



NAME	United Automotive Building			REF. NO.	9
ADDRESS	100-110 South Main Street				
CITY	Santa Ana	ZIP	92701	ORANGE COUNTY	
YEAR BUILT	1922	LOCAL REGISTER CATEGORY: Contributive			
HISTORIC DISTRICT	N/A	NEIGHBORHOOD	NA		
NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION	A, C	NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS CODE	5S1		

Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

USGS 7.5" Quad _____ Date: _____ T _____ R _____ ¼ of _____ ¼ of Sec _____ : _____ B.M.

Prehistoric Historic Both

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Other: One- or Two-Story Brick Commercial

DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND RELATED TO PERIOD ARCHITECTURE:

As newly settled American towns grew, commercial centers evolved from simple beginnings of a handful of wood-frame commercial buildings to more permanent construction in brick. One frequently seen building type, the one- or two-story brick commercial building, owed its appearance more to function than to the popular architectural styles. It may be recognized by its relatively modest scale, brick construction, and façade topping parapet, which could be partially raised in a stepped or triangular pattern. Façades were generally finished with a different color brick than the common red bond used on non-public elevations. Fenestration was straightforward, with storefronts and display windows banded by transoms on lower stories and double-hung sash on upper stories, when present. Symmetry, with a central emphasis keyed by the parapet, was common. Architectural detailing, if any, was picked out by contrasting color bricks or by variations in brick patterns. Commercial buildings of this type began appearing in the late 19th century and persisted through the first two or three decades of the 20th century. In later years, the building type was often adapted to automobile-related uses, such as garages and repair shops.

CONSTRUCTION HISTORY: (Construction data, alterations, and date of alterations)

June 1922. Public garage.	February 3, 1945. Alteration to auto parts store.
September 1923. Stores and nine apartments.	August 1, 1947. Oil storage room for United Automotive Co.
March 29, 1933. Repair earthquake damage.	March 23, 1959. Roof sign.
July 12, 1934. Alterations.	December 4, 1985. Seismic rehab/expired May 9, 1986.
December 11, 1936. Alteration & repair to public garage.	May 19, 1989. Seismic rehab.
May 6, 1937. Close front of stores.	February 4, 1993. Reinforce roof to support sign structure.
February 14, 1938. Plaster partition in store building.	

RELATED FEATURES: (Other important features such as barns, sheds, fences, prominent or unusual trees, or landscape)

None.

DESCRIPTION: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, settings, and boundaries.)

Located on the southwest corner of Main and First Streets, this is a one and two-story commercial building with elements taken from the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Visually, this masonry building with exteriors of dark brown brick consists of three sections. At the corner, a tiled, hip roof tops a one-story section. Piers with cast stone plaques for capitals divide the north (First Street) elevation into three bays and the east (Main Street) elevation into five bays. As of 2001, all of these bays have been boarded up; older photographs show display windows banded by transoms with spindle grilles or *rejas*. To the south, on Main Street, a two-story section is flat-roofed and divided into three bays. The ground floor bays are similar to those on the corner and are also boarded up. Three second-floor tripartite windows are set off by friezes of patterned brickwork above and below them. To the west, on First Street, a one-story section is flat-roofed and is divided into three bays. The plainest of the three parts of the building, this section contains a central vehicular opening with a glazed and paneled door flanked by large, square windows, now enclosed by cement block. Two large billboards have been placed on the roof of the building.

HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS:

This building was apparently constructed in two parts by W. E. Chilson. In June 1922, Chilson applied for a permit to construct a public garage at 102-108 South Main Street, at a cost of \$30,000. In September 1923, a second permit for stores and nine apartments to be constructed at 108-110 South Main Street at a cost of \$25,700 was issued. In 1924 the first occupants were the Hull, Witner-Haynes Company, who sold Haynes and Oldsmobile motorcars. The following year, the R. W. Townsend Motor Company, sellers of Marmon and Pierce autos, and the Orange County Motors Company occupied the site. By 1927 the Hub Motor Company, dealers in Hudson and Essex autos, was located in the building. They were followed in 1931 by Marmon Motors, which handled sales of Marmons, Roosevelts, and Austins. In 1937 the United Automotive Service, owned by Leonard Forcey and Arthur Tobey, began a long occupancy; a sign in the window today still contains their name. As of 2001, the building had been boarded up for several years.

RESOURCE ATTRIBUTES: (List attributes and codes from Appendix 4 of Instructions for Recording Historical Resources, Office of Historic Preservation.)

(HP 6) 1-3 story Commercial Building

RESOURCES PRESENT:

Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other

MOVED? No Yes Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, geographic scope, and integrity.)

Santa Ana was founded by William Spurgeon in 1869 as a speculative townsite on part of the Spanish land grant known as Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana. Early growth and development was stimulated by the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1878 and the Santa Fe Railroad in 1886. By the end of the 1880s, Santa Ana’s downtown business district was defined by five city blocks of brick commercial buildings on Fourth Street, with the heart of the city at the intersection of Fourth and Main Streets.

The early 1900s witnessed the construction of many new business blocks or remodels along Fourth and the adjacent streets, and by the 1920s Santa Ana’s downtown had expanded in all directions to include both commercial and civic development. This property illustrates the architectural evolution of downtown from wood frame buildings into more permanent brick edifices in the commercial style. It is noteworthy for its early association with the automobile industry. As automobiles progressively achieved dominance in transportation over the first quarter of the 20th century, they spawned a series of new building types: the automobile showroom, sometimes quite elaborate as befit the image of the vehicles on offer; the service garage, reminiscent in form of the livery stable; and the service station. The United Automotive Building functioned as a showroom and service garage, in combination with the more traditional downtown retail and residential uses.

Character-defining exterior features of the United Automotive Building, which should be preserved, include but may not be limited to: exterior materials and finishes, including brown brick and decorative brickwork; bay divisions and storefront configuration; hipped tile roof; original fenestration where extant; architectural detailing such as piers and cast stone ornament; and transoms and grilles, if extant.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION:

This building is listed in the Santa Ana Register of Historical Property and has been categorized as “Contributive.” It contributes to “the overall character and history” of downtown Santa Ana through its early and continued association with the automobile and as an example of the adaptation of a traditional downtown building type to new uses, the automobile showroom and service garage. It is also a “good example of period architecture” as a demonstration of the one and two-story commercial vernacular that characterized much of downtown Santa Ana during the first quarter of the 20th century, and “has not been substantially altered” on the second story (Municipal Code, Section 30-2.2(2)).

OWNER AND ADDRESS: _____

RECORDED BY: (Name, affiliation, and address)
Leslie J. Heumann
Science Applications International Corporation
35 S. Raymond Avenue, Suite 204, Pasadena, CA 91105

DATE RECORDED: October 1, 2001

SURVEY TYPE: (Intensive, reconnaissance, or other)
Intensive Survey Update

REPORT CITATION: (Cite survey report and other sources)
City of Santa Ana, *Santa Ana's Historic Treasures*.

REFERENCES: (List documents, date of publication, and page numbers. May also include oral interviews.)
Harris, Cyril M. *American Architecture: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*. New York, WW Norton, 1998.
Marsh, Diann. *Santa Ana, An Illustrated History*. Encinitas, Heritage Publishing, 1994.
McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.
National Register Bulletin 16A. "How to Complete the National Register Registration Form."
Washington DC: National Register Branch, National Park Service, US Dept. of the Interior, 1991.
Whiffen, Marcus. *American Architecture Since 1780*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969.

EVALUATOR: Leslie J. Heumann **DATE OF EVALUATION:** October 1, 2001

EXPLANATION OF CODES:

- **National Register Criteria for Evaluation:** (From Appendix 7 of Instructions for Recording Historical Resources, Office of Historic Preservation)
 - A:** that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
 - 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.
- **National Register Status Code:** (From Appendix 2 of Instructions for Recording Historical Resources, Office of Historic Preservation)
 - 5S1:** Is separately listed or designated under an existing local ordinance, or is eligible for such listing or designation.