



NAME	Old Santa Ana City Hall			REF. NO.21
ADDRESS	217 North Main Street			
CITY	Santa Ana	ZIP	92701	ORANGE COUNTY
YEAR BUILT	1935	LOCAL REGISTER CATEGORY: Landmark		
HISTORIC DISTRICT	N/A	NEIGHBORHOOD	N/A	
NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION	A, C	NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS CODE	1S	

Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

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

Prehistoric Historic Both

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Art Deco

DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND RELATED TO PERIOD ARCHITECTURE:

The Art Deco style is characterized by smooth wall surfaces, often of stucco; zigzags, chevrons, fluting, reeding, and other low-relief stylized and geometric motifs as decorative elements on the façade; accents of terra cotta, glass, or metal; polychromy; rectangular or compound forms; and a more vertical emphasis than its close stylistic relative, Streamline Moderne. Art Deco was essentially a style of decoration, and was applied to jewelry, clothing, furniture and handicrafts as well as architecture. In style between 1920 and 1940, Art Deco was popularized by the Exposition des Arts Decoratifs held in Paris in 1925. It was most commonly utilized on commercial or public buildings, sometimes in combination with the Gothic Revival whose verticality and sculptural decoration was ideally suited to the Art Deco style.

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

May 10, 1935. City of Santa Ana City Hall.	July 26, 1968. Add paneling over existing wall.
July 7, 1939. Alterations & repairs.	October 15, 1970. Office partitions (Council Chambers).
December 4, 1946. Alter City Hall basement.	May 14, 1971. Interior partitions on 3 rd floor.
July 7, 1959. Remodel 3 rd floor of City Hall for Planning Dept. and Mayor's office.	June 12, 1972. Interior partitions.
March 2, 1961. Interior alterations 1 st and 2 nd floors.	June 2, 1982. Add new 2 nd floor elevation and rehabilitate building for Barristers' Bldg., Ltd., owner.
July 9, 1963. Suspended ceiling.	September 29, 1982. Tenant improvement.
May 25, 1965. Partitions around stair well on 2 nd floor rear.	September 19, 1985. Install door.
May 9, 1968. Elevated floor system and air systems in computer room.	April 16, 1993. Repair partition walls.

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 southeast corner of Main and Third Streets, the Old Santa Ana City Hall is a three-story reinforced concrete building designed in the Art Deco style. A four-story tower is centered above the main (west) elevation. Both the façade and the similarly detailed north elevation are banded by a polished marble base at ground level. Stepped piers divide the façade and the north elevation into five and seven bays, respectively. Most ground floor bays contain tall, tripartite, metal-framed windows topped by ornately gridded transoms. Upper story bays, divided into three parts by pilasters, which mimic the design of the piers, contain metal casement windows and transoms, separated between stories by decoratively carved spandrels, which vary from level to level. Single windows are located in each of the end bays. The main entrance on the west is flanked by fluted pilasters topped by Assyrian heads and torsos and topped by a panel incised with the name of the building. A flagpole is suspended from the building at an angle over the entry. Another Assyrian head crowns the central bay, in front of the tower. The tower culminates in a pyramidal copper roof, lantern and spire. Two "mini-towers" cap the end bays. Art Deco ornament, including stylized foliage, fluting, and chevrons enhance all the decorated surfaces, including the spandrels, parapet, entry, tower, and window headers. Old Santa Ana City Hall retains a high degree of integrity on its two public elevations.

HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS:

Old Santa Ana City Hall was constructed in 1935 at a cost of \$126,000, funded by city bonds and a Works Progress Administration (WPA) grant. It was designed by architect W. Horace Austin of Long Beach, who had designed the rather similar Masonic Temple at Sycamore and Fifth Streets a few years earlier. A prominent Southern California architect, Austin's credits also include the Bowers Museum and numerous Long Beach commissions (the old Long Beach City Hall [demolished], several schools, the original Buffum's Department Store [demolished], the Long Beach YMCA [demolished], the Pacific Tower, the Press-Telegram Building, and the Long Beach Airport Terminal). Local contractors Ball and Honer constructed the building. This was the third City Hall to be built on the site, and replaced the 1904 building, which had been rendered unsafe after the 1933 earthquake. The City offices were located in this building until the 1980s with the exception of the City's Public Works Agency, which vacated the building in 1999. In approximately 1982 it was converted into private offices and in 2001 it won an American Institute of Architects/Orange County design award for its interior adaptive reuse by Nestor/Gaffney Architects.

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

HP14. Government 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. At this time, Santa Ana was governed by the County of Los Angeles. On June 1, 1886, a majority of the eligible voters amongst Santa Ana’s 2,000 citizens voted to incorporate as a city of the sixth class. A Board of Trustees was elected, with William Spurgeon selected to be the first Chairman. In August 1888, with a population of 5,000, the city reincorporated as a city of the fifth class. The following year Santa Ana was acknowledged as one of the leading communities in the area in 1889 when it became the seat of the newly created County of Orange.

Old Santa Ana City Hall is the most prominent and tangible symbol of the municipal development of the City. It was a source of pride to citizens when it opened, and was described in the *Santa Ana Daily Register* (November 27, 1935) as having “beauty in design” and “sleek, modern, sturdy, and with ample room.” In addition to its historic importance as the seat of city government and the place where important decisions affecting the community were made, Old Santa Ana City Hall is architecturally significant as a fine example of the variant of the Art Deco style often associated with WPA projects. The building is also significant as an example of the work of architect W. Horace Austin. Due to its high level of integrity, all aspects of the exterior of Old Santa Ana City Hall, including materials and finishes, design and composition, building elements and architectural detailing, are considered to be character-defining and should be preserved.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION:

This building was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. Under the regulations implementing the California Register of Historical Resources, the building is also listed in the California Register. Listed in the Santa Ana Register of Historical Property, the Old Santa Ana City Hall has been categorized as “Landmark” because it “is on the national register,” “is on the state register,” “has historical/cultural significance to the City of Santa Ana,” and “has a unique architectural significance (Municipal Code, Section 30-2.2).

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: September 4, 2001

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

REPORT CITATION: (Cite survey report and other sources)
Les, Kathleen. "Santa Ana Historic Survey, Final Resources Inventory: Downtown." May 1980.

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.
Heritage Orange County and the City of Santa Ana. *Downtown Walking Tour*, Santa Ana, 1986.
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.
Santa Ana Daily Register, November 27, 1935.

EVALUATOR: Leslie J. Heumann **DATE OF EVALUATION:** September 4, 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)
 - 1S:** Separately listed.