

# **EXHIBIT A**

# CITY LANDMARK ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION REPORT



OCTOBER 2013

## MILLARD SHEETS CITY-WIDE ARTWORK INSTALLATIONS

City of Beverly Hills, CA

### Prepared for:

City of Beverly Hills  
Community Development Department  
Planning Division  
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# CITY LANDMARK ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION REPORT

## Millard Sheets City-wide Artwork Installations

Chase Bank (1955)  
9245 Wilshire Boulevard  
APN: 4342-030-001

First Bank (1959)  
9145 Wilshire Boulevard  
APN: 4328-002-001

Civic Center Parking Structure 5 (19xx, 2013)  
450 North Rexford Drive  
APN: 4342-016-900

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## INTRODUCTION

This landmark assessment and evaluation report, completed by Ostashay & Associates Consulting for the City of Beverly Hills, documents and evaluates the local significance and landmark eligibility of the Millard Sheets designed artwork located at three different sites within Beverly Hills: 9245 Wilshire Boulevard, 9145 Wilshire Boulevard, and 450 North Rexford Drive. This landmark assessment report only considers and evaluates the local historical significance of the three artwork installations located at the sites referenced above, and not the three buildings themselves. Included in the report is a discussion of the survey methodology used, a summarized description of each artwork installation under review, a brief history of the community and development of the artwork installations, the landmark criteria considered, evaluation of local significance, photographs, and applicable supporting materials.

## METHODOLOGY

The landmark assessment was conducted by Jan Ostashay, Principal with Ostashay & Associates Consulting. In order to identify and evaluate the subject property as a potential local landmark, an intensive-level survey was conducted. The assessment included a review of the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) and its annual updates, the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), and the California Historical Resources Inventory list maintained by the State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) in order to determine if any previous evaluations or survey assessments of the property had been performed. The results of the records search indicated that the subject property had been previously surveyed and documented, and was found through those surveys to be eligible for listing in the National Register under criteria associated with historical events, important personages, and architecture. For this current assessment site inspections and a review of building permits and tax assessor records were also done to document the property's existing condition and assist in evaluating the office building for historical significance. The City of Beverly Hills landmark

criteria were employed to evaluate the local significance of the property and its eligibility for landmark designation. In addition, the following tasks were performed for the study:

- Searched records of the National Register, California Register, and OHP Historic Resources Inventory.
- Conducted a field inspection of the subject property.
- Conducted site-specific research on the subject property utilizing Sanborn fire insurance maps, city directories, newspaper articles, historical photographs, and building permits.
- Reviewed and analyzed ordinances, statutes, regulations, bulletins, and technical materials relating to federal, state, and local historic preservation, designation assessment procedures, and related programs.
- Evaluated the potential historic resource based upon criteria established by the City of Beverly Hills and utilized the OHP survey methodology for conducting survey assessments.

## **FINDINGS**

The Millard Sheets designed artwork installations located at 9145 Wilshire Boulevard, 9245 Wilshire Boulevard, and 450 North Rexford Drive appear to satisfy the City's criteria for designation as a local Landmark as required in Section 10-3-3212 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (BHMC 10-3-3212 (A)(B)(C)). These sites satisfy the requirement of subsection A, which requires that at least two of the six "significance" criteria be met. Upon conclusion of the assessment, the Sheets designed artwork located at the three sites under review appears to meet four of the "significance" criteria: criterion A.1, A.2, A.3, and A.4. They also meet the requirements of subsection 10-3-3212(B), which requires that: "a property retains integrity from its period of significance," and subsection 10-3-3212(C), which requires that: "a property has historic value."

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

At the City's Cultural Heritage Commission's July 10, 2013 meeting, the Landmark Nomination Advisory Committee recommended formal consideration of the various artwork installations throughout the City by artist Millard Sheets as local landmarks. The Cultural Heritage Commission accepted this recommendation and requested City staff to prepare a historic assessment on those artwork installations identified in the staff report to determine their potential historical significance.

Millard Sheets (1907-1989) was a highly acclaimed painter, designer, illustrator, and artist who worked in various mediums of the craft. He was also a strong proponent for the integration of art and architecture and as such incorporated all forms of art, including murals, mosaics, sculpture, stained glass, and ceramic into his architectural designs. He worked primarily throughout much of southern California, including Beverly Hills.

Within the City of Beverly Hills there are currently three Millard Sheets designed artwork installation sites that are visible to the public. Located at 9245 Wilshire Boulevard just east of Rexford Drive is what was originally the Homes Savings and Loan building (currently Chase Bank) with a monumental mosaic representing local history over the main entrance, two external sculptures by Renzo Fenci, and integrated interior artwork. The second Millard Sheets art installation is located at 9145 Wilshire Boulevard (now the First Bank) and also features two large elongated entry panel mosaics, sculptural screens, and interior wall murals and stained glass. The third of Sheets art installations is located on the west-facing wall of the Civic Center parking structure (parking structure 5) at 450 North Rexford Drive adjacent the public library and across the street from City Hall.

## PROPERTY DESCRIPTIONS

**9245 Wilshire Boulevard, Artwork Installation.** Situated along the north side of Wilshire Boulevard between Rexford Drive and Maple Drive, the former Home Savings and Loan building (now Chase Bank) that contains several Millard Sheets artwork installations began construction in 1954 and was completed in 1955. The two-story financial institution and its landscape features were the work of artist and designer Millard Sheets, who originated and supervised the design, color scheme, and art work of the property. Per the original building permit the licensed architect of record was Robert A. Miller with L.A. Irvin as engineer both of whom were employed with the Wallace Cunneen Company of Philadelphia who did the drafting and engineering for the building. Hence, it was the Cunneen Company took Sheets drawings and created the project's detailed plans. The project was to cost roughly \$4,000, however, by the time it was finished seventeen months later the cost had increased to \$2,000,000. Ahmanson called it his Taj Mahal.<sup>1</sup>

The exterior of the building reflects the vocabulary of neoclassical Greek architecture and features Roman travertine cladding, Italian marble molding, Italian glass tesserae mosaics, and bronze sculpture. The main room of the bank building has a circular design with many of the walls made of pebbles of various color and size. The second floor features a curvilinear balcony and contains the executive offices. The building also has a full volume basement.

The dedication of the new bank building occurred on March 7, 1956, with Governor Goodwin Knight presiding over the occasion. Others in attendance at this special ceremony included the mayor of Beverly Hills at the time George Davis; Howard Ahmanson, president of the Home Savings and Loan Association; Kenneth D. Childs, executive vice-president of the association; and Millard Sheets, who designed the building. The property was Home Savings and Loan Association branch number 004 and served as the institution's flagship for many years. It was also the first Home Savings and Loan structure that Millard Sheets designed for Howard Ahmanson.

In terms of exterior artwork on the building, a Millard Sheets designed mosaic, which represents the family, homeownership, and community, is situated over the main entrance that

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<sup>1</sup> *Abrahmanson, Eric John. Building Home: Howard F. Ahmanson and the Politics of the American Dream, pg. 207.*

fronts Wilshire Boulevard. Dated 1955, the mosaic was completed with the assistance of James E. Michalski and Ronald Gerber, two employees of Sheets' design studio. Two eight foot tall bronze group sculptures each set on pedestals flank the entry and were the work of Renzo Fenci of Santa Barbara. According to a *Los Angeles Times* article, the group sculpture to the left (west) portrays a father and son and the group on the right (east) depicts a mother and daughter. Together they represent "the timelessness and indestructibility of the family." The Home Savings and Loan seal, which was on the right of the entrance, was molded in clay by Joseph Martineck from a design by Millard Sheets. The handmade ceramic veneer tiles that surround the formal entry were created by Gladding McBean & Company. They also produced the gilded ceramic tiles that are set vertically in each of the large outer bays of the building and repeat the bank's acronym "HS&L" in two varying stylistic period fonts. These gilded "logo" tiles also clad the spandrels between the window frames along the east side of the building (fronting Maple Drive) and the rear of the structure.

On the interior of the bank building the theme of the artwork depicts various forms of barter, money, and the history of banking from the Sumerians to the Renaissance. Set in front of the large windows along the walls of the first floor lobby area are colorful stained glass windows that convey various forms of bartering. These modernistic pieces were planned by Sheets and executed with the assistance of Margaret Montgomery. The large etched glass panels that depict the history of banking and finances were also conceived by Sheets and carved by Leonard Carriere with the glass made by the Wallis-Wiley Studio in Pasadena. The executive suite on the second floor has a lion mosaic, the trademark logo of Ahmanson that was done by Jean Ames and an enamel on copper design of a hunter by Arthur Ames.

**9145 Wilshire Boulevard, Artwork Installation.** Located two full blocks east of the former Home Savings and Loan building discussed above, this property is situated at the northwest corner of North Oakhurst Drive and Wilshire Boulevard. This modest two-story bank building was constructed in 1959 as the Ahmanson Bank and Trust. The marble clad, classically inspired structure was designed by Millard Sheets in association with architect S. David Underwood who was a member of Sheets' design studio. Rectangular in plan with an extended porte-cochere off its east elevation the property initially featured a fountain, indoor-outdoor reflecting pool, round elevator, and interior and exterior artwork. Guests at the formal ground breaking ceremony held February 19, 1959 included William H. Ahmanson, president of the bank as well as president of the Homes Savings and Loan Association; Beverly Hills mayor George Davis; David B. Heyler, representing the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce; Wayne S. Mullin, vice-present of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce; and Millard Sheets, the designer of the structure.

Built at an initial cost of roughly \$350,000, this property served as the Ahmanson Bank and Trust's main office. The Ahmanson Bank and Trust was founded as a local financial institution in 1957 by Howard Ahmanson. It was established as an independent bank that provided personalized service to the old-time residents of Beverly Hills and surrounding communities. The opening of this bank marked another Ahmanson venture into the financial industry that also included operation of the Homes Savings and Loan Association and the National American

Insurance Company. In June of 1960, the building received a Los Angeles Beautiful award for its outstanding efforts towards beautifying the Los Angeles region. Out of over 300 nominations, the Ahmanson Bank and Trust building was one of forty winners of this award, which was given for contributing to the beautification and aesthetic development of the community.

Using similar materials found on the property located 9245 Wilshire Boulevard the Ahmanson Bank and Trust building is sheathed in Italian Lasa Bianco (white) marble with a top cornice faced with ceramic fired gold tiles. A huge golden winged lion or 'griffin' was originally set at the upper left corner of the front façade as was the bank's logo, a large capital "A" with a smaller capital "B" stacked over a smaller capital "T" just off to the right of it. The 'griffin' symbol was the Ahmanson business emblem and was incorporated into most of his financial institutions as well as his foundation. Much of the white marble and all of the glazed cornice line have been painted over by subsequent occupants of the structure. Both the 'griffin' and the bank's logo on the facade have been removed as well by those succeeding tenants. Two "monumental" Millard Sheets designed mosaics adorn the recessed wall space over the main entry off Wilshire Boulevard. The mosaic on the left depicts an image of a man and boy fishing while the mosaic on the right illustrates a group of women and girls in a tree with birds. These two mosaics are still intact over an altered entry approach and fenestration. Along the east side of the building are two uniquely designed concrete screens that help to diffuse visibility into the lobby area of the bank and also provides decorative interest to this elevation. The screens depict a modernistic interpretation of a tall tree with branches, leaves, and flying birds. This thematic design of the "tree of life" is also complemented on the interior of the building by the use of stained glass panels and inlaid wood elements. The multi-color inlaid marble scene on the east wall of the central banking area conveys the tree of life with various types of birds. From within the building this artistic element is visually framed by the outside concrete window screens that are evident through the flanking fenestration. Set as part of the glazing system along the rear (north) wall and exit door are two floor-to-ceiling stained glass pieces that depict the tree of life with various animals. When looking from within the building, the multi-color stained glass piece west (left) of the rear exit door illustrates a modernistic interpretation of a tree with ducks, rabbits, deer, peacocks, sheep, fish, chickens, etc. during the day (hence the word "DAY" at the bottom and the full sun at the top). The multi-color stained glass piece east (right) of the rear exit door shows the tree of life at night with stars sparkling and numerous animals, including a leopard, fish, bald eagle, horses, birds, lion, owls, dove, etc. within and or near the it (hence the word "NIGHT" at the bottom and the crescent moon at the top). Acting as an upper transom is a row of smaller stained glass panels depicting various animals set above the two elongated stained glass "DAY" and "NIGHT" panels. All of these pieces were the design of Millard Sheets many in association with Susan Hertel. They were executed with the aid of various artists and craftspeople from his design studio. The stained-glass windows were fabricated by the Wallis-Wiley Studio of Pasadena. Master mosaicist Denis O'Conner participated in the production of the mosaics for the Sheet's studio.

This branch of the Ahmanson Bank and Trust closed in the mid-1970s and became a branch of the California Overseas Bank. This new occupant of the bank building painted over much of the structure's white marble cladding and gold ceramic cornice tiles in a dark green color. It was

also at this time that the Ahmanson bank logo and winged lion figure were removed from the façade. They also removed the lower, 5th row of screening detail from each of the two concrete screens along the side (east) elevation. The building is currently occupied by First Bank, who has painted over the dark green color of the exterior with a neutral white color to complement the visibly remaining white marble cladding on the building.

**Civic Center Parking Structure Artwork Installation.** The Millard Sheets mural installed onto the west-facing wall of the Civic Center Parking Structure (Parking Structure 5) in mid-2013 was originally located on the wall of the motor court of the Beverly Wilshire Hotel (9500 Wilshire Boulevard). The Beverly Wilshire Hotel was completed in 1928 and was designed in the Italian Renaissance style by Los Angeles based architects Walker and Eisen. The hotel occupies an entire block along the south side of Wilshire Boulevard between Rodeo Drive and El Camino Drive. The hostelry had a number of owners over the years, including Hernando Courtright, the previous owner of the Beverly Hills Hotel, who purchased the property with a group of investors in 1961. As part of a large-scale renovation plan for the hotel Courtright had the garden, the tennis courts, and pool, which were all at the rear of the hotel, converted to a private street known as the El Camino Real (the Royal Road) in 1971. It was also at this time that a multi-story detached addition designed by Welton Becket was constructed. The new building, known as the Beverly Wing, was separated from the main hotel building by the new motor court driveway. Features of the original motor court included Carrara marble and the work of Italian master artists. It was paved with cobblestones and lined with thirty-eight gaslight lanterns imported from a castle in Edinburgh. As a complement to the motor court Courtright contacted Millard Sheets to create a large mosaic to welcome guests as they entered the hotel upon exiting their automobiles.

Completed in 1974, the mosaic, measuring approximately 15 feet by 31 feet, was executed on large marble panels and crafted to depict an early California scene with a noble Caballero and his lady on horseback. Millard Sheets was quoted as saying “the theme would be ‘Mi casa es su casa’ – a welcome to the home of a Caballero.” The mosaic holds five figures, with two ladies and a young girl watching the pair on horseback traverse through a forest setting. A sense of welcome and arrival are conveyed in the content. The ornate patterns on the dresses show the intricate craftwork of Sheets’ studio mosaicists Denis O’Connor and Nancy Colbath. The execution of design is highly stylized and the color palette subdued.

In 1985, Regent International purchased the hotel property. As part of additional renovations to the hotel by the new owners the mosaic was removed in 1987, presented to the City as a gift, and then placed in storage until an acceptable location and funding could be found to re-install the art piece. With the financial support provided by the Ahmanson Foundation and Carnevale and Lohr (Sheets granite supplier) this mosaic emerged from storage in early 2013. It was meticulously cleaned, repointed, and was recently installed onto the face of the Civic Center Parking Structure located at 450 North Rexford Drive, across from City Hall.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

**Beverly Hills.** The early settlement and development of Beverly Hills began on what was called Rancho Rodeo de las Aguas. This land was originally claimed by Mexican settlers Maria Rita Valdez and her husband Vicente Valdez around 1822. Aptly named The Ranch of the Gathering of the Waters, the swamps or “cienegas” that characterize the natural landscape were created by rain run off flowing out of Coldwater and Benedict Canyons. Vegetable farming, sheep herding, bee keeping and the raising of walnut trees were the primary agricultural activities within the rancho lands during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Several attempts at subdividing and establishing communities on the ranch lands were attempted during the 1860s and 1880s, but ended in failure.<sup>2</sup>

In 1906, the Amalgamated Oil Company reorganized as the Rodeo Land and Water Company. Burton Green played a leading role in formulating the plans for a garden city, located between Whittier Drive on the west, Doheny Drive on the east, Wilshire Boulevard on the south, and the foothills above Sunset Boulevard to the north.<sup>3</sup> The syndicate hired notable California park planner, Wilbur F. Cook, Jr., to plan the new community. Cook had worked with landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted prior to moving to Oakland in 1905 to establish his own firm. Comprised of “Beverly” in the commercial triangle between Santa Monica and Wilshire boulevards and “Beverly Hills” north of Santa Monica Boulevard, the new community was one of the earliest planned communities in southern California.

In 1914, concern over establishment of a secure water system and the desire to improve the local school system prompted incorporation of the City of Beverly Hills. The original boundaries of the City were much the same as they are today, except for the area south of Wilshire Boulevard, annexed in 1915, and Trousdale Estates, annexed in 1955. Most of the City was open land at the time of incorporation with development scattered around Canon Drive, Beverly Drive, Crescent Drive, and the downtown triangle.<sup>4</sup>

The architecture of Beverly Hills in the years following the City’s founding was dominated by the Craftsman, Mission Revival, and Period Revival styles (Tudor, Georgian, Beaux-Arts Classicism). With Beverly Hills establishing itself as a haven for movie stars in the 1920s, the architectural character of the city began to realize a varying degree of extravagance in the design of its housing stock. Flamboyant art directors and producers showed how delightful the art of set decoration could be applied to real life. Hence, fanciful houses such as Pickfair, Dias Dorados, and Greenacres were built. Throughout the late 1920s and 1930s sophisticated period revival styles dominated both the domestic and commercial architecture of the city. By the mid to late 1930s Beverly Hills became one of the areas in southern California most closely connected with the development of the Hollywood Regency style. Born of the meeting of Moderne sleekness with the elegance of early nineteenth century architectural forms, it used

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<sup>2</sup> *Beverly Hills Historic Resources Survey 1985-1986*, pg. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 8-9.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 11.

simple, primary forms and blank wall surfaces to project exclusivity and sophistication.<sup>5</sup> Beverly Hills' architecture in the post-World War II era saw the incorporation of Revival references in its new building stock, and also the introduction of contemporary, luxury designs reflective of the International Style and Mid-century Modern idiom. The International Style, Corporate Modernism, and Mid-century Modernism dominated the commercial, banking, and office buildings constructed throughout much of the City in the 1950s and 1960s, particularly along Wilshire Boulevard and within the downtown commercial triangle area.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the City's downtown urbanization continued until the westernmost section of the downtown area was as densely developed as any other southern California office cluster outside of downtown Los Angeles.<sup>6</sup>

**Millard Sheets.** One of the most prominent figures in the southern California art and design community, Millard Sheets exerted a wide influence through his prolific artistic practice, his role as an educator, and his curatorial initiatives. A Pomona native, Sheets studied art and taught watercolor at Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles, where his virtuosic and innovative pursuit of the medium and focus on California subject matter established his reputation. In accordance with his belief that art should be integral to all aspects of daily living, Sheets also worked in the applied arts. From 1931 to 1953 he designed and painted murals for private and public buildings, created department store displays, and produced illustrations. This business evolved into his Claremont based firm Millard Sheets Design, Inc., which designed and executed large-scale murals, mosaics, and stained-glass windows. Sheets' artistic legacy in southern California is most visible in the design and decoration of more than 120 branches of the Home Savings and Loan Association, an endeavor he began in 1952. His influence was also felt through his teaching and curatorial efforts. He served on the faculty and later as director of art at Scripps College and Claremont Graduate School, and was also the director of the Los Angeles County Art Institute. As director of art exhibitions at the Los Angeles County Fair from 1931 to 1956, Sheets exposed the work of contemporary local artists and craftspeople to a broad public. In the 1970s Sheets built a home and studio, which he called Barking Rocks, in Gualala in Mendocino County on California's northern coast, settling there permanently in 1978. Outside of California his major commissions included murals for the Detroit Public Library, the Mayo Clinic, the dome of the National Shrine in Washington, D.C., the Notre Dame University Library, and the Hilton Hotel in Honolulu. His art work has been widely exhibited and is included in the collections of many museums, including the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum in New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Millard Sheets passed away at his home in Gualala on the Mendocino coast at the age 81 on March 31, 1989.

**Howard Ahmanson, H.F. Ahmanson & Company.** The H.F. Ahmanson & Company was a California holding company named after its founder Howard Fieldstead Ahmanson, Sr. It is best known as the parent of Home Savings of America. Ahmanson was born in Omaha, Nebraska on July 1, 1906. After graduating from the University of Southern California he established his own

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 17.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 19.

company in 1927, which specialized in casualty insurance. During the depression the company prospered by dealing with foreclosures. In 1943, Ahmanson bought control of Omaha-based National American Insurance Company. Following the end of World War II, he purchased the Home Building and Loan Association (later renamed Home Savings and Loan and then Homes Savings of America), a savings and loan association in 1947. Founded in 1889, Home Savings became the cornerstone of its parent company, H.F. Ahmanson & Company. In the decade that followed, Ahmanson acquired 18 additional financial institutions, merged them under the name Homes Savings and Loan, and turned the group into a financial giant.

While involved in this burgeoning savings and loan association, H.F. Ahmanson also formed the Ahmanson Bank and Trust Company in 1957, the National American Title Insurance Company in 1958, and the National American Life Insurance Company of California in 1961. The company continued to grow and prosper with new branches of the various institutions being constructed throughout the country. For the Home Savings and Loan Association in particular that included the design and construction of office branches in southern California. Ahmanson wrote a cryptic letter to Sheets in 1953 stating “Dear Sheets. Saw photograph building you designed, L.A. Times. Like it. I have two valuable properties, Wilshire Boulevard, need buildings. Have driven Wilshire Boulevard for twenty-six years, know year every building was built, names of most architects, bored. If interested in doing a building that will look good thirty-five or forty years from now when I’m not here. Call me.”<sup>7</sup> Ahmanson hired artist Millard Sheets in 1954 to design the bank’s new Beverly Hills branch at 9245 Wilshire Boulevard. He selected Sheets because he wanted someone who could combine the art and flavor of California with the utilitarian needs of a savings and loan association. The result was a bank building designed with minimal financial restraint and plenty of opulence.

The bank with its colorful mosaics, decorative stained glass windows, and travertine cladding proved such a success that Ahmanson hired Sheets to design over forty additional Home Savings and Loan Association branch offices as part of the company’s expansion plan. Following Ahmanson’s death in 1968, the collaboration with Millard Sheets Design Studio continued by producing 80 more commissions until the H.F. Ahmanson and Company and its Home Savings unit were sold to Washington Mutual in 1998 (and later acquired by Chase in 2008). Howard Ahmanson also had Sheets designed his flagship Ahmanson Bank and Trust office in Beverly Hills in 1959.

## **EVALUATION OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

**Evaluation Criteria.** In analyzing the historical significance of the subject property, criteria for designation under the City’s local landmark program was considered. Additionally, consideration of historical integrity and the State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) survey methodology was used to survey and assess the relative significance of the property.

**City of Beverly Hills Landmark Criteria.** The City’s Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Title 10 Chapter 3 Article 32; BHMC 10-3-32) authorizes the Cultural Heritage Commission

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<sup>7</sup> *Abrahamson, Eric John. Building Home: Howard F. Ahmanson and the Politics of the American Dream, pg. 202.*

(CHC) to recommend the nomination of properties as local landmarks to the City Council. The Council may designate local landmarks and historic districts by the procedures outlined in the ordinance.

The Preservation Ordinance also establishes criteria and the process for evaluating and designating properties as potential local landmarks. Under the City's criteria a property must be more than 45 years old, unless it possesses exceptional significance; retain sufficient historical integrity to physically illustrate its significance; and satisfy significance criteria.

To be eligible for local designation as a historic landmark, properties must satisfy the following criteria:

- A. The property meets at least two of the following (significance) criteria:
  - 1. Is identified with important events in the main currents of national, state, or local history, or directly exemplifies or manifests significant contributions to the broad social, political, cultural, economic, recreational, or architectural history of the Nation, State, City, or community;
  - 2. Is directly associated with the lives of Significant Persons important to national, state, City or local history;
  - 3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction;
  - 4. Represents a notable work of a person included on the City's List of Master Architects or possesses high artistic or aesthetic value;
  - 5. Has yielded or has the potential to yield, information important in the prehistory or history of the Nation, State, City or community;
  - 6. Is listed or has been formally determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or is listed or has been formally determined eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources.
  
- B. The property retains integrity from its period of significance. The proposed landmark retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association. Integrity shall be judged with reference to the particular significance criteria specified above.
  
- C. The property has historic value. The proposed landmark is of significant architectural value to the community, beyond its simple market value and its designation as a landmark is reasonable, appropriate, and necessary to promote protect, and further the goals and purposes of the City's historic preservation ordinance.

**California Office of Historic Preservation Survey Methodology.** The evaluation instructions

and classification system prescribed by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) in its publication *Instructions for Recording Historical Resources* provide a three-digit evaluation rating code for use in classifying potential historic resources. The first digit indicates one of the following general evaluation categories for use in conducting cultural resources surveys:

1. Property listed in the National Register or the California Register;
2. Property determined eligible for listing in the National Register or the California Register;
3. Property appears eligible for the National Register or the California Register through a survey evaluation;
4. Property appears eligible for the National Register or the California Register through other evaluation;
5. Property recognized as historically significant by local government;
6. Property not eligible for any listing or designation; and
7. Property not evaluated for the National Register or California Register or needs re-evaluation.

The second digit of the evaluation status code is a letter code indicating whether the resource is separately eligible (S), eligible as part of a district (D), or both (B). The third digit is a number that is used to further specify significance and refine the relationship of the property to the National Register and/or California Register. Under this evaluation system, categories 1 through 4 pertain to various levels of National Register and/or California Register eligibility. The California Register, however, may also include surveyed resources with evaluation rating codes through level 5. In addition, properties found ineligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, or for designation under a local ordinance are given an evaluation status code of 6.

**Historical Integrity.** “Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance.” In addition to meeting the criteria of significance, a property must have integrity. Integrity is the authenticity of a property’s physical identity clearly indicated by the retention of characteristics that existed during the property’s period of significance. Properties eligible for local landmark designation must meet at least two of the local landmark designation criteria and retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their historical significance.

Both the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources recognize the seven aspects of qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity. To retain historic integrity a property should possess several, and usually most, of these seven aspects. Thus, the retention of the specific aspects of integrity is paramount for a property to

convey its significance. The seven qualities that define integrity are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The seven qualities or aspects of historical integrity are defined as follows:

- Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.
- 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.
- 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.

**Application of City Landmark (Significance) Criteria.** In summary, based on current research and the above assessment the three Millard Sheets designed artwork installations located at 9245 Wilshire Boulevard, 9145 Wilshire Boulevard, and 450 North Rexford Drive appear to meet the necessary City of Beverly Hills Landmark criteria.

The property was evaluated according to statutory criteria, as follows:

- A. The property meets at least two of the following criteria (BHMC 10-3-3212(A)).

***BHMC 10-3-3212(A)(1)*** *The property is identified with important events in the main currents of national, state, or local history, or directly exemplifies or manifests significant contributions to the broad social, political, cultural, economic, recreational, or architectural history of the Nation, State, City, or community.*

The three sites under review contain masterful pieces of artwork designed by artist Millard Sheets and executed by the Millard Design Studio in a variety of materials and techniques that were fully integrated into each property. Their vast appeal, appreciation, and contribution to the cultural and architectural history of the community have been greatly appreciated for many decades by the residents, visitors, and others of Beverly Hills and beyond for years. The installations at the two banking institutions, in particular, reflect a particular period in time as they provide a visual narrative of community and family that appealed to post-war southern

Californians who were bombarded at the time with images and messages that idealized the nuclear family. Because of their social content; artistic form and material; and association with a master artist, Millard Sheets, these artwork installation sites are considered highly valuable and represent an important period in art and cultural history. Therefore, the three Millard Sheets artwork installation sites appear to satisfy this criterion.

***BHMC 10-3-3212(A)(2) The property is directly associated with the lives of Significant Persons important to national, state, City or local history.***

The design and development of these three Millard Sheets designed artwork installations is due to the sponsorship of Howard F. Ahmanson. His generous support allowed the artists to fully realize his vision. Because of Ahmanson's appreciation of the arts and investment in aesthetics he had the incentive to invest more into art and architecture and commissioned Sheets to design a series of bank branches and remodels throughout the country, which were all neoclassical buildings with iconic mosaics and sculpture that celebrated community, family, and homeownership. Because of this unique partnership, the three Millard Sheets designed artwork installation sites appear to satisfy this criterion.

***BHMC 10-3-3212(A)(3) The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction.***

The type and method of construction for these three Millard Sheets designed artwork installations entailed expertise that only masters in their field could have attained. With his design team Sheets created initial sketches of the artwork, then created full-color gouaches, made full-size projections of the approved designs, and selected the correct tile colors. The small, textured glass tiles were hand cut into the perfect shapes, mixing shades to give the illusion depth, movement, and shadows. They were then pasted onto numbered sections of paper, and then delivered to the site for installation. The tiles were then installed onto the travertine facing of the bank's exterior wall. Set with a base layer of cement the tiles were carefully inlaid and finished with a grout sealer.<sup>8</sup> The meticulous method of construction of each of these sites exemplifies outstanding craftsmanship and consummate skill that should be recognized.

***BHMC 10-3-3212(A)(4) The property represents a notable work of a person included on the City's List of Master Architects or possesses high artistic or aesthetic value.***

This criterion appears to be satisfied. Artist, craftsman, teacher, lecturer, designer Millard Sheets is listed on the City's List of Master Architects. Though not a licensed architect, Sheets did design the two bank buildings located at 9145 and 9245 Wilshire Boulevard. He also designed all of the integrated artwork that was installed on the exterior and interior of each property. Sheets was also responsible for the design and installation of the large mural that was originally located along the wall of the Beverly Wilshire Hotel's "El Camino Real" motor court and has since been removed and recently re-installed onto the west wall of the City's parking

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<sup>8</sup> Arenson, Adam. "Paying Dividends," *Huntington Frontiers*, March 16, 2012, in *Fall/Winter 2011*.

structure located at 450 North Rexford Drive. Together, these three artwork installations represent the best of Sheets' portfolio of work located within the City of Beverly Hills. These works of art and architecture play an important role as part of Sheets' legacy of art.

In addition, these three artwork installations under review also possess high artistic and aesthetic value. Each of these artwork installations in some form is an artistic object of noteworthy interest and value in that they echo patriarchal themes or express local history in their design. Because of their historical content and mastery of design and execution they are highly valued as an aspect of community sentiment and pride not only within the local community but the broader, regional area as well. The artistic value of these sites has also been recognized by prominent artists, architects, and organizations, as well as the local, regional and national media.

***BHMC 10-3-3212(A)(5) The property has yielded or has the potential to yield, information important in the prehistory or history of the Nation, State, City or community.***

The three art sites installation under consideration for local landmark designation do not appear to satisfy this criterion.

***BHMC 10-3-3212(A)(6) The property is listed or has been formally determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or is listed or has been formally determined eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources.***

The three Millard Sheets designed artwork installations are not currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources, nor have they been formally determined eligible for listing on the National Register or the California Register. The art installations under review herein do not satisfy this criterion.

B. The property retains integrity from its Period of Significance (BHMC 10-3-3212(B)).

The period of significance of these three sites vary as their installation dates occurred at different times (1955, 1959, 1971-1974). Nonetheless, those physical qualities of each Millard Sheets designed artwork installation are still intact and visually evident. These artwork installations retain their historical integrity of location, design, materials, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association. Therefore, they appear to satisfy this criterion.

C. The property has Historic Value (BHMC 10-3-3212 (C)).

Because of their design merit, high artistic and aesthetic qualities, and association with master artist Millard Sheets these three artwork installation sites are considered to have significant historic value to the local community, region, and beyond. Therefore, the sites under review appear to satisfy this criterion.

**Character-defining Features.** Every historic property is unique, with its own identity and its

own distinguishing character. A property's form and detailing are important in defining its visual historic character and significance. It is a property's tangible features or elements that embody its significance for association with specific historical events, important personages, or distinctive architecture and it is those tangible elements; therefore, that should be retained and preserved.

Character refers to all those visual aspects and physical features that comprise the appearance of every historic property. According to *National Park Service Brief 17, Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character*, character-defining features include the overall shape of a property (building, structure, etc.), its material, craftsmanship, decorative details, interior spaces and features (as applicable), as well as the various aspects of its site and immediate environment (form, configuration and orientation).

The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* defines historic character by the form and detailing of materials, such as masonry, wood, stucco, plaster, terra cotta, metal, etc.; specific features, such as roofs, porches, windows and window elements, moldings, staircases, chimneys, driveways, garages, landscape and hardscape elements, etc.; as well as spatial relationships between buildings, structures, and features; room configurations; and archaic structural and mechanical systems.

Identifying those features or elements that give a historic property visual character and which should be taken into account and preserved to the maximum extent possible is important in order for the property to maintain its historical significance. Distinctive and important character-defining features associated with the Millard Sheets designed artwork installations include but are not limited to their materials (glazed tiles, marble, glass, lead, bronze, concrete, etc.), size and shape, content of design and theme, form, volume, setting, texture, finish, color, transparency in some instances (stained glass), installation method and materials, and visibility.

## **CONCLUSION**

As discussed above, the three Millard Sheets artwork installation sites appear to meet the City of Beverly Hill's criteria for local landmark designation, as required in the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (BHMC Section 10-3-3212).

The property satisfies the requirement of subsection 10-3-3212(A)(1), in that it "exemplifies important elements of the City's cultural and architectural history." The three artwork installation sites also satisfies the requirements of subsection 10-3-3212(A)(2), in that it "is directly associated with the lives of significant persons important to national, state, City or local history." The two financial institutions that contain Millard Sheets designed artwork were sponsored by Howard F. Ahmanson, who owned and operated both the Homes Savings and Loan Association (9245 Wilshire Boulevard) and the Ahmanson Bank & Trust (9145 Wilshire Boulevard) and was directly responsible for the financing and hiring Sheets for the design and artwork installations at these locales. In addition, the artwork installations under review satisfy the requirements of subsection 10-3-3212(A)(3), in that it "embodies the distinctive

characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction.” Because of their methods of design, execution, and assembly the artwork at these three sites embody and physically reflect unique and distinctive methods of construction. And finally, under the requirements of subsection 10-3-3212(A)(4), these artwork installations satisfy this criterion in that they “represent a notable work of a person included on the City’s List of Master Architects.” They were designed by noted artist and designer Millard Sheets, who is was one of the most recognized and well-respected individuals in his field, and is also included in the City’s List of Master Architects. These artwork installations also satisfy this criterion for having “high aesthetic value” as they are masterful works of art with high aesthetic value recognized locally, regionally, and nation-wide for their design, artistry, materials, method of execution, and beautiful sense of composition and sensitive taste. In addition, the artwork installations under review satisfy the requirements of subsection 10-3-3212(B) in that they retain sufficient integrity to convey their historical and artistic significance. Further, they satisfy BHMC 10-3-3212 subsection 10-3-3212(C) as they collectively possess high design merit and exceptional artistic and aesthetic value, and are also the representative work of a master designer who is listed on the City’s List of Master Architects.

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## **APPENDIX**

Tax Assessor Maps

Ephemeral Material

Photographs

## TAX ASSESSOR MAPS

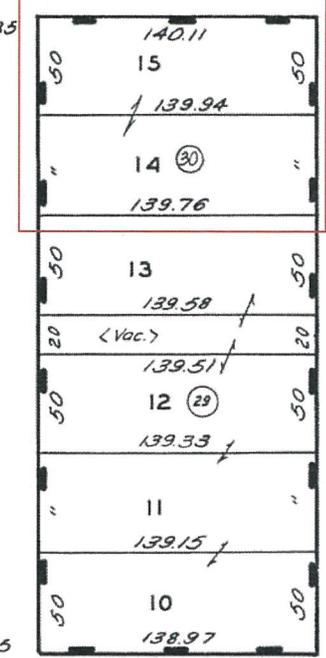
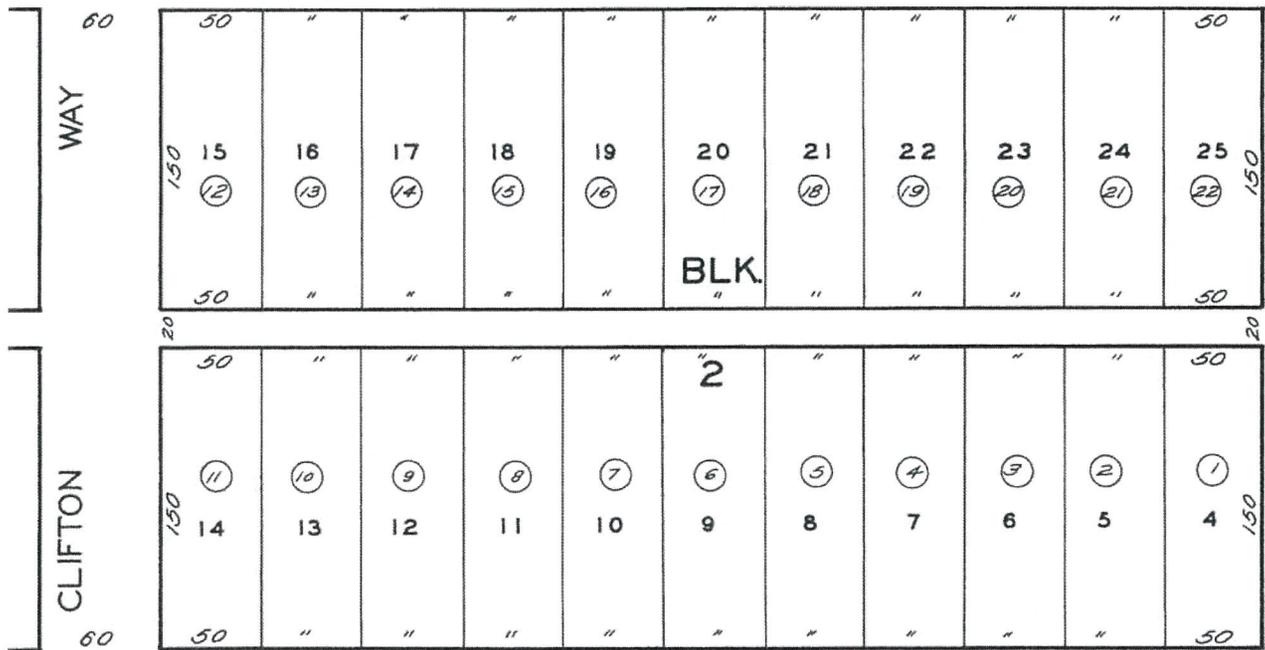


4342 32  
SCALE 1" = 60'

OAKHURST

DR.

3-8-58  
4-19-60  
7-15-60



BLVD.

PALM DR.

9145 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD

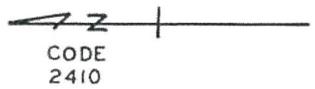
WILSHIRE

TRACT NO. 4794

TRACT NO. 10599

M.B. 45-50

M.B. 161-17

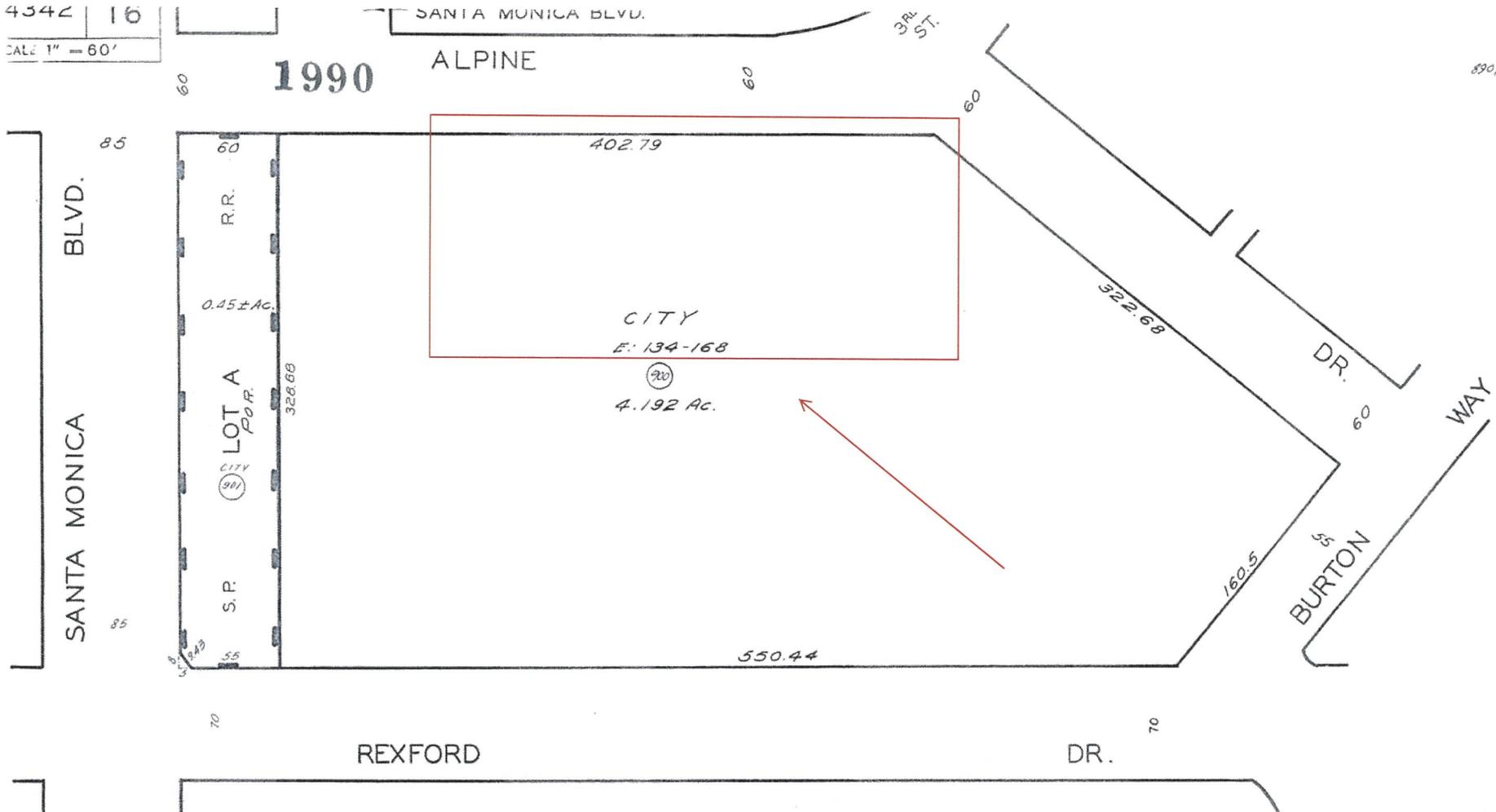


FOR PREV. ASSM'T. SEE: 1690-32

ASSESSOR'S MAP  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

4342 16  
SCALE 1" = 60'

3-8-58  
2-4-59  
72110103  
89070606006001-25



450 NORTH REXFORD DRIVE  
Civic Center Parking Structure No. 5

1990  
CODE  
2410

A PORTION OF RANCHO  
RODEO DE LAS AGUAS  
M.R.107-210-212

TRACT NO. 10921  
M.B.190-8-9

FOR PREV. ASSM'T. SEE: 1690-16

ASSESSOR'S MAP  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIF.