

Appendix D

Historic Assessment Report



PHASE 1: HISTORIC ASSESSMENT REPORT

5250 Ralston Street, Ventura, CA Historic Resource Assessment

March 6, 2020

HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP

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INTRODUCTION

This report evaluates the industrial property at 5250 Ralston Street in the City of Ventura, California (APN 1370013055) for potential eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, and as a City of Ventura Historic Landmark. This report finds that the subject property is not eligible for listing at the federal, state, or local levels. This conclusion is based on a review of previous survey findings and evaluations of the property, primary and secondary source research, a review of the relevant historic contexts, and an analysis of the eligibility criteria and integrity thresholds for historic designation. A site visit was conducted on February 26, 2020.

Research, field inspection, and analysis were performed by Christine Lazzaretto, Managing Principal; Molly Iker-Johnson, Associate Architectural Historian/Staff Photographer; and Robby Aranguren, Planning Associate/GIS Specialist, all of whom meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Standards for history and architectural history.

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FIGURE 1. LOCATION MAP



Subject property outlined in red.

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REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Historic resources may be designated at the federal, state, and local levels. Current designations available in Ventura include: National Historic Landmarks, National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, California Registered Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, and Ventura Landmarks, Points of Interest, and Historic Districts. While some programs place emphasis on architectural character, all use basic criteria relating to a property's place in important events or patterns of development, association with important personages, and architectural significance. A property must meet one or more identified criteria of significance, and it must retain sufficient historic integrity in order to evoke the sense of place and time with which it is historically associated.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is "an authoritative guide to be used by federal, state and local governments, private groups, and citizens to identify the nation's cultural resources and indicate what properties should be considered for protection from destruction or impairment,"¹ and is administered by the National Park Service. Listing in the National Register assists in preservation of historic properties through: recognition that a property is of significance to the nation, state or the community; consideration in the planning for Federal or Federally-assisted projects; eligibility for Federal Tax benefits; and qualification for Federal Assistance for historic preservation, when funds are available.

Criteria for Evaluation

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

¹ U.S. Department of the Interior, *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service) 1997.

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- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.²

Historic Integrity

In addition to meeting any or all of the designation criteria, eligible properties must also possess historic *integrity*. Historic integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance and is defined as “the authenticity of a property’s historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property’s historic period.”³

In order for a property to be eligible for historic listing or designation, it must be historically significant, *and* it must possess sufficient historic integrity to convey that significance. An assessment of a property’s historic integrity is predicated on an understanding of its significance. If a property is not found to be historically significant, no evaluation of integrity is warranted.

The evaluation of integrity, though sometimes subjective, is grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance.

Historic properties either retain integrity (convey their significance) or they do not. The National Register recognizes seven aspects or qualities that comprise integrity. These qualities are defined as follows:

- *Location* is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event took place.
- *Design* is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.
- *Setting* is the physical environment of a historic property.

² 36CFR60, Section 60.3. Criterion D typically applies to properties with potential archaeological significance, which is outside the scope of this study.

³ *National Register Bulletin 16A*, 4.

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- *Materials* are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.
- *Workmanship* is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.
- *Feeling* is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.
- *Association* is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.⁴

Because feeling and association depend on individual perceptions, their retention alone is never sufficient to support eligibility of a property for the National Register.

Guidance provided by the National Park Service acknowledges that all properties change over time. It is not necessary for a property to retain all of its historic physical features or characteristics in order to convey its significance. However, the property must retain the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historic identity.⁵ The essential physical features are those features that define both why a property is significant (Applicable Criteria and Areas of Significance), and when it was significant (Period of Significance).⁶

Period of Significance

The National Park Service defines the period of significance as “the length of time when a property was associated with important events, activities or persons, or attained the characteristics which qualify it for... listing” in National, State or local registers. A period of significance can be “as brief as a single year... [or] span many years.” It is based on “specific events directly related to the significance of the property,” for example the date of construction, years of ownership, or length of operation as a particular entity.⁷

⁴ U.S. Department of the Interior, *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service) 1990.

⁵ *National Register Bulletin 15*.

⁶ *National Register Bulletin 15*.

⁷ *National Register Bulletin 16A*.

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California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register is an authoritative guide used by State and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the State's historical resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change.⁸

Criteria for Evaluation

The criteria for eligibility for listing in the California Register are based upon National Register criteria:

1. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
2. Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values
4. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

Integrity

Historical resources eligible for listing in the California Register must meet one of the criteria of significance described above and retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. It is possible that historical resources may not retain sufficient integrity to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register, but they may still be eligible for listing in the California Register.⁹

City of Ventura

The City of Ventura has adopted historic preservation regulations and established procedures for identifying, designating, and preserving historic landmarks or points of interest that were the site of a historic event, that are connected with the life of an important person, or that contain a building, structure, or other object that is architecturally significant, representative of a type,

⁸ California PRC, Section 5023.1(a).

⁹ State of California, Office of Historic Preservation, "Technical Assistance Series #6 – California Register and National Register: A Comparison (for purposes of determining eligibility for the California Register)," <http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1069/files/technical%20assistance%20bulletin%206%202011%20update.pdf> (accessed October 2019).

period or particular method of construction, or is associated with a significant builder, architect, designer or artist. (City Municipal Code, Division 24, Chapter 455, Section 110 Et. seq).

A property may be designated as a landmark if it is unique or significant because of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship or aesthetic feeling and is associated with:

1. Events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community;
2. Lives of persons who made a meaningful contribution to national, state or local history;
3. Reflecting or exemplifying a particular period of the national state or local history;
4. Embodying the distinctive characteristic of a type, period or method of construction;
5. The work of one or more master builders, designers, artists or architects whose talents influenced their historical period, or work that otherwise possesses high artistic value;
6. Representing a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
7. Yielding, or likely to yield, information important to national, state or local history or pre-history¹⁰

Integrity and Criteria Consideration

Properties eligible for local designation include buildings, structures, objects archeological sites, districts or landscapes possessing physical evidence of human activities that are typically over 40 years old regardless of whether they have been altered or continue to be used.

Significant Architects and Builders

The City of Ventura maintains a list of Significant Architects and Builders known to have practiced in the city. Properties associated with these or any important architects or builders may have historic or cultural significance based upon this association. However, association with one of the identified individuals or firms does not automatically establish the historic significance of the property. A determination of any property's eligibility for historic designation would require a more comprehensive evaluation.

¹⁰ Criterion 7 typically applies to properties with potential archaeological significance, which is outside the scope of this study.

PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS/DESIGNATIONS**Historic Resources Surveys**

The City of Ventura completed the Phase I Cultural Heritage Survey of Downtown and Westside Areas in 1983. During this effort, 1,167 buildings were surveyed, 359 of which were found eligible and documented on DPR 523 forms. An updated Historic Resources Survey of the Downtown Specific Plan was completed in 2007, which surveyed 1,181 properties and identified 204 properties. The Westside Community Plan Area was re-surveyed in 2011. This effort surveyed 4,882 properties, 93 of which were found eligible and documented on DPR 523 forms.

The subject property is not located in any of the above survey areas and does not appear to have been previously evaluated for potential historic significance.

California Historical Resources Inventory

The California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) maintains the California Historical Resources Inventory (HRI), a database of previously evaluated resources throughout the state. The subject property is not listed in the California Historical Resources Inventory (HRI).¹¹

¹¹ California Historical Resources Inventory, December 2006.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The subject property is located on the south side of Ralston Street between Glacier and Saratoga Avenues. The irregularly shaped parcel is bounded on the west by Glacier Avenue, on the north by Ralston Street, on the east by Saratoga Avenue and one-story industrial buildings with associated surface parking, and on the south by Walker Street. There are one-story residences across Ralston Street to the north, and one-story industrial buildings across Glacier Avenue to the west. The subject property is occupied by a one- and two-story over basement industrial building, associated surface parking areas, and large landscaped areas with grass and mature trees.

The industrial building is located at the center of the subject property, set back from the street by a low concrete planter with mature shrubs and trees and a surface parking lot paved in asphaltic concrete. It has a roughly rectangular plan, simple massing, and asymmetrical composition. There is a flat roof with parapet and built-up roofing. There are loading docks at the south and east facades, and patio areas at the north and east façades sheltered by wood pergolas supported on circular concrete columns and enclosed by walls of concrete masonry units. Exterior walls are exposed concrete masonry units or are clad in cement plaster. Fenestration is limited to the north (primary) façade and consists of floor-to-ceiling aluminum frame fixed windows with reflective glazing. A window has been covered with plywood. The primary entrance is centrally located on the north façade and consists of two pairs of fully glazed aluminum frame doors separated by a circular concrete column, accessed from the sidewalk via the surface parking area and a concrete sidewalk. One door has been covered with plywood. There are numerous secondary entrances on each secondary façade, consisting of single or paired flush metal doors, partially glazed metal doors, metal roll-up garage doors, and metal freight doors. An opening has been covered in plywood on both the west and south façades; partially glazed doors have been covered in plywood on the east façade.

Alterations

In 1986, a 20,000 square foot two-story addition was made to the rear of the building.¹² In 1998, a section of the building was removed wall-to-wall to accommodate the removal and replacement of the printing press.¹³ Between 2016 and 2019, several window openings were covered with plywood.¹⁴

¹² City of Ventura building permit 20649, January 21, 1986.

¹³ City of Ventura building permit 76544, July 6, 1998.

¹⁴ No building permit was found for this alteration, which was noted based on visual observation of existing conditions. Approximate date derived from Google StreetView images of the property.

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A summary of available building permits is included in Appendix A. Existing conditions photographs are included in Appendix B; historic aerial photographs are included in Appendix C.

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

The subject property is currently developed with a one- and two-story over basement industrial building, associated surface parking areas, and large landscaped areas with grass and mature trees.

Ownership History

The John P. Scripps Newspapers company developed the subject property as an office and printing plant for the *Ventura County Star-Free Press* in 1977. The newspaper remained on the property until 2011, when operations moved to Camarillo. Since that time, the subject property has been vacant.

DATE	OWNER/TENANT
1977-2011	John P Scripps Newspapers/Ventura County Star-Free Press
2011-present	Ventura County Star/Vacant

Site Development

The subject property was used for agriculture until the present building was constructed on the property. In 1977, John P. Scripps Newspapers hired Rasmussen, Love & Ellinwood to design a one-story building with basement to serve as an office and printing plant for the *Ventura County Star-Free Press*, constructed by Macleod Construction Company.¹⁵ The remainder of the subject property was developed with surface parking areas and landscaped open areas. The newspaper company hired architect Craig J. Lopez, AIA to design a 20,000 square foot, two-story addition to the office and printing plant in 1986, which was constructed by HMM Construction.¹⁶ In 1998, Rasmussen & Associates were hired to remove a section of the building wall-to-wall to accommodate the removal and replacement of the printing press; construction was undertaken by HMM Construction.¹⁷

¹⁵ City of Ventura building permit 67873, August 1, 1977.

¹⁶ City of Ventura building permit 20649, January 21, 1986.

¹⁷ City of Ventura building permit 76544, July 6, 1998.

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HISTORIC CONTEXT

Growth and Industrial Development¹⁸

The town of San Buenaventura, measuring approximately one square mile, was incorporated in 1866. Early residential and commercial development was primarily located west of Mission San Buenaventura, and access at this time was chiefly by water. In 1868, a stagecoach line was established, making the city more accessible and stimulating a period of development and growth that would characterize the town for the remainder of the 19th century.¹⁹

On January 1, 1873 Ventura County was officially established and the wharf (Pier) completed. This made travel easier for passengers, but it also spurred economic growth by providing better shipping and storage facilities for merchants and the growing number of agricultural interests. The area's first newspaper, *The Ventura Signal*, was established by John H. Bradley in 1871. This was followed in short order by three other newspapers, *The Daily Ventura Free Press*, *The Ventura Daily Post*, and *The Daily Democrat*.

In 1886, the Southern Pacific Railroad announced plans to build a spur from Newhall through the Santa Clara Valley to Ventura and Santa Barbara. By 1887, regularly-scheduled trains were arriving at the Ventura Depot.²⁰ Eastern settlers began migrating to the state by the thousands, many arriving via the newly-established rail line.²¹ By 1904, the Southern Pacific had permeated all parts of the County and growth continued on a steady pace as San Buenaventura entered the 20th century.²²

Construction within the City's downtown and the immediately surrounding areas was considerable during the first decades of the 20th century. Commercial development expanded, solidifying Main Street as the City's primary commercial corridor. By 1914, the oil industry had targeted land in and around Ventura for oil drilling. World War I advanced technologies and

¹⁸ Narrative history adapted from City of Ventura, "Historic Resources Survey Update: City of Ventura, California, Downtown Specific Plan Area," prepared by Historic Resources Group, April 2007 and City of Ventura, "Westside Historic Context & Survey Report, City of Ventura," prepared by Galvin Preservation Associates Inc., January 2011.

¹⁹ E. M. Sheridan, *History of Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties California* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1917), 50.

²⁰ David F. Myrick, "Ventura County Railroads, A Centennial History, Volume I: The Railroad Comes to Ventura County," *The Ventura County Historical Society Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 1, Fall 1987.

²¹ Judy Triem, *Ventura County, Land of Good Fortune*, 2nd ed. (San Luis Obispo: EZ Nature Books, 1990).

²² Triem, *Ventura County, Land of Good Fortune*.

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increased the demand for gasoline, fuel, oil and lubricants. In 1921, a major oil strike by Shell Oil ushered in a new era of growth and prosperity for Ventura County. Thousands of oil workers, geologists, engineers, and oil-related businesses descended upon the City, increasing the need for housing. Ventura's population increased by 179 percent in the 1920s.

Economic prosperity created greater demand for goods and services, leading to a proliferation of commercial buildings. Prior to the oil boom, the north side of Main Street was only partially developed and contained many one-story, wood frame structures. By 1928, whole blocks along Main Street had experienced recent construction.²³ In 1925, a new county-wide newspaper, the *Ventura County Star*, was established at the southeast corner of Santa Clara and California Streets in Ventura, in a building purpose-built for the newspaper.²⁴

The stock market crash of October 1929 and subsequent Great Depression essentially halted construction in Ventura County. In 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt became President of the United States, and his New Deal relief programs started putting Americans back to work. Ventura County received hundreds of thousands of dollars for new construction and improvement programs for public buildings, parks, roads, and bridges. Programs like the Public Works Administration (PWA), the Works Progress Administration (WPA), and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) operated in the county between 1933 and 1941.²⁵ New development would increase slightly in the latter half of the 1930s as economic conditions stabilized. Several commercial buildings were added downtown, and a few existing structures were modernized between 1937 and 1941.

In the post-World War II era, there was an oil boom, which created the need for a large oil-related tool trade industry. The booming oil and tool industries influenced new construction throughout Ventura, and former agricultural fields were transformed into industrial office parks, residential tracts, and parking areas. The industrial expansion in Ventura between the 1950s and the 1970s contributed to the prosperity of the county, providing continuing demand for a county-wide newspaper like the *Star-Free Press*. However, by the late 1970s,

²³ Sanborn Fire Insurance map, 1928.

²⁴ "New Daily paper in Ventura Next Month," *Oxnard Press-Courier*, May 27, 1925; Photograph, *Ventura County Star*, June 18, 1925.

²⁵ Triem, *Ventura County, Land of Good Fortune*.

a decline in oil production resulted in a decrease in the amount of oilfield activity and investment in the area.

Ventura County Star-Free Press

The subject property was initially developed in 1977 by the John P. Scripps Newspaper company as an office and printing plant for the *Ventura County Star-Free Press*.

Roy Pinkerton founded the *Ventura County Star* in June 1925 as an afternoon newspaper.²⁶ The newspaper offices and printing plant were located at the southeast corner of Santa Clara and California Streets in Ventura, in a building purpose-built for the newspaper.²⁷

A year after it launched, the *Ventura County Star* purchased the *Ventura Morning Post*, “uniting the two largest dailies in Ventura county.”²⁸ The sale included all of the Post’s assets, including a lease on its publication building.²⁹ The following year, the *Star* purchased the entire circulating list of the *Oxnard Evening Tribune* when that paper ceased operations.³⁰

In August 1936, the *Ventura County Star* purchased the *Ventura Free Press* from Dan Emmett. The *Free Press*, established in 1875, was the oldest newspaper in Ventura county at the time.³¹ The group of new owners of the combined newspapers were John P. Scripps, in association with Roy Pinkerton and E.F. Elfstrom.³² The company printed three papers: the *Ventura Free Press* every morning except Monday, the *Ventura County Star* every evening except Saturday, and a combined issue, the *Star-Free Press*, every Sunday morning.³³ Despite the sale, the *Free Press* continued to be “an independent newspaper in every respect, maintaining an editorial policy distinct from that of The Star.”³⁴

²⁶ “New Newspaper to Start Publication in Ventura,” *Hanford Sentinel*, May 14, 1925.

²⁷ “New Daily paper in Ventura Next Month,” *Oxnard Press-Courier*, May 27, 1925; Photograph, *Ventura County Star*, June 18, 1925.

²⁸ “Combine Papers Ventura County,” *Whittier News*, August 13, 1926.

²⁹ “Combine Papers Ventura County,” *Whittier News*, August 13, 1926.

³⁰ “Oxnard Paper Closes Down,” *Pomona Progress Bulletin*, May 14, 1927.

³¹ “Ventura ‘Free Press’ Sold by Dan Emmett,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 20, 1936.

³² “Ventura ‘Free Press’ Sold by Dan Emmett,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 20, 1936.

³³ Advertisement, *Ventura County Star*, September 9, 1936.

³⁴ “Sale of Free Press To Star Announced,” *Ventura County Star*, August 19, 1936.

In 1937, the *Ventura County Star*, the *Democrat* (later known as the *Post*), and the *Ventura Free Press* were consolidated into the *Ventura County Star-Free Press*.³⁵ The consolidated paper was printed at the newspaper's offices at 53 S. Oak Street in Ventura every day except Sunday and major holidays.³⁶

By 1960, the newspaper had moved its operation to 567 E. Santa Clara Street.³⁷ In 1977, the *Star-Free Press* built a new office and printing plant at 5250 Ralston Street.³⁸ In 1994, the newspaper's name was changed to the *Ventura County Star*.³⁹

In 2011, the newspaper moved its operations from Ventura to Camarillo.⁴⁰

³⁵ *Napa Valley Register*, April 12, 1937.

³⁶ *Napa Valley Register*, April 12, 1937.

³⁷ Advertisement, *Ventura County Star-Free Press*, April 9, 1960.

³⁸ City of Ventura building permit 67873, August 1, 1977.

³⁹ Kay Saillant, "Chain's Daily Papers to Get Name Change," *Los Angeles Times*, November 18, 1994.

⁴⁰ Google StreetView imagery of the subject property, 2011.

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EVALUATION OF ELIGIBILITY

The subject property is evaluated below for potential eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, and for local designation as a City of Ventura Landmark.

Evaluation of Eligibility for National/California Registers

Criterion A/1 (association with events or patterns of development)

According to guidance from the National Park Service, in order to be considered eligible for designation for representing a pattern of development:

“...A property must be associated with one or more events important in the defined historic context. The event or trends, however, must clearly be important within the associated context: settlement, in the case of the town, or development of a maritime economy, in the case of the port city. Moreover, the property must have an important association with the event or historic trends, and it must retain historic integrity...Mere association with historic events or trends is not enough, in and of itself, to qualify under [this criterion]; the property’s specific association must be considered important as well.”⁴¹

Post-World War II industrial development in Ventura centered around oil and oil-related tools. The booming oil and tool industries influenced new construction throughout Ventura, and former agricultural fields were transformed into industrial office parks, residential tracts, and parking areas. The industrial expansion in Ventura between the 1950s and the 1970s contributed to the prosperity of the county, providing continuing demand for a county-wide newspaper like the *Star-Free Press*.

The subject property was developed on a former agricultural field in 1977 by the *Ventura County Star-Free Press*. The newspaper was founded as the *Ventura County Star* in 1925 and had risen to local prominence in the region in its early history, acquiring various competing newspapers within fifteen years of its origination and consolidating several newspapers to form the *Star-Free Press* in 1937.

The subject property was not developed for newspaper use until the late 1970s. The *Ventura County Star-Free Press* developed the property to expand their operations, and the location capitalized on the proximity to the US-101 freeway for transportation of supplies and printed newspapers to and from the facility. This property was not the original location of the *Ventura*

⁴¹ *National Register Bulletin 15*.

County Star-Free Press; and there is no evidence to suggest that it was the site of significant events in the newspaper's history. It does not appear that the newspaper's activities at the subject property made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state, or community; the general expansion over time of a long-time enterprise does not meet this threshold.

Therefore, the subject property is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or in the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion A/1 for an association with a significant industry.

Criterion B/2 (association with an important person)

According to the National Park Service, properties may be eligible for an association with the lives of persons significant in our past: individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context. A property is not eligible if its only justification for significance is that it was owned or used by a person who is a member of an identifiable profession, class, or social or ethnic group. In addition, the property must be associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he or she achieved significance, and it must be the property that "best represents [the person's] contribution...and the property must be compared to other associated properties."⁴²

No evidence was found to suggest that any individual associated with the subject property was demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context. Therefore, the subject property is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion B/2.

Criterion C/3 (architectural merit or work of a master architect)

According to guidance from the National Park Service, to be eligible under Criterion C/3, a building must clearly contain enough of the "distinctive characteristics" to be considered a true representative of the style or type. Buildings eligible for artistic merit must embody the distinctive characteristics or a type, period, or method of construction, and they must possess high artistic value. A building with some applied detailing is not eligible if the details are not fully integrated into the overall design.

⁴² *National Register Bulletin 15.*

Additionally, per the National Park Service, a 'master' is "a figure of generally recognized greatness in a field, a known craftsman of consummate skill, or an anonymous craftsman whose work is distinguishable from others by its characteristic style and quality. The property must express a particular phase in the development of the master's career, an aspect of his or her work, or a particular idea or theme in his or her craft. A property is not eligible as the work of a master, however, simply because it was designed by a prominent architect."⁴³

The industrial building on the subject property does not represent a significant industrial property type and is not an example of a particular architectural style. The building was designed by Rasmussen, Love & Ellinwood, an architectural firm about which little is known. Although the building was constructed by the Macleod Construction Company, which is included on the City of Ventura List of Master Architects and Builders, it is not an early or exceptional example of the firm's work. The building is a modest industrial building of concrete block construction, and therefore does not represent the quality of work typifying a master builder such as Macleod Construction Company. In addition, it has undergone alterations over time, including a 20,000 square foot rear addition in 1986.

Therefore, the subject property is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion C/3.

⁴³ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

Evaluation of Eligibility for City of Ventura Landmark Designation

Criterion 1 (events)

Post-World War II industrial development in Ventura centered around oil and oil-related tools. The booming oil and tool industries influenced new construction throughout Ventura, and former agricultural fields were transformed into industrial office parks, residential tracts, and parking areas. The industrial expansion in Ventura between the 1950s and the 1970s contributed to the prosperity of the county, providing continuing demand for a county-wide newspaper like the *Star-Free Press*.

The subject property was developed on a former agricultural field in 1977 by the *Ventura County Star-Free Press*. The newspaper was founded as the *Ventura County Star* in 1925 and had risen to prominence in the region in its early history, acquiring various competing newspapers within fifteen years of its establishment, and consolidating several of the papers to form the *Star-Free Press* in 1937. It does not appear that the newspaper's activities at the subject property made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state, or community.

Therefore, the subject property is not eligible under Criterion 1.

Criterion 2 (life of an important person)

No evidence was found to suggest that any individual associated with the subject property made a meaningful contribution to state and local history. Therefore, the subject property is not eligible under Criterion 2.

Criterion 3 (period of history)

The subject property was developed on a former agricultural field in 1977 by the *Ventura County Star-Free Press*. The *Star-Free Press* likely developed the subject property to expand their operation and to capitalize on the proximity to the US-101 freeway to transport supplies to the facility and to transport printed newspapers from the facility. As a result, this industrial use was a byproduct of the larger trend of development brought about by the postwar boom and expansion of services. The newspaper's move to the subject property in the late 1970s coincided with a general falling-off of industrial expansion in Ventura; the building therefore is not representative of a development trend during that period of history.

This property was not the original location of the *Ventura County Star-Free Press*; it was not the site of significant events in the newspaper's history; and it does not represent an important association with the newspaper's operations.

The subject property is therefore not eligible under Criterion 3.

Criterion 4 (type, period, or method of construction)

The industrial building on the subject property does not represent a significant industrial property type and is not an example of a particular architectural style. It is a modest industrial building of concrete block construction, and has undergone alterations over time, including a 20,000 square foot rear addition in 1986. The building does not represent an important type, period, or method of construction.

Therefore, the subject property does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. The subject property is not eligible under Criterion 4.

Criterion 5 (work of a master or possessing high artistic value)

The industrial building on the subject property was designed by Rasmussen, Love & Ellinwood, an architectural firm about which little is known. Although the building was constructed by the Macleod Construction Company, which is included on the City of Ventura List of Master Architects and Builders, it is not an early or exceptional example of the firm's work. The building is a modest industrial building of concrete block construction, and therefore does not represent the quality of work typifying a master builder such as Macleod Construction Company. In addition, it has undergone alterations over time, including a 20,000 square foot rear addition in 1986. The building does not have high artistic value or represent an important style or type.

Therefore, the subject property is not eligible under Criterion 5.

Criterion 6 (district)

The subject property is evaluated as an individual resource and not part of any identified or potential historic district.

CONCLUSION

The subject property was developed as an office and printing plant in 1977 by the *Ventura County Star-Free Press*. However, it was not the site of significant events in the newspaper's history; and it does not represent an important association with the newspaper's historic operations. The building does not represent a significant industrial property type or architectural style. The building was designed by Rasmussen, Love & Ellinwood, an architectural firm about which little is known. Although the building was constructed by the Macleod Construction Company, which is included on the City of Ventura List of Master Architects and Builders, it is not an early or exceptional example of the firm's work. Therefore, the subject property is not eligible for listing at the federal, state, or local level, and does not warrant further consideration or additional analysis as a historical resource as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

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PHASE 1: HISTORIC ASSESSMENT REPORT

5250 Ralston Street, Ventura, CA Historic Resource Assessment

HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP

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APPENDIX A: PERMIT HISTORY

DATE	PERMIT NO.	OWNER	ARCHITECT/CONTRACTOR	DESCRIPTION OF WORK
8/1/1977	67873	John P. Scripps Newspapers c/o Star-Free Press	Rasmussen, Love & Ellinwood/Macleod Construction Co.	One story bldg. (w/basement) of concrete block and plaster for use as office & printing plant for Ventura County Star-Free Press
1/21/1986	20649	John P. Scripps Newspaper Group	Craig J. Lopez AIA/HMH Construction	20000 s.f. 2-story addition. 10000 s.f. interior alterations
4/14/1987	27588	Star Free Press	Craig J. Lopez, Architects, AIA/H.M.H. Construction	360 s.f. equip. repair room alteration
12/6/1993	58014	John P. Scripps Newspapers/Star Free-Press	Craig J. Lopez, Architects, AIA/HMH Const. Co. Inc.	Remodel 650 s.f. (E) camera room/dark room/ & plate making room
1/28/1994	58598	Ventura County Star-Free Press	Craig J. Lopez, Architects, AIA/HMH Const. Co. Inc.	760 s.f. off tenant imp.
11/28/1995	67735	John P Scripps Newspapers	Craig J. Lopez, Architects, AIA/H.M.H. Construction	Alteration office/industrial
1/17/1997	71892	John P Scripps Newspapers	Owner-Builder	New mobile home office/temporary
7/6/1998	76544	John P Scripps Newspapers	Rasmussen & Associates/HMH Construction Co. Inc.	Remove section of building wall to wall. Remove printing press then replace.
10/18/2004	107702	John P Scripps Newspapers	Owner-Builder	Temporary 36' x 60' commercial coach to be used as a temporary office during construction. Coach shall be state labeled for "B" occupancy. Coach to be provided with a handicap accessible ramp and landing.

APPENDIX B: CURRENT CONDITIONS PHOTOGRAPHS (HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP, FEBRUARY 26, 2020)



North (primary) façade, view facing southwest.



North (primary) façade, view facing southeast.



West façade, view facing northeast.



South façade, view facing northeast.



South and east façades, view facing northwest.



East façade, view facing west.



Contextual view along Ralston Street, view facing southwest.



Contextual view along Ralston Street, view facing northeast.



Contextual view along Saratoga Avenue, view facing southwest.



Contextual view along Saratoga Avenue, view facing northeast.

APPENDIX C: HISTORIC AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS



1970 aerial photograph. Subject property outlined in red. Source: Mark Hurd Aerial Surveys, Inc., Frame 287, 1:12,000, HB-RT. University of California Santa Barbara Aerial Photography Collection.



1977 aerial photograph. Subject property outlined in red. Source: Teledyne Geotronics, Frame 32-22, 1:24,000, TG-7700. University of California Santa Barbara Aerial Photography Collection.



1978 aerial photograph. Subject property outlined in red. Source: Pacific Aerial Surveys for USDA-Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Frame 178-144, 1:40,000, USDA-40-06111. University of California Santa Barbara Aerial Photography Collection.