continuous lintel and sill. Wall plane of each end bay projects slightly, with pilasters extending down to a mid-cornice above the first floor, creating a visual terminus for the design. Parapet roof, with ornate cornice just below roofline, topped by coping above end bays and center section of anthemion cresting. Medium blue terra-cotta accents in pilasters, cornices, and plaques above end second floor windows. Seven skylights. Stairway at second floor level surrounded by columns.

NOTE: Rear of Mutual and Crown Buildings joined by wooden deck at second floor level, with access from buildings and connected to ground by matching wooden stairway. Buildings share similar appearance, with brick rear walls laid in American bond and comparable fenestration topped by arched rows of header bricks.

## 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1905-1928 Builder/Architect multiple

### Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The significance of the Civic Center Financial District is two-fold: as a group reflecting the early twentieth century development of Pasadena, particularly the 1920's, and as individual structures exhibiting high-quality architectural designs.

The original commercial center of Pasadena in the late-nineteenth century, known today as Old Pasadena, was located between one-third and one-half mile west of the District. Gradually this area expanded eastward along Colorado Boulevard toward Marengo Avenue. Two of the three North Marengo Avenue buildings in the District, the Mutual and Crown Buildings, were constructed between 1905 and 1909. Growth in this area was stimulated from 1915 through the early 1930's by the construction, to the east and north of the District, of eleven of twelve buildings within what is now the National Register Civic Center Historic District, including City Hall, Public Library, Public Auditorium, and Post Office. The prestige and beauty of this example of the City Beautiful movement attracted other institutions to the immediate area, such as banks, and developed into an important office and retail locale. The commitment to upholding an image is evidenced in the Civic Center Financial District by the use of classical architectural vocabulary to lend substance, prestige, and a link to the Civic Center institutions, as well as the awarding of commissions to leading Los Angeles and Pasadena architects.

The focal point is the Security Pacific Building, judged "one of the best examples remaining in Pasadena of bank architecture . . . and the major building of the cluster of financial institutions which grew up at Marengo and Colorado in the 1920's."<sup>1</sup> Combined with the Citizens Bank Building, these two structures situated at the crest of a rise have visually commanded this site for over half-a-century, forming the "gateway to the Civic Center."<sup>2</sup> Additionally, the four structures extending along North Marengo and Colorado, similar to their larger counterparts in materials and range of color, form an important adjunct. Their size illustrates another facet of the Civic Center area, that amidst the monumental structures, small buildings such as these make "a positive contribution

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. . . by virtue of the quality and scale" of their architecture.<sup>3</sup>

The Civic Center Financial District merits recognition and protection due to its role as a significant link in Pasadena between the Civic Center development, evolution of downtown, and trends in local architectural history.

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<sup>1</sup>Pasadena's Architectural and Historical Inventory. 230-234 East Colorado Blvd. file. 1979

<sup>2</sup>Pasadena's Architectural and Historical Inventory. 225 East Colorado Blvd. file. 1979

<sup>3</sup>Pasadena's Architectural and Historical Inventory. 24-26 North Marengo Ave. file. 1979

All materials located in the Urban Conservation Section of the Department of Housing and Community Development of the City of Pasadena.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Beaton, Mary. "A New Bank Building by Curlett and Beelman." California Southland. January, 1925.  
Pasadena Star-News. 20 October 1928 (item on 231-243 E. Colorado Blvd.).  
Pasadena's Architectural and Historical Inventory. Urban Conservation Section of the Dept. of Housing and Community Development. 1979.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property 1.2

Quadrangle name Pasadena, CA

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

see individual descriptions

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

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard J. Sicha Research Assistant

organization Pasadena Heritage date 18 August 1981

street & number 54 West Colorado Blvd. telephone 213/793-0617

city or town Pasadena state California 91105

## 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

title date

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

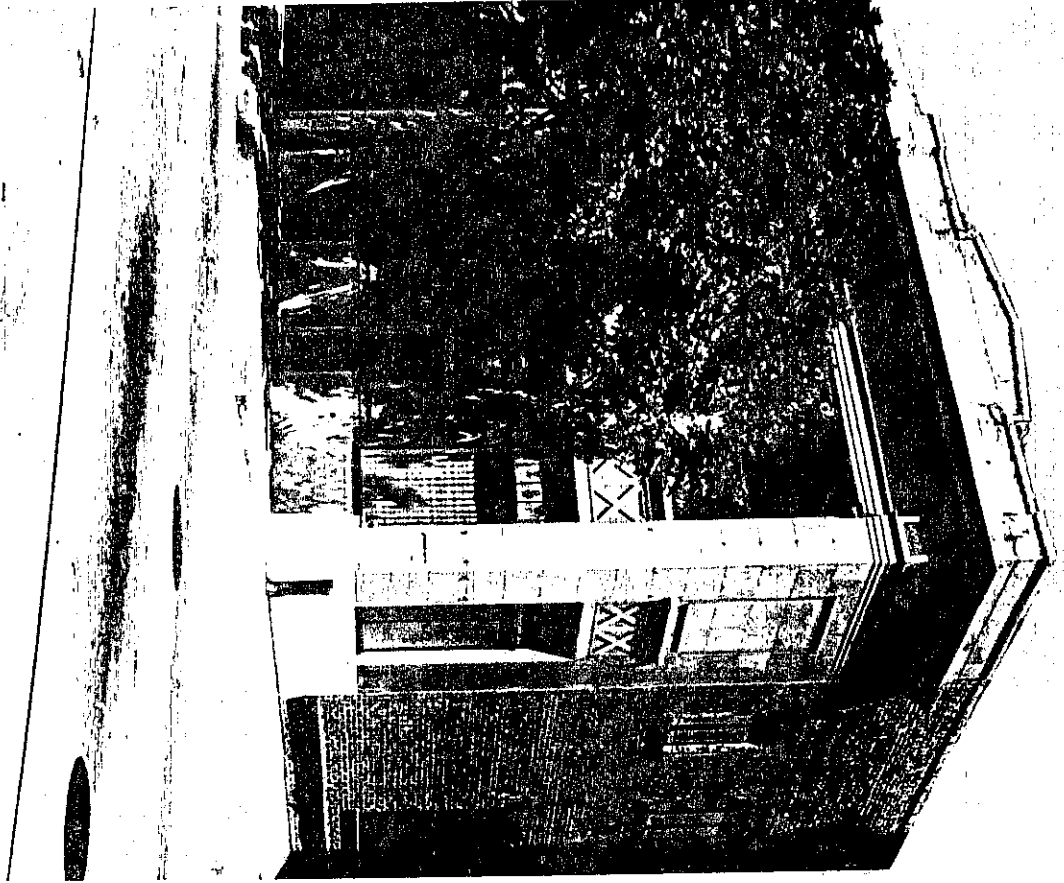
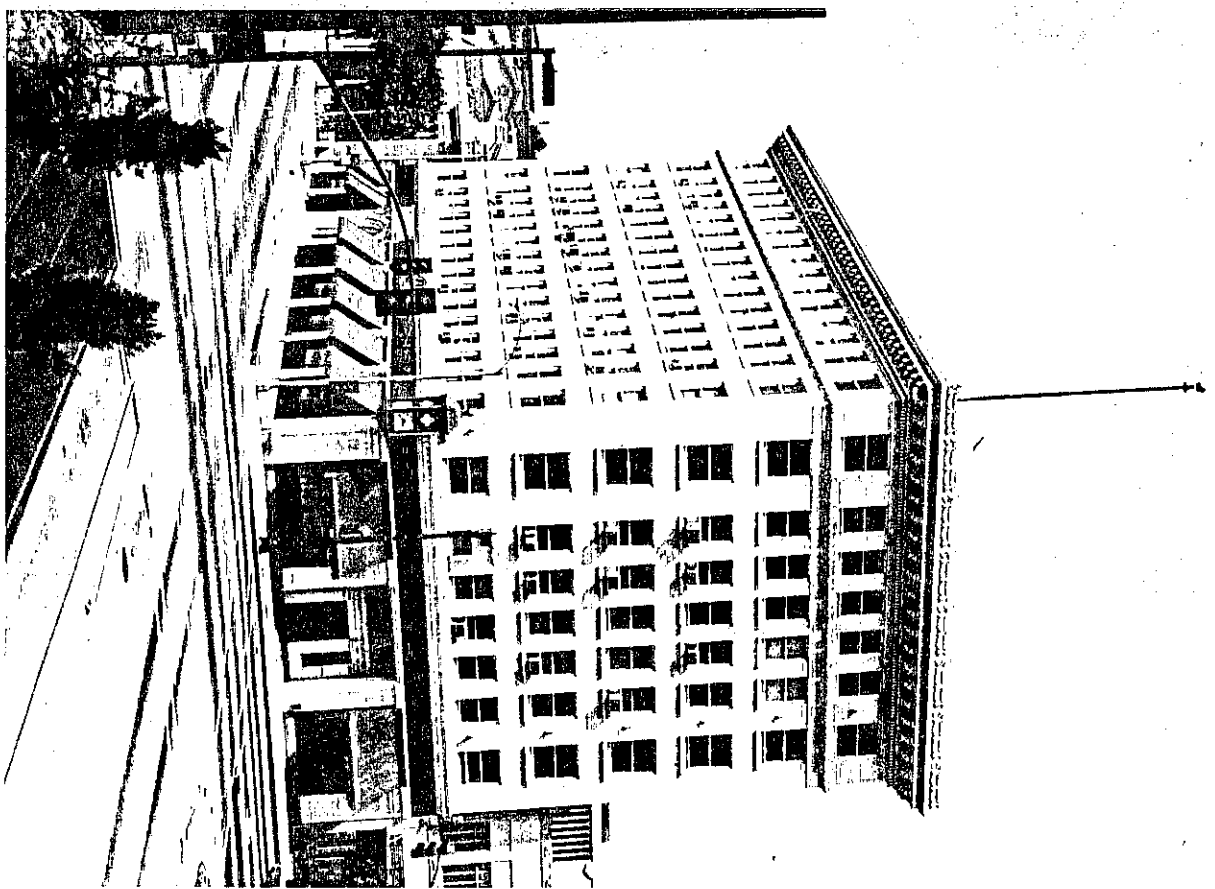
Keeper of the National Register

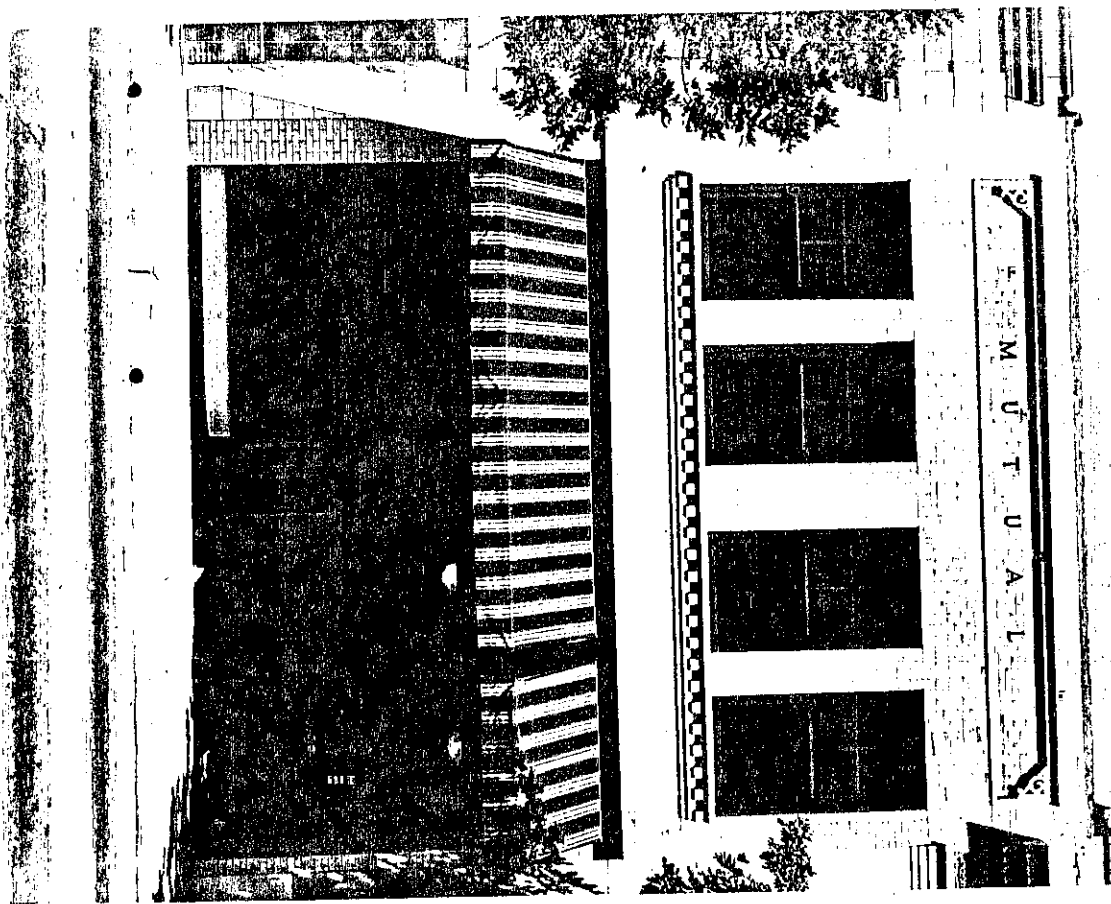
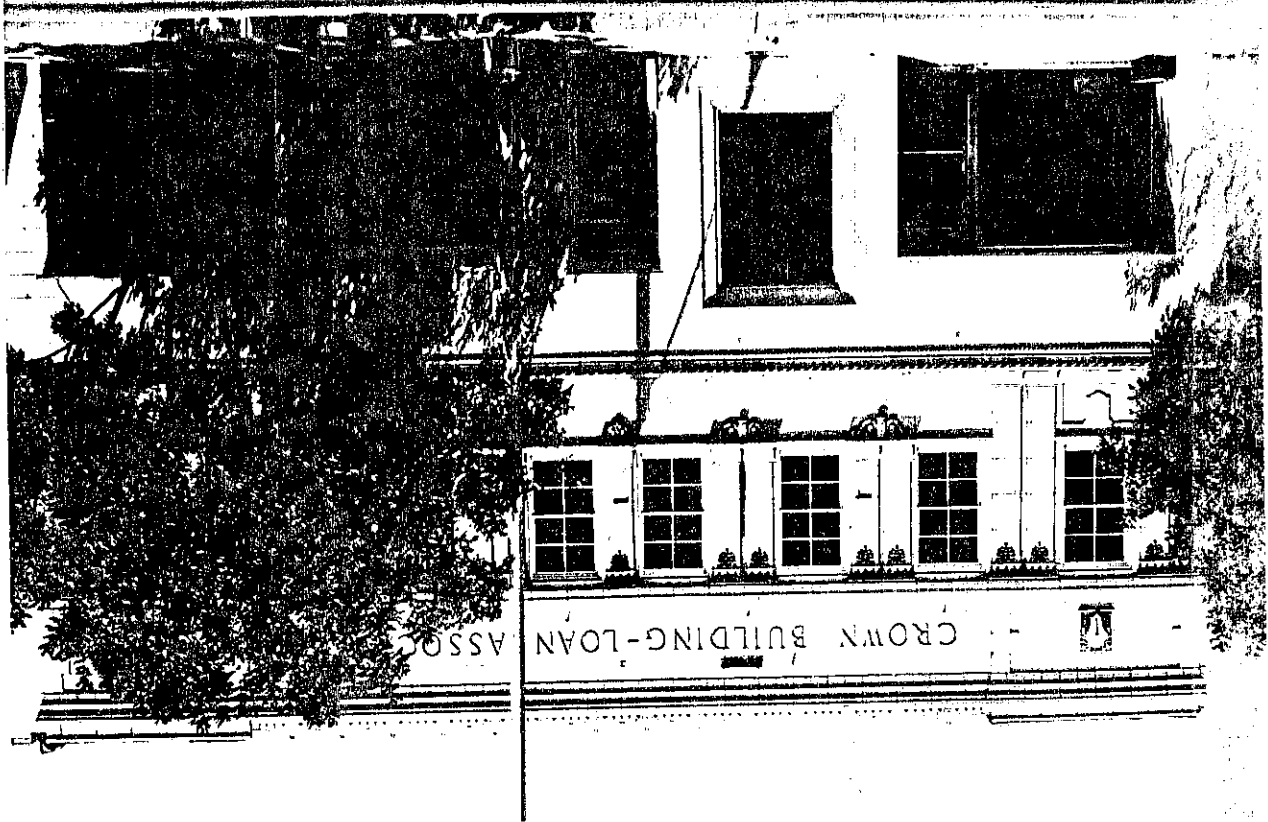
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration







Y.W.C.A. - CIVIC CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

UNION STREET

NEW CONSTRUCTION

NORTH MARENGO AVENUE

24- 28-  
26 30 32-38

STRATTON PLACE

BRAINARD ALLEY

18

225

231-243

EAST COLORADO BLVD.

POST OFFICE - CIVIC CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

NEW CONSTRUCTION

SOUTH MARENGO AVENUE

230-234

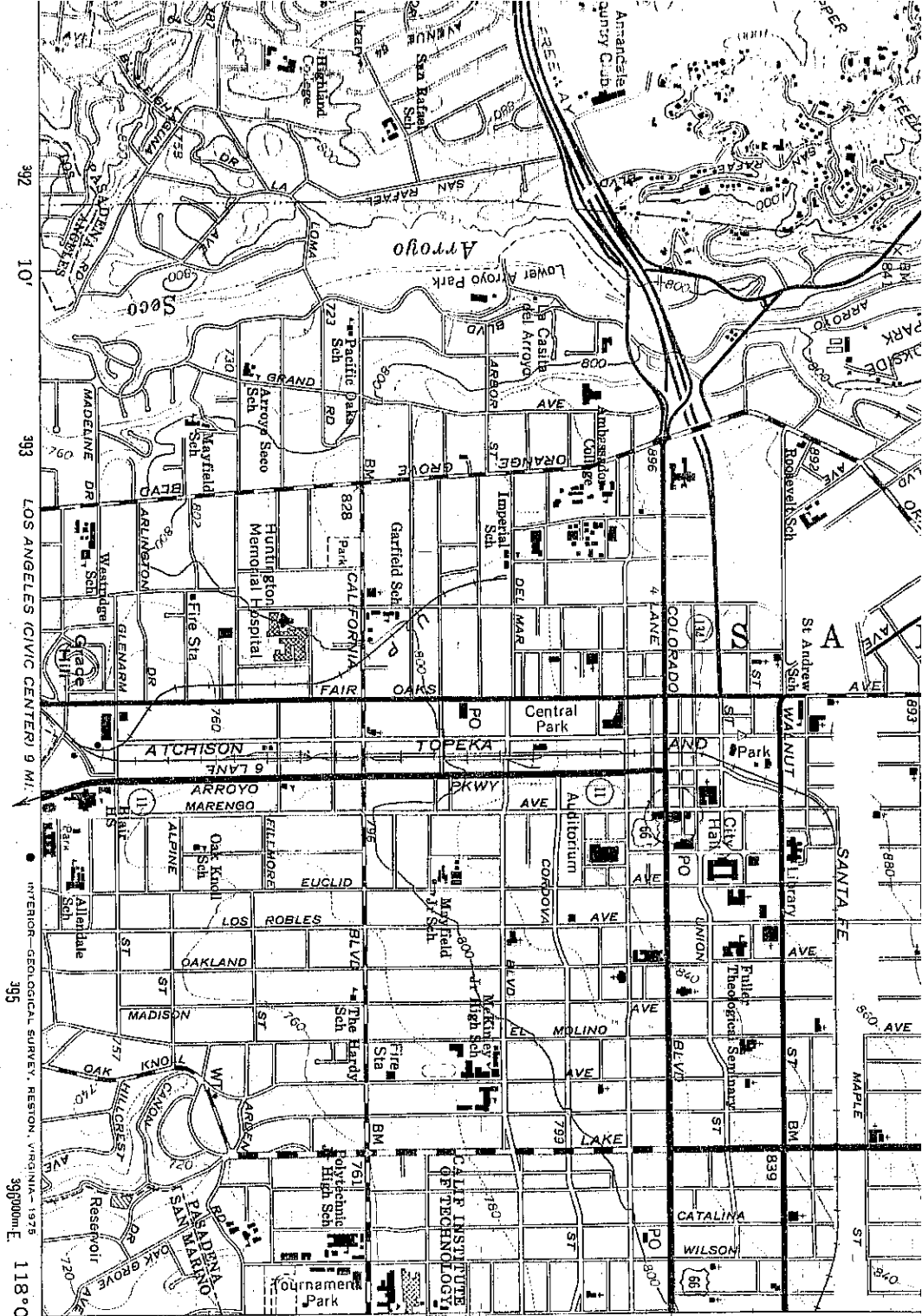
SHOPPING MALL

N

CIVIC CENTER  
FINANCIAL DISTRICT  
Pasadena, California

1 inch=60 feet

GREEN STREET



# **CIVIC CENTER FINANCIAL DISTRICT** **VICINITY OF COLORADO BLVD & MARENGO AVE.** **PASADENA, CALIFORNIA**

QUADRANGLE LOCATION



Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1972. This information not field checked  
 Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
 Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt =====

U.S. Route ——— State Route ———  
 Interstate Route ———

PASADENA, CALIF.

N3407.5—W11807.5/7.5

1966

PHOTOREVISED 1972

AMS 2552 II NW—SERIES V895

34°07'30"  
 118°07'30"  
 3950m E

ARCADIA 6 MI.  
 AZUSA 14 MI.