

901 HERMOSA AVENUE HISTORIC RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

HERMOSA BEACH, CALIFORNIA
[24017]

PREPARED FOR
901 HERMOSA PARTNERS LLC

April 17, 2024



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I. INTRODUCTION

This Historic Resource Assessment (HRA) has been prepared at the request of the City of Hermosa Beach for property owners 901 Hermosa Partners LLC to evaluate the potential historic significance of the property at 901 Hermosa Avenue (APN# 4187-003-028) in Hermosa Beach, California (**Figure 1**). The building sits on the west side of Hermosa Avenue, the city's main commercial corridor, and is bordered by 10th Court to the north and 9th Street to the south. (**Figure 2**). 10th Court is a driving street while 9th Street is a pedestrian only walking street. The property has a high-bay, one-story, 7,780-square-foot commercial building with a rectangular footprint. Designed in a commercial vernacular style with modest references to the Mission Revival style, it was erected in 1922 as an automobile showroom and repair facility for Lincoln, Ford, and Fordson vehicles by business owner George L. Stiles. The former showroom area, facing Hermosa Avenue, has since been subdivided to accommodate smaller retail businesses. The former repair area, comprising the west side of the building behind the showroom, has been subdivided with a mezzanine to serve as a storage facility.



Figure 1: The location of the subject property is shaded red. Source: Los Angeles County office of the Assessor.

Edited by Page & Turnbull.



Figure 2: Aerial view of 901 Hermosa Avenue, the subject property outlined in red. Source: Google Earth 2024. Edited by Page & Turnbull.

This report provides an examination of the current historic status for 901 Hermosa Avenue, as well as a property description; historic contexts for Hermosa Beach and early twentieth century automobile retailing; a site history; and a biography for the developer and first owner for the subject property. The report also includes an evaluation of the building's eligibility for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), and as a Hermosa Beach Landmark. The 2017 Hermosa Beach General Plan Update identified 901 Hermosa Avenue as a potential local historic resource with a California Historical Resource Status Code of 5S3 (appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation) and as a representative example of a 1920s commercial building.¹ It appears that the property has not previously been evaluated for eligibility for listing in the National Register or the California Register as an individual property or as a contributor to an eligible district.

Methodology

Page & Turnbull staff prepared this report using research collected at various local repositories including the Los Angeles County Hermosa Beach Library and the Hermosa Beach Historical Society. Online resources included the Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor Property Assessment Information System for property information, the Los Angeles County Public Works Land Records

¹ PCR Services, "7.0 Cultural Resources, Technical Background Report," in *2017 City of Hermosa Beach PLAN Hermosa*, August 2017, 7-20, 7-21, 7-29.

Information portal for historic tract maps, the Los Angeles Public Library Collection for digital Sanborn maps, HistoricAerials.com, Newspapers.com, and Ancestry.com. Page & Turnbull staff submitted a public record request to the City of Hermosa Beach for building permits and to the Los Angeles County Assessor for property records; these provided information on construction and alterations to the property and on past ownership from approximately 1946 through 2023. Historical narratives chronicling the development of Hermosa Beach reference the historic context in the 2017 Hermosa Beach General Plan.² The current building owner, 901 Hermosa Partners LLC, provided Page & Turnbull staff with a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment Report prepared by Partner Engineering and Science, Inc. for the subject property in July 2022.³ This document provided historic owner and occupant information that supplemented Page & Turnbull staff research.

Page & Turnbull staff conducted a site visit 901 Hermosa Avenue January 31, 2024. All photographs within this report were taken at that time, unless otherwise noted.

Summary of Findings

901 Hermosa Avenue is not currently listed on any local, state, or federal register of historic resources. The property was previously identified as potentially eligible for local landmark designation in a 2014 windshield survey, and it is Page & Turnbull's professional opinion that the property does appear to be eligible for local listing as a Hermosa Beach Landmark under Hermosa Beach Criterion C (Architecture) as a local example of a 1920s automobile showroom that is also one of the few remaining early commercial buildings in Hermosa Beach. This Historic Resource Assessment finds that the property *does not* appear to be individually eligible for listing in the National Register or California Register.

Per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (14 CCR § 15064.5(a)), as 901 Hermosa Avenue is not currently listed in a local register of historic resources or in the California Register, and is not eligible for listing in the California Register, the property is not a historic resource for the purposes of the CEQA.⁴

² PCR Services, "7.0 Cultural Resources, Technical Background Report," in *2017 City of Hermosa Beach PLAN Hermosa*, August 2017, 7-3 to 7-16.

³ Partner Engineering and Science, Inc., *Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment Report, 901 Hermosa Avenue*, Prepared for Powerscourt Partners LLC, July 22, 2022.

⁴ Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines), California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14 § 15000 et seq.

II. EXISTING HISTORIC STATUS

The following section examines the national, state, and local historic status currently assigned to the commercial building at 901 Hermosa Avenue.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation's most comprehensive inventory of historic resources. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level.

The subject property is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places individually, or as part of a registered historic district.

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed in the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register-listed properties are automatically listed in the California Register. Properties can also be nominated to the California Register by local governments, private organizations, or citizens. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on those developed by the National Park Service for the National Register of Historic Places.

The subject property is not listed in the California Register of Historical Resources individually, or as part of a registered historic district.

California Historical Resource Status Codes

Properties listed or under review by the State of California Office of Historic Preservation are listed within the Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD) and are assigned a California Historical Resource Status Code (Status Code) of "1" to "7" to establish their historical significance in relation to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) or California Register of Historical Resources (California Register).⁵ Properties with a Status Code of "1" or "2" are either eligible for listing in the California Register or the National Register, or are already listed in one or both of the registers. Properties assigned Status Codes of "3" or "4" appear to be eligible for listing in either

⁵ California State Office of Historic Preservation, Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD), Los Angeles County, updated September 2022.

register, but normally require more research to support this rating. Properties assigned a Status Code of "5" have typically been determined to be locally significant or to have contextual importance. Properties with a Status Code of "6" are not eligible for listing in either register. Finally, a Status Code of "7" means that the resource has not been evaluated for the National Register or the California Register or needs reevaluation.

901 Hermosa Avenue is not currently listed in the BERD database for Los Angeles County with a status code. This means the property has not been formally evaluated using California Historical Resource Status Codes and submitted to the California Office of Historic Preservation. The most recent update to the BERD database was in September 2022.⁶

Hermosa Beach Landmarks

The City of Hermosa Beach adopted a Historical Resources Preservation Ordinance in 1998 (Municipal Code Chapter 17.53). The ordinance is intended to identify and ensure the long-term protection and use of historic resources that reflect special elements of the City's architectural, artistic, cultural, historical, political, and social heritage. A historic resource must be at least 50 years old, or at least 30 years old if the City Council determines it is exceptional or threatened by demolition, removal, relocation, or inappropriate alteration. Nomination of a historic resource as a landmark is made by the City or by application of the property owners.

The ordinance has a Certificate of Appropriateness process for alterations, restorations, demolitions, removal, or relocation of any interior or exterior features for landmark or potential landmark properties. Potential landmark properties are those on a list of historic resources established by City Council being considered for landmark status. Designated landmarks can benefit from certain incentives, such as the Mills Act program, and the State Historic Building Code.

As of February 2024, four buildings have been designated or identified for protection under the City's Historic Resources Preservation Ordinance:

- The Bijou Theater, a 1923 theater at 1229-1235 Hermosa Avenue, as a local landmark;
- The Hermosa Beach Community Center, a 1939 Art Deco complex at 710 Pier Avenue originally built as a school, as a local landmark;
- Bank of America building at 90 Pier Avenue as a potential landmark warranting further study; and

⁶ California Office of Historic Preservation. *Technical Assistance Bulletin No. 8: User's Guide to the California Historical Resource Status Codes & Historic Resources Inventory Directory* (Sacramento: California Office of State Publishing. November 2004).

- Hermosa Hotel at 710 Pier Avenue as a potential landmark warranting further study.⁷

901 Hermosa Avenue is not currently listed as a Hermosa Beach Landmark.

2017 City of Hermosa Beach General Plan Update

The 2017 Hermosa Beach General Plan Update incorporates the results of a 2014 windshield survey of approximately 3,600 Hermosa Beach properties that were over 45 years old at that time (2014 survey). Based solely on their architecture, the survey identified about 220 potential historic and cultural resources, including residential and commercial buildings, public facilities, and landscape features such as parks and walk streets closed to vehicular traffic. Among the resources were 14 one- to three-story commercial buildings dispersed throughout the city, including several in the area around Pier Plaza and south to 9th Street. These vary in style from brick utilitarian to beach cottage, Mission Revival, Renaissance Revival, Midcentury Modern, New Formalist, and roadside vernacular. They do not comprise a coherent district by location or type. Each potentially eligible resource was documented with a Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523A (Primary Record) form. Each of these resources that was found to be potentially eligible for individual local listing or designation through survey evaluation was given status codes of "5S3."

However, the 2014 windshield survey did not conduct property-specific historic research on the identified properties, and no DPR 532B (Building, Structure, Object) evaluation forms were prepared. As such, the surveyed properties were expected to require additional research and evaluation as historic resources for the purposes of CEQA review. The 2014 windshield survey was not submitted to the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) or State Historic Resources Inventory and DPR 523B evaluation forms were not prepared; as such, the survey does not meet the requirements of Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5024.1(g) as it relates to the thresholds for historical resources for the purposes of CEQA.⁸

Based on this 2014 windshield survey, the 2017 Hermosa Beach General Plan Update identified 901 Hermosa Avenue as a potential local historic resource with a California Historical Resource Status Code of 5S3 (appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation) as a representative example of a 1920s commercial building (*Appendix B*).⁹

⁷ "Historic Resources," City of Hermosa Beach, accessed February 15, 2024, <https://www.hermosabeach.gov/our-government/city-departments/community-development/historic-resources>.

⁸ CEQA Guidelines, 14 CCR § 15064.5.

⁹ PCR Services, "7.0 Cultural Resources, Technical Background Report," in *2017 City of Hermosa Beach PLAN Hermosa*, August 2017, 7-20, 7-21, 7-29.

III. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The property at 901 Hermosa Avenue is a rectangular parcel that contains a high-bay one-story, 7,780-square-foot commercial building built in 1922 (**Figure 3**). The building occupies the majority of its flat site which measures approximately 115 feet in width and 86 feet in depth. The east side of the building faces, and is set back from, Hermosa Avenue behind a pedestrian sidewalk; its north side is built out to the site perimeter at 10th Court; its west side faces a narrow, concrete-paved pedestrian alley and a two-story apartment building at 58 10th Court; its south side is set back approximately twenty feet from 9th Street and faces onto a concrete-paved strip that historically served as a driveway. The property boundary on the south side is defined by a low curb that separates the driveway from the street.

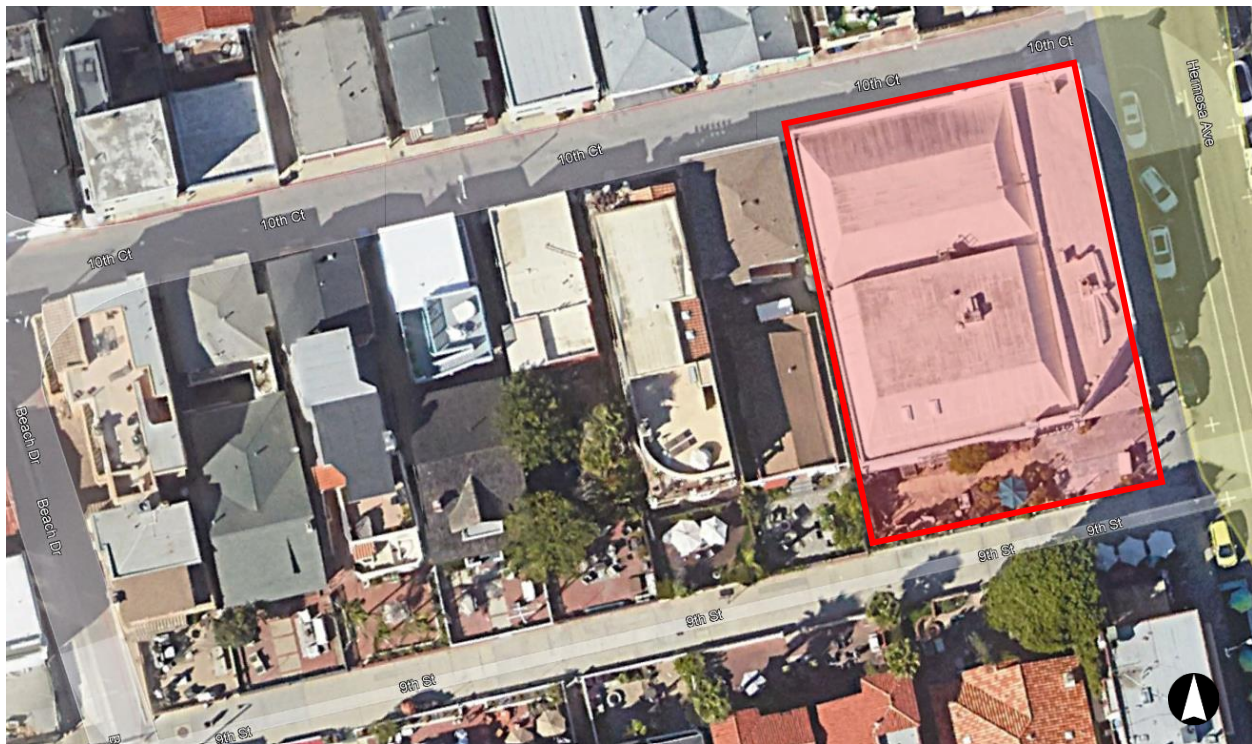


Figure 3: Aerial view of 901 Hermosa Avenue, outlined in red. Source Google Earth 2024. Edited by Page & Turnbull.

Building Description

901 Hermosa Avenue is occupied by a high-bay, one-story wood-frame building with box-like massing and a rectangular footprint except at its southeast corner where the façade is angled at forty-five-degrees (**Figure 4**). The design of the building is typical of one-part vernacular commercial construction that provides a sizable wall area between windows and cornice for signage, a feature that also makes the façade appear larger.¹⁰ The subject property's stucco finish and arched window openings modestly reference the Mission Revival style popular in 1920s Southern California.



Figure 4: Primary (east) façade of 901 Hermosa Avenue, view northwest.

The subject property has a combination of flat and projecting truss roof forms, covered with asphalt-coated rolled roofing, which are hidden behind a combination stepped and flat parapet. The stepped section of the parapet wraps the building's primary (east) façade and continues onto the east ends of the north and south façades. The building's undecorated stucco walls are painted. Fenestration includes punched arched openings with recessed, wood-framed, multi-light display windows, and rectangular steel-framed garage door openings. Each three-part display window is framed with tall lower panes surmounted by an arched upper transom. The lower panes and their wood frames and thin mullions are non-original in each opening. The transoms are generally original, featuring a centered row of narrow vertical panes flanked by arched corner fanlights; some

¹⁰ Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street* (Washington DC: Preservation Press, 1987), 54-65.

of the central sashes have been replaced. The rectangular garage openings at the side facades have metal roll-up doors.

The overall building massing is organized as three bays. A narrow rectangular bay with a flat roof along the east front of the building is oriented north-south and contains the former showroom, which is currently used as retail spaces. Behind the front bay, to the west, are two adjacent rectangular bays; these contain the former auto repair area, which has been retrofitted to serve as storage space. These rear bays have projecting wood truss roofs. The north side of the south bay's roof is straight rather than sloped; though currently covered, it is likely this face served as a glazed clerestory for natural daylighting.

Primary (East) Façade

The primary (east) facade consists of two parts: the main storefront parallel to Hermosa Avenue and an angled southeast façade at the corner. The southeast and east-facing façades have stepped parapets (**Figure 5**).



Figure 5: Primary façade (right) and southeast angled corner façade (left), view northwest.

The angled southeast corner wall features a triangular wood-framed canopy over a single-panel entry door flanked by square, fixed wood-frame windows (**Figure 6 and Figure 7**). The long edge of the canopy is attached to the angled wall and its southeast corner is supported by a wood-encased round metal column seated on a round concrete base. The fenestration is situated on the north

(right) half of the wall, where its perimeter is surrounded with horizontally-layered tree branch segments that form a rustic frame.



Figure 6: Southwest corner, view west.



Figure 7: Southwest corner, view north.



Figure 8: East façade, view northwest



Figure 9: East façade, view southwest

The storefront portion of the primary façade has three window bays, each with an arched opening and multi-light display window (**Figure 8 and Figure 9**). The middle section of the south (left) transom has been subdivided to accommodate a new center mullion flanked by metal-frame single-light sliding windows. The center window retains its original configuration except for new paired metal-frame entry doors. The north (right) window retains its original configuration. A small number of transom lites have been replaced with new glass. Sign boards are attached to the wall above the center of each window opening.

North Façade

The north façade is organized in three sections, the east and center of which are located beneath the stepped parapet (**Figure 10 and Figure 11**). The east (left) section features a typical arched display window; the center section of its transom has been covered with an opaque panel. The middle section of the façade is penetrated by a rectangular garage door opening with concrete wheel guards at its base. The long, west (right) section has an infilled rectangular opening at its center; its proportions suggest that it was formerly a second garage door. A single metal panel door is located at the far west end.



Figure 10: North façade, view southwest.



Figure 11: North façade, view southeast.

Rear (West) Façade

The west façade currently has no openings. Five recessed stucco panels, evenly arranged across the center of the wall plane, are infilled former window openings (**Figure 12**).



Figure 12: Rear (west) elevation, view south.

South Façade

The south façade is organized in two sections, which are located to the west of the angled southwest corner wall (**Figure 13 and Figure 14**). The west (left) section of the façade has a large rectangular plaster patch covering an infilled window opening. The center of the wall currently features a metal-framed three-part fixed and sliding window with an interior security grille. The window is framed with a simple painted wood surround (**Figure 13**). The east section has stepped parapet and is penetrated by a wide garage door opening with concrete wheel guards at its base and a cloth awning above. The opening has been subdivided to accommodate a single panel entry door with a glass-block transom on its west side and a smaller rolling security door on its east side (**Figure 14**).



Figure 13: South façade, view northwest.



Figure 14: South façade, east end, view north.

Site Features

The curb between the public sidewalk and Hermosa Avenue at the southwest front of the property features a long curb cut, which formerly allowed vehicle access. The open area along the south property boundary is paved with scored concrete and separated from the adjacent walking street by a raised curb. Both site features indicate that this area was formerly used as a driveway to access the zone under the canopy and the garage door (**Figure 15**). The area is now used as a seating area with outdoor furniture and potted plants.

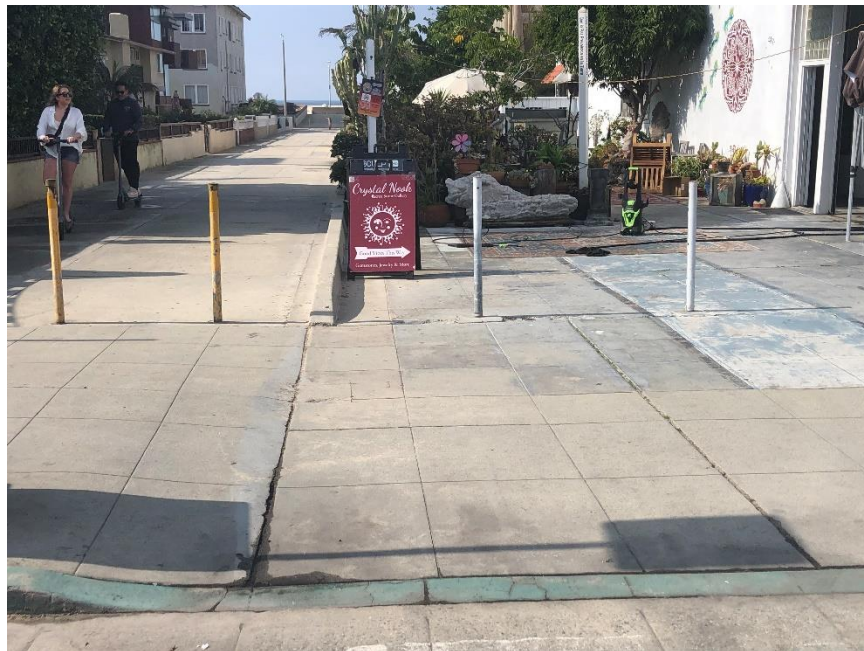


Figure 15: Streetside curb cut, curb, and driveway, view west.

Surrounding Neighborhood

The neighborhood surrounding 901 Hermosa Avenue is a mix of property types and uses. Hermosa Avenue to the north and south of the subject property is a Main Street-type commercial thoroughfare that was once a streetcar route (**Figure 16 and Figure 17**). Properties along Hermosa Avenue are primarily one- and two-story commercial buildings, most of which are from the mid- to early twenty-first century. Two- and three-story commercial buildings are located directly across Hermosa Avenue from the subject property. Several 1920s-era commercial buildings remain on the street, including a former automobile repair building one-half block south of the subject property at 832 Hermosa Avenue, identified as potentially historic in the 2017 General Plan.¹¹ Also nearby,

¹¹ PCR Services, "7.0 Cultural Resources, Technical Background Report," in *2017 City of Hermosa Beach PLAN Hermosa*, August 2017, 7-21.

around Pier Avenue and Hermosa Avenue, are three of the four buildings receiving protection under the City's Historic Resources Preservation Ordinance: the former Bijou Theatre that is now a Chase bank and retail store, the Bank of America Building, and the Hermosa Hotel.



Figure 16: Typical commercial buildings along Hermosa Avenue, view north.



Figure 17: Typical commercial buildings along Hermosa Avenue, view south.

The blocks along 9th Street and 10th Court between Hermosa Avenue and Beach Drive are primarily residential with early one-story beach bungalows, mid- and late-twentieth century single-family residences and two-story apartment buildings (**Figure 18 and Figure 19**).



Figure 18: Typical residential buildings along 9th Street, view west.



Figure 19: Typical residential buildings along 10th Court, view west.

IV. HISTORIC CONTEXT

Hermosa Beach History

Hermosa Beach is one of a string of beach cities in the southwest corner of Los Angeles County.¹² Prior to the founding of Hermosa Beach, the area was part of Rancho Sausal Redondo. Granted to Antonio Ignacio Avila in 1822 during the Mexican era, Rancho Sausal Redondo encompassed over 22,000 acres. It extended along the coast from present-day Marina del Rey south to Redondo Beach and east to Inglewood and Lawndale. Avila's ownership of the land was upheld in the transition to United States rule after the Mexican-American War ended in 1848, but his heirs sold the rancho lands after Avila's death in 1858. A Scottish baron, Robert Burnett, purchased Rancho Sausal Redondo and the adjacent Rancho Aguaje de la Centinela in the 1860s.¹³ In the 1870s, Canadian Daniel Freeman and his wife, Catherine, leased both ranchos where they grew barley and grazed sheep; the Freemans purchased the land in 1885.¹⁴ Freeman started to sell parts of the rancho and, in 1900, the Hermosa Land and Water Company purchased 1,500 acres of the former rancho.

Railway barons Moses Sherman and Eli Clark started the Hermosa Land and Water Company in anticipation of a resort settlement at the coast and growth from the City of Los Angeles. The land was surveyed in 1901 starting with Santa Fe Avenue (now Pier Avenue) running from the Santa Fe Railroad (at today's Valley Drive) to the beach. The survey also laid out a boardwalk along the beach (now The Strand), while Hermosa Avenue, the second thoroughfare, ran parallel to the beach. In 1901, the original Hermosa Beach tract was subdivided between the boardwalk and Hermosa Avenue. Numbered streets started with 1st Street at the south and extended north; Santa Fe Avenue corresponded to 12th Street. The "First Addition to Hermosa Beach" was surveyed later in 1901, extending north to 26th Street and east to Loma Drive. The "Second Addition" was surveyed in 1902 and extended east from Loma Drive to the eastern border just beyond present day Prospect Avenue.

The rapid pace of surveying and subdividing meant that residential development was sporadic in the first few decades. As a beach resort, Hermosa Beach was initially a seasonal community with a small permanent population that attracted many visitors on the weekends and in the summer.¹⁵ In 1904, the first Hermosa Beach Pier was constructed of wood. By 1906, Hermosa Beach had a population of around 300 people and only a few public buildings existed: a post office, schoolhouse, grocery,

¹² Unless otherwise cited, this section is summarized from the PCR Services, "7.0 Historic Resources." Hermosa Beach General Plan Updated, 2014; and Chris Miller, Jerry Roberts, and Hermosa Beach Historical Society, *Images of America: Hermosa Beach* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005).

¹³ Loretta Louise Scheerer, "The History of the Sausal Redondo Rancho" (MA Thesis, University of Southern California, 1938), 20.

¹⁴ Scheerer, "The History of the Sausal Redondo Rancho," 22-3.

¹⁵ Patricia A. Gazin, *Footnotes on the Sand* (Hermosa Beach: Myron Gazin, 1991), 10.

general store, and a few boarding houses.¹⁶ In January 1907, Hermosa Beach incorporated as the nineteenth city in Los Angeles County.



Figure 20: Late 1910s photograph of the corner of Santa Fe (now Pier) Avenue and Hermosa Avenue, looking northwest. Source: Roger Creighton in *Images of America: Hermosa Beach*.

Greater growth would come with the arrival of the Pacific Electric rail line (**Figure 20**). By 1910, Hermosa Beach was a stop on the Pacific Electric's "Balloon Route Excursion" that ran along Hermosa Avenue. The train brought more tourists and potential new residents to the beach community. The Berth family built the first hotel at 10th Street and the Strand in 1907. The new city spent thousands of dollars on street and lighting improvements to attract new residents. Many of the early residences were summer homes for those in Los Angeles and Pasadena.¹⁷ Most of the housing stock was the vernacular beach cottages or bungalows that could be built for a modest amount. Development was denser near the coast and toward the southern end of the city, though even in the 1920s, many blocks had several undeveloped lots. In the hills inland, Greek and Japanese farmers grew carnations, chrysanthemums, and other flowers (**Figure 21**).¹⁸

¹⁶ Scheerer, "The History of the Sausal Redondo Rancho," 28.

¹⁷ Gazin, *Footnotes on the Sand*, 17, 26.

¹⁸ Gazin, *Footnotes on the Sand*, 16-17.

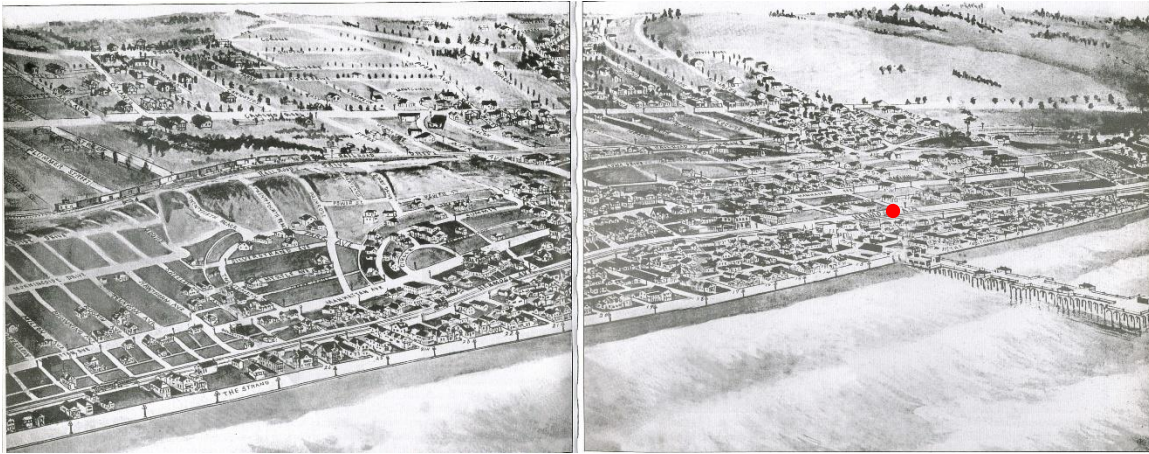


Figure 21: Map of Hermosa Beach in 1915 with concentrated development near the coast and scattered elsewhere. The approximate location of 901 Hermosa Avenue is marked with a red dot.

Source: Hermosa Beach Historical Society in *Images of America: Hermosa Beach*.

In 1913, the city approved plans to replace its wood boardwalk with a concrete “Strand.” That same year the extant wooden pier was replaced with a concrete pier. At the entrance of the new pier was a Mission Revival-style building (since demolished) with an archway that had an upper-level viewing deck (**Figure 22**).¹⁹ In 1917, the Hermosa Beach Bathhouse Company announced plans for a bathhouse at The Strand, just south of the pier. The Spanish Colonial Revival-style building provided a private place for beach visitors to change and store their belongings.

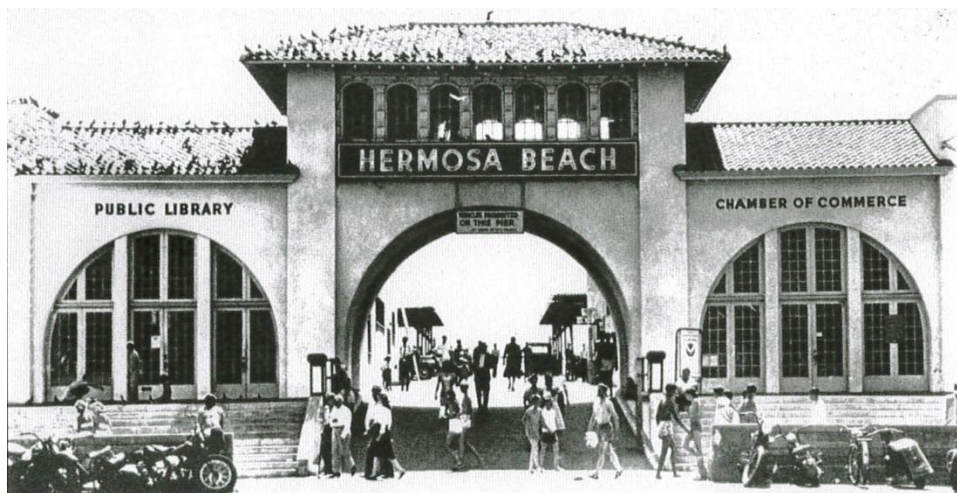


Figure 22: Mission Revival-style building at entrance to the Hermosa Beach Pier, circa 1940, demolished 1960s. Source: Hermosa Beach Historical Society in *Images of America: Hermosa Beach*.

¹⁹ “Handsome Archway: Hermosa Beach Is Adding Decorative Additions to Its Pleasure Pier, Rest Rooms Provided,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 4, 1914.

With the economic boom of the 1920s, Hermosa Beach saw greater residential and commercial development, much of the expansion serving tourists (**Figure 23**). In 1923, the Surf and Sand Club announced plans for a clubhouse on The Strand located north of the pier, between 14th and 15th streets. Designed by prominent Southern California architect, Myron Hunt, the four-story building had a ballroom, indoor swimming pool, and 124 rooms with private bathrooms. The building became the Hermosa Biltmore Hotel (since demolished) in the 1930s. Also constructed in the 1920s was the Metropolitan (later Bijou) Theatre (extant, Hermosa Beach Landmark).



Figure 23: View of storefronts along Pier Plaza, circa 1925. Source: Hermosa Beach Historical Society in *Images of America: Hermosa Beach*.

Development in Hermosa Beach was modest during the Great Depression and World War II. Like much of Southern California, Hermosa Beach boomed in the post-World War II years. The lots near the ocean that had not yet been developed were finally infilled, while previously industrial and agricultural lands further inland were subdivided for new housing. A new civic center with a Modernist style city hall, police station, fire station, and library opened in 1962. Many of Hermosa Beach's earliest notable buildings and features were demolished in the 1960s, including the arch and pavilion buildings at the pier entrance, the former Surf and Sand Club (Hermosa Biltmore Hotel), and the Pacific Electric rail line.

Automotive Retailing and Repair (1915 – 1930)

California's early and rapid embrace of the automobile made it a pioneer in automobile ownership and retailing.²⁰ The earliest automobile sales were conducted through livery stable, carriage dealer, or bicycle shops. Purpose-built auto dealerships emerged just before World War I, typically fitting into central retail districts with conventional storefronts, except for large entry doors and windows. By the late 1910s, sales facilities became more elaborate, and dealers frequently constructed impressive buildings in traditional styles with opulent sales salons to convey a reputable experience. Since most potential customers did not yet own automobiles, dealerships were located close to streetcar lines. Auto manufacturers were often corporate sponsors of the initial buildings; these sales rooms served as examples of the new form and distinctive quality manufacturers encouraged locally owned and built dealerships to emulate.²¹

In the early 1920s, urban dealerships began to combine auto servicing and repair with sales (**Figure 24**). This required the construction of larger, often multi-story, facilities with ramps and the volume to accommodate multiple vehicles. Façades continued to feature historicist detailing with the only feature identifying the buildings as auto service facilities being factory sash windows and vehicle-sized openings.²²



Figure 24: 1050 Hope Street (Los Angeles) was built as a showroom and service center for the Willys-Overland Company in 1916 and served as such through 1932, photo circa 2015. Source: *Survey-LA*.

²⁰ This section is adapted using relevant information from the Daniel Prosser and Daniel Herrick, "Commercial Development, 1850-1980: Commercial Development and the Automobile, 1910-1970" in *Survey-LA Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey, Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement*, prepared for the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning, August 2016.

²¹ Prosser and Herrick, "Commercial Development," 35-36.

²² Prosser and Herrick, "Commercial Development," 35-36.

Outlying business districts continued to build small single-story outlets on local main streets (**Figure 25**). The suburban showrooms adopted a common three-bay façade composition consisting of an elaborate center entrance with symmetrically flanking show windows placed directly on the street without setback. These were essentially single-story versions of the more elaborate central business district dealerships, and they maintained a footprint similar to that of an early livery stable. The suburban buildings typically adopted the period revival styles popular at the time.²³



Figure 25: Former showroom and repair facility (Hollywood) built in 1925, photo circa 2015. Source: *Survey-LA*.

By the 1930s, as many potential customers owned cars, there was no longer a need to be located close to streetcar lines. Instead, ease of access and adequate parking meant that the few new showrooms constructed during the Great Depression moved to outer arterial roads. The new facilities at these locations were typically designed with a showroom in the front, still positioned directly on the sidewalk without a setback, and service bays to the rear with generous perimeter parking and driveways. These buildings frequently adopted the new Streamline Moderne and Art Deco styles of the decade.

After World War II, the showroom typology shrank in size in favor of larger parts and service departments. By the 1960s, automobile retailing shifted again to facilities in the far suburbs with on-site showrooms at the back of the lot used as offices and for display of select models, the buying experience focused instead on vast outdoor sales lots.²⁴ These shifts meant that early automobile

²³ Prosser and Herrick, "Commercial Development," 36.

²⁴ Prosser and Herrick, "Commercial Development," 36-39.

retail buildings were quickly outdated. Some were repurposed for other uses. Some continued as brand-specific repair facilities, as satellite space for relocated dealerships, or as independent businesses providing a specialized automobile-related service. Many were demolished and early examples are increasingly rare.

The Sanborn Map Company fire insurance map of Hermosa Beach (Sheet 15, January 1927 – September 1946) showed four automobile sales and repair businesses on Hermosa Avenue between Pier Avenue and Second Street in this period. Three were located opposite 901 Hermosa Avenue on the east side of the street. These included an auto sales and repair facility at 900-910 Hermosa Avenue (demolished), an auto repair facility at 832-842 Hermosa Avenue (extant and converted to co-working space), and an auto service business between them (demolished). These businesses were likely accessed from the rear alley, Palm Drive, or through the auto service business. The remaining building at 832-842 Hermosa Avenue was built in 1913 and represents the previous decade in automotive history when buildings for both retail and repair were industrial in character without the accommodation for auto circulation and display evident at 901 Hermosa Avenue built in 1922 (**Figure 26**).

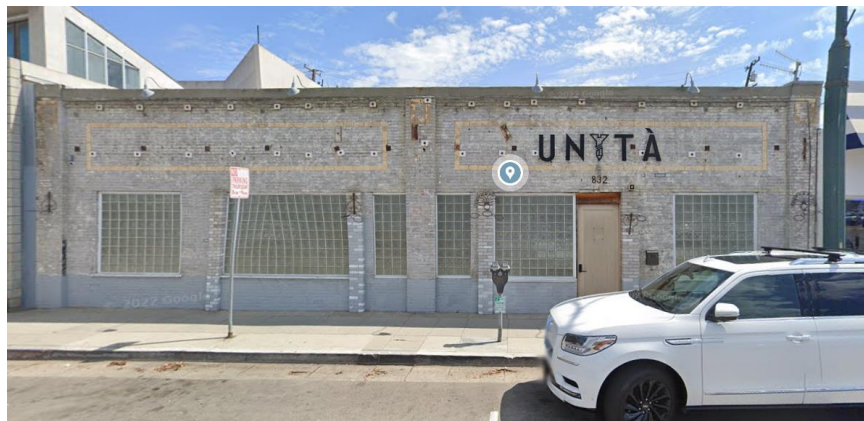


Figure 26: 832-842 Hermosa Avenue, built in 1913, circa 2022. Source: Google Street View.

V. SITE HISTORY

Site Development

The property at 901 Hermosa Avenue is located within the original Hermosa Beach tract that was surveyed and subdivided in 1901. The tract map for that year shows that lots 25, 26, and 27, which comprise the subject property, at the northwest corner of Ninth Street and Hermosa Avenue were part of the city's original plan (**Figure 27**).

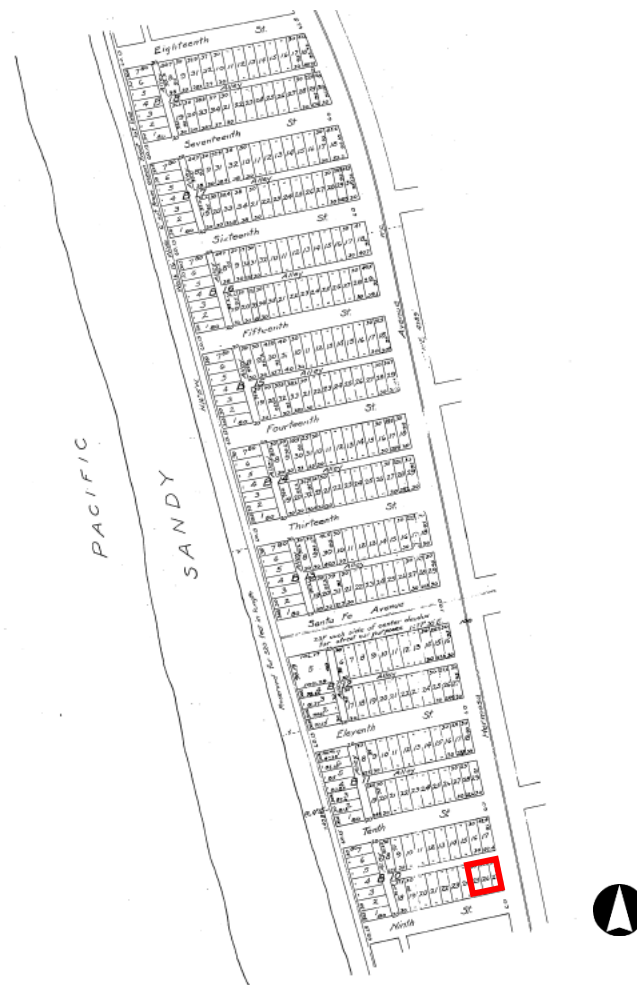
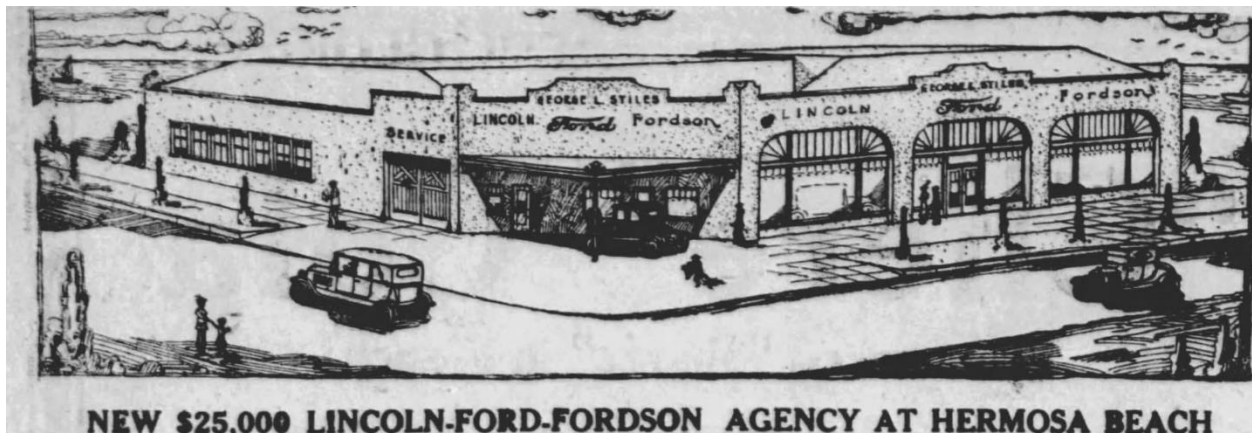


Figure 27: 1901 Tract Map of Hermosa Beach. Source: Los Angeles County Public Works Land Records Information. Edited by Page & Turnbull.

According to historic Los Angeles County Assessor map books, the first improvement on 901 Hermosa Avenue occurred around 1922. No original building permit for the subject property is on file at the City of Hermosa Beach, and research has not identified the architect or builder. By late 1922, the parcel was owned by George L. Stiles. A newspaper article announced his construction of a \$25,000 Lincoln-Ford-Fordson dealership and repair facility at the corner of Hermosa Avenue and 9th Street, stating it would be built of "brown stucco of the Mission type of architecture so appropriate for western landscapes."²⁵ The article further noted that it would provide a larger floor space for Lincoln-Ford-Fordson products and repair than at other nearby dealers, and be open by November 1922. The accompanying rendering portrayed a building that is largely consistent with the appearance of 901 Hermosa Avenue in 2024, with overall massing fenestration, roof form, windows, and parapet intact (**Figure 28**).



NEW \$25,000 LINCOLN-FORD-FORDSON AGENCY AT HERMOSA BEACH
Figure 28: Proposed design of 901 Hermosa Avenue, October 1922. Source: "New \$25,000 Lincoln - Ford - Fordson Agency at Hermosa Beach," *Redondo Reflex*, October 13, 1922, 6.

A 1927 Sanborn Map Company fire insurance map showed the footprint of the auto sales and repair building, including the angled façade and canopy. The map indicated that the building had a wood truss roof and concrete floor, and also showed the residential buildings to the west and commercial buildings along Hermosa Avenue (**Figure 29**).

²⁵ "New \$25,000 Lincoln-Ford-Fordson Agency at Hermosa Beach," *Redondo Reflex*, October 13, 1922, 6.



Figure 29: Sanborn Map Company fire insurance map of Hermosa Beach, Sheet 15, January 1927 – September 1946. The location of the subject property is outlined in red. Source: Los Angeles Public Library. Edited by Page & Turnbull.

Building permits indicated that, in 1946, the subject property was reroofed and that windows on the north and south of the building were plastered over in 1975. In 1986, the exterior was water blasted (likely meaning pressure washed) and the building was reroofed again in 1991 and in 2010. An interior stair and emergency fire exit were constructed in 1998; this was likely the exit door at the west end of the north façade. Assessor notes dated September 17, 1956 (added to a September 3, 1947 Los Angeles County Assessor Building Description Blank Form) indicate that the rear west wall had been converted to a firewall by that time. It is likely that the windows on the rear wall were infilled as part of this change.

A comparison of the building rendering from 1922 with staff observations made during the Page & Turnbull site visit on January 31, 2024, reveals other visible alterations that are not recorded in building permits or assessor documentation. These changes include: replacement glazing in the

lower sections of the east façade windows and in the southeast façade windows; removal and enclosure of a door on the south half of the southeast façade; substitution of original wood panel doors on the south and north façades with metal rolling doors; and infill of a ribbon of windows at the west end of the south façade.

Building permits and assessor records suggest that the building continued to serve automotive uses through the late 1960s before being converted to warehouse and general retail use.

CONSTRUCTION CHRONOLOGY

The following table provides the building permit information for construction activity at 901 Hermosa Avenue based on applications on file with the City of Hermosa Beach Planning Division. Cancelled and expired permits are not included.

TABLE 1. PERMIT HISTORY FOR 901 HERMOSA AVENUE

Date Filed	Permit App. #	Owner	Contractor	Work
1946	3963	<i>Not listed</i>	<i>Not listed</i>	Reroofing
1975	16370	John Haworth	<i>Not listed</i>	Plaster up existing windows on north and south of building
1976	16550	John Haworth	<i>Not listed</i>	Construct non-bearing partition wall 61' x 12' high with 3' door dividing rear area
1977	<i>Not listed</i>	John K. Haworth	<i>Not listed</i>	Interior partition walls
1980	<i>Not listed</i>	Greg Dahle	<i>Not listed</i>	Remodel existing storage use
1986	20209	Greg Dahle	<i>Not listed</i>	Water blast building exterior
1987	20913	Greg Dahle	<i>Not listed</i>	Install awnings
1991	22214	Greg Dahle	A-1 All American Roofing	Remove roof and install three-ply cap roof
1997	<i>Not listed</i>	<i>Not listed</i>	<i>Not listed</i>	Hermosa Fire Department letter noting no record of any permit for two level storage
1998	<i>Not listed</i>	Gregg and Kay J. Dahle	<i>Not listed</i>	Add stairs and emergency fire exit
2010	<i>Not listed</i>	Gregg and Kay J. Dahle	Shoreline Roof Co.	Apply four-layer built-up roof system over existing one-layer flat roof

Ownership and Occupant History

The following tables provide a summary of the ownership and occupancy history of 901 Hermosa Avenue beginning with the year of construction, compiled from historic newspaper articles, building permits, and data in the *Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment Report (2022)* prepared by Partner Engineering and Science, Inc..²⁶

TABLE 2. OWNERSHIP HISTORY FOR 901 HERMOSA AVENUE

Date(s)	Owner(s)	Occupation
1922- 1923	George L. Stiles	Owner, Lincoln-Ford-Fordson Dealership and Garage
1923-1943	Unknown	Unknown
1943-1980	John Haworth	Owner, Haworth Chevrolet Company, auto parts warehouse and auto glass replacement service, other retail
1980-2022	Melvin Greg Dahle	

TABLE 3. OCCUPANT HISTORY FOR 901 HERMOSA AVENUE

Date(s)	Occupant(s)
1923	Hufford & Haggett Lincoln and Ford
1927	Haggett Lincoln Autos
1931-1936	Nelson & Stickney Autos
1939	Haworth Jones Chevrolet
1941-1954	Haworth Chevrolet Company Autos
1954	Butler Buick
1960	John Haworth
1968	John Haworth (auto parts warehouse and auto glass replacement service, other retail)
1971	Gene's Restaurant Equipment, Sedillo Sheet Metal
1978	Cadene Ozzie, The First Time, The Grab Bag, TK & Company
1981	Dar Es Salam, Dial A Sign Inc, The Gazelle, Greenpeace Southern California, Iris Creation, Jamal Farida
1981-1985	Maya
1981-2024	Bay Self Storage
1985	Executive Communique, Intimate Impression, Maya, Murphy's Graphics, SJ & Company, Studio 9, Tattiahas Original, Things Oriental, West Coast Plants, Word Magic, Write Now Computer
1985-1995	Bradford GM & Associates
1990	Champ Awards, Jim Searcy Glass Etching, South Bay Hng GA FU, Sun International, Treasure House, Universal Cash Register
1995	Inta Sport, Keppler Entertainment, Woods of Holly Glory

²⁶ Partner Engineering and Science, Inc., *Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment Report, 901 Hermosa Avenue*, prepared for Powerscourt Partners LLC, July 22, 2022, 8-9, 14.

Date(s)	Occupant(s)
1995-2003	Antique Eddy's
1995-2020	Grizzly Clothing
2003	Bearsmouth Entertainment, Meg Co
2003-2008	Let There Be Light
2003-2020	Meg Company
2008	Hermosa Hair Studio, Lucinda Messer Lecovin MD, Sol Baby
2008-2016	David Frederickson Law Office
2008-2024	Glow Hair & Skin Therapy, Ogden Photography
2012	Sole Searching
2012-2020	By Hand
2016	Hermosa Beadworks
2020	Lily Pad, Meg Co
2021-2024	Trick E-bikes

SELECT OWNER AND OCCUPANT BIOGRAPHIES

George Leslie Stiles (1880 – 1935)

George Leslie Stiles was born in Buffalo, New York in 1880 and died in Los Angeles in 1935.²⁷ By 1900, his family had relocated to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where George and his brother, Charles, worked at the family-run Stiles Floral Company, a wholesale florist and grower business established in 1899.²⁸ George married Katherine Gran Jervey in Oklahoma City in 1912 and continued working at the floral company through early 1922.²⁹ The business filed for bankruptcy in March of that year and, in June, George and Katherine moved to Los Angeles, likely to the community of Redondo Beach where directories placed them in 1925.³⁰ Within months, George became an active member of the Hermosa Beach area Chamber of Commerce, chairing their membership committee and networking to bring new businesses to the city.³¹

In October 1922, the local newspaper announced Stiles' construction of a \$25,000 Lincoln-Ford-Fordson vehicle dealership and garage in Hermosa Beach, noting that sales were already underway and that the building would be ready for occupancy by mid-November 1922.³² His association with the new business was brief as, in July 1923, Stiles sold the dealership to the Hufford & Haggett

²⁷ California United States Death Index 1880-1935, via Ancestry.com.

²⁸ 1900 United States Census, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma, digital image s.v. "George L. Stiles," via Ancestry.com; and "Oklahoma City Pays \$300,000 Annually To Say It With Flowers," *The Daily Oklahoman* (Oklahoma City, OK), November 6, 1921, 9.

²⁹ Oklahoma County Marriage Records 1889-1951 Book 19, 460, s.v. "George Leslie Stiles," via Ancestry.com.

³⁰ "Notice of First Meeting of Creditors," *The Daily Law Journal-Record* (Oklahoma City, OK), March 9, 1922, 3; and Sadie Anderson, "Society," *Oklahoma City Times*, June 16, 1922, 7.

³¹ "Agitate for Hotel," *Redondo Reflex*, October 20, 1922, 11.

³² "New \$25,000 Lincoln-Ford-Fordson Agency at Hermosa Beach," *Redondo Reflex*, October 13, 1922, 6.

Lincoln and Ford company.³³ By 1925, George and Charles Stiles, with partner John Zeller, took over an existing Hudson-Essex sales and repair business in Redondo Beach, forming Zeller-Stiles Motors.³⁴ In 1927, Stiles moved to Pasadena and refocused his business interests on real estate. He worked for architect and developer Frank Meline as the manager for his Miramar Sales Corporation's Miramar Estates in Santa Monica (now Castellammare in Pacific Palisades) and subsequently as a sales representative for a Chandler Improvement Company project to develop a winter resort in Arizona to be designed by architect John Byers.³⁵

³³ "Hermosa News," *Redondo Reflex*, July 20, 1923, 5.

³⁴ "Locates in Redondo," *Redondo Reflex*, Jun12, 1925, 8.

³⁵ "Completion of New Boulevard Lends Impetus," *Los Angeles Times*, July 31, 1927,78; and "Winter Resort in Desert Will Be Cooperative," *Los Angeles Times*, February 23, 1920, 62.

VI. EVALUATION

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation's most comprehensive inventory of historic resources. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service and includes districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. These resources contribute to an understanding of the historical and cultural foundations of the Nation at the national, state, or local level. Typically, properties over fifty years of age may be eligible for listing in the National Register if they meet any one of the four significance criteria and if they retain sufficient historic integrity to convey that significance. However, properties under fifty years of age may be determined eligible if it can be demonstrated that they are of "exceptional importance." Other criteria considerations apply to cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed buildings, and properties primarily commemorative in nature. National Register criteria are defined in depth in *National Register Bulletin Number 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

The National Register has four basic criteria under which a property may be considered eligible for listing. It can be found significant under one or more of the following criteria.

- **Criterion A (Events):** Properties associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- **Criterion B (Person):** Properties associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- **Criterion C (Architecture):** Properties 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 distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- **Criterion D (Information Potential):** Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

A property may be considered significant on a national, state, or local level to American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture.

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed in the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register-listed properties are automatically listed in the California Register. Properties can also be nominated to the California Register by local governments, private organizations, or citizens. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on those developed by the National Park Service for the National Register of Historic Places. In order for a property to be eligible for listing in the California Register, it must be found significant under one or more of the following criteria.

- **Criterion 1 (Events):** Resources that are 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.
- **Criterion 2 (Persons):** Resources that are associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
- **Criterion 3 (Architecture):** Resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values.
- **Criterion 4 (Information Potential):** Resources or sites that have yielded or have the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.³⁶

The following section examines the eligibility of 901 Hermosa Avenue for individual listing in the National Register and the California Register.

CRITERION A/1 (EVENTS)

901 Hermosa Avenue does not appear eligible for listing in the National Register or California Register under Criterion A/1.

³⁶ California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistance Bulletin No. 7: How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of Historical Resources* (Sacramento: California Office of State Publishing, September 4, 2001), 11.

Research did not associate 901 Hermosa Avenue with any events that have made a significant impact in history. The building was built in 1922 and was among the group of early commercial buildings along Hermosa Avenue that arrived with the introduction of the Pacific Electric streetcar line in 1910 and the rise in automobile ownership. Although the streetcar increased access to Hermosa Beach, it was never a streetcar suburb of Los Angeles and remained a seasonal beach destination until after World War II. 901 Hermosa Beach does not appear to have played a unique or significant role in development of the Hermosa Avenue commercial corridor.

CRITERION B/2 (PERSONS)

901 Hermosa Avenue does not appear eligible for listing in the National Register or California Register under Criterion B/2.

The subject property was commissioned by George Stiles who owned the building for less than one year before selling. He appears to have been a serial entrepreneur whose next investment in a Redondo Beach automobile dealership was equally brief before he shifted his attention to real estate sales outside the beach cities area. Stiles lived in Hermosa Beach for only five years before moving to Pasadena. Research on his contributions to the city indicate that they did not rise above participation in various Chamber of Commerce activities. Stiles has no history as a leader or innovator in the automotive industry, the construction industry, or as an individual of note in shaping the new Hermosa Beach community.

CRITERION C/3 (ARCHITECTURE)

901 Hermosa Avenue does not appear to be eligible for listing in the National Register or California Register under Criterion C/3.

901 Hermosa Avenue is a modest example of an early automobile showroom and repair facility, typical of those located on suburban main streets adjacent to streetcar lines in the 1920s. The subject property illustrates the simplest version of the building typology prevalent in outlying areas in the decade before California's exploding car culture led to larger showrooms further from downtown areas. It features a characteristic single-story three-bay glazed façade composition. The subject property's massing, with a stylized streetside showroom fronting a functional rear repair area, illustrates how this early typology complemented and functioned within a typical early twentieth century streetscape. Its siting, which accommodates a driveway, angled corner, and passage through the building for cars, reveals how this early architectural form was manipulated to accommodate automobile circulation. Like other automobile sales and service buildings of the period, its design references a popular local style of the era, Mission Revival; here, it is executed with less elaboration and ornamentation than on more high-style examples. Further, original features

such as side windows and doors have been replaced or infilled. No builder or architect was identified in the course of research, and the property does not possess high artistic value. The modest design of 901 Hermosa Avenue does not rise to the level of architectural distinction required for state or national eligibility under Criterion C/3.

CRITERION D/4 (INFORMATION POTENTIAL)

901 Hermosa Beach does not appear to be eligible under Criterion 4 as a principal source of important construction-related information.

The “potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of California” typically relates to archeological resources, rather than built resources. When California Register Criterion 4 (Information Potential) does relate to built resources, it is relevant for cases when the building itself is the principal source of important construction-related information. Page & Turnbull’s evaluation of this property was limited to age-eligible resources above ground and did not involve survey or evaluation of the subject property for the purposes of archaeological information.

Hermosa Beach Landmarks

To be listed as a Hermosa Beach Landmark, a property must be at least 50 years old and meet one or more of the following criteria:

- A. It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City’s cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, or architectural history; or
- B. It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history; or
- C. It embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or
- D. It is representative of the notable work of a builder, designer, or architect; or
- E. Its unique location or singular physical characteristic(s) represents an established and familiar visual feature or landmark of a neighborhood, community, or the City.

A property that is at least 30 years old may become a Landmark if the City Council determines it is exceptional or threatened by demolition, removal, relocation, or inappropriate alteration.

The following section examines the eligibility of 901 Hermosa Avenue for individual listing as a Hermosa Beach Landmark.

HERMOSA BEACH CRITERION A (SPECIAL ELEMENTS OF THE CITY'S HISTORY)

901 Hermosa Avenue does not appear to be eligible under Hermosa Beach Criterion A.

Research did not show that the building played a role in Hermosa Beach's cultural, social, political, or engineering history. It was one among many commercial establishments along Hermosa Avenue, including three auto sales and service businesses located directly across the avenue, that served the local community without making automotive services a significant economic generator for the city. The subject property is not an exceptional example of the Mission Revival aesthetic and does not contribute to the overall architectural history of Hermosa Beach.

HERMOSA BEACH CRITERION B (PERSONS OR EVENTS)

901 Hermosa Avenue does not appear to be eligible under Hermosa Beach Criterion B.

The original owner, George L. Stiles, appears to be a serial entrepreneur whose association with the subject property and Hermosa Beach was brief and uneventful. General research on subsequent owners did not reveal that any made contributions significant to local, state, or national history. Research did not connect the building to events of significance to local, state, or national history.

HERMOSA BEACH CRITERION C (ARCHITECTURE)

901 Hermosa Avenue appears to be eligible under Hermosa Beach Criterion C.

901 Hermosa Avenue is one of the few remaining commercial properties that date to the early period of Hermosa Beach development and to the 1920s era of automobile retailing. It is an example of an increasingly rare early main street showroom and repair facility in an outlying town. Further, it exhibits site and architectural characteristics of a modest vernacular automotive building form specific to the 1920s, the transitional decade in which auto retailing discarded its previously industrial aesthetic and before it shifted to larger and more suburban facilities. It is distinct from the other remaining automotive building at 832 Hermosa Avenue that represents the industrial appearance associated with automobile service in the nineteen-teens. 901 Hermosa Avenue illustrates how automotive buildings fit into an early twentieth century commercial and streetcar setting, adjusted their form to meet the needs of automobile circulation, developed a distinctive appearance—single-story three-bay façade composition with an extensively glazed display in the front and service at the rear—to convey their business function, and asserted their status by adopting a current architectural style, here a minimal version of Mission Revival. The building continues to convey its original function, form, and aesthetic to illustrate the history of automobile and main street commercial retailing. While the property does not appear to rise to the level of significance for listing in the National Register or California Register, the property is a rare and

distinctive example of a former 1920s automobile showroom and repair facility in Hermosa Beach where very few early twentieth century commercial properties remain extant.

HERMOSA BEACH CRITERION D (BUILDER OR ARCHITECT)

901 Hermosa Avenue does not appear to be eligible under Hermosa Beach Criterion D.

Research did not uncover any information about a particular architect or builder associated with the building.

HERMOSA BEACH CRITERION E (UNIQUE LOCATION OR SINGULAR PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTIC)

901 Hermosa Avenue does not appear to be eligible under Hermosa Beach Criterion E.

While part of the City's downtown commercial streetscape near the ocean and pier, the building has a modest scale. Its angled southeast façade, while a unique response to the need for automotive circulation and service, is not a singular physical characteristic that has made the building an established or familiar visual landmark in the neighborhood or city.

INTEGRITY

In order to qualify for listing in any local, state, or national historic register, a property or landscape must possess significance under at least one evaluative criterion as described above and retain integrity. Integrity is defined by the California Office of Historic Preservation as "the authenticity of an historical resource's physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance," or more simply defined by the National Park Service as "the ability of a property to convey its significance."³⁷

In order to evaluate whether the subject property retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance, Page & Turnbull used established integrity standards outlined by the *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Seven variables, or aspects, that define integrity are used to evaluate a resource's integrity—location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A property must possess most, or all, of these aspects in

³⁷ California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistance Series No. 7: How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of Historical Resources* (Sacramento: California Office of State Publishing, September 4, 2001), 11; and National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1995), 44.

order to retain overall integrity. If a property does not retain integrity, it can no longer convey its significance and is therefore not eligible for listing in local, state, or national registers.

The seven aspects that define integrity are defined as follows:

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

Setting addresses the physical environment of the historic property inclusive of the landscape and spatial relationships of the building(s);

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of the property;

Materials refer to the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form the 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 the property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time; and

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and the historic property.

LOCATION

901 Hermosa Avenue retains integrity of location. The subject property has not been moved from its original site.

SETTING

901 Hermosa Avenue retains integrity of setting. Hermosa Avenue remains a commercial strip and both 9th Street and 10th Court continue to be residential. Although the scale and design of the surrounding properties has changed and the Pacific Electric streetcar line has been removed, these alterations, which are typical of commercial corridor development, have not dramatically altered the spatial relationship of 901 Hermosa Avenue to its setting. The building retains its spatial relationship with Hermosa Avenue, which was key to its original use for automobile service.

DESIGN

901 Hermosa Avenue retains integrity of design. The building continues to exhibit the original footprint, massing, roof form, fenestration, and parapet profile illustrated in the 1922 news article announcing its completion. It retains its position on the sidewalk without a setback, division into front and rear sections, three-bay façade composition, arched window openings, unique glazing pattern, and features reflecting automobile circulation such as service doors, driveway, canopy, and curb cut. Some alterations to the subject property were observed at the time of the site visit including the infill of side and rear windows. These changes are reversible and do not diminish the building's essential qualities as a showroom and repair facility.

MATERIALS

901 Hermosa Avenue retains integrity of materials. The original architectural palette of stucco cladding and glazing within arched openings is intact. Some alterations to the subject property were observed at the time of the site visit including the updating of some glazing, window frames, and doors, within original openings. New wood window framing for the lower units replicates the layout of the original; replaced glazing within the new frames replicates the original window pattern. Door replacement has occurred within original frames and does not detract from the original openings. These changes are reversible and do not diminish the building's essential qualities as a showroom and repair facility.

WORKMANSHIP

The majority of the building's original materials and method of assembly are still visible to illustrate construction of a modest retail building in the early twentieth century. The building has a reasonable level of original workmanship, and early twentieth century details such as the arched fanlight transoms remain extant.

FEELING

901 Hermosa Avenue retains integrity of feeling. With auto circulation accommodated by an angled corner and extant driveway and an intact front showroom façade, it continues to express the aesthetics and form of an early automobile retail and repair facility in a main street retail district.

ASSOCIATION

901 Hermosa Avenue retains integrity of association. It maintains its relationship to the street with its distinctive three-part façade and angled corner continues to convey its original use as an automobile-related business.

Overall, 901 Hermosa Avenue retains all seven aspects of integrity for local listing.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is state legislation (Pub. Res. Code §21000 et seq.) that provides for the development and maintenance of a high-quality environment for the present-day and future through the identification of significant environmental effects.³⁸ CEQA applies to “projects” proposed to be undertaken or requiring approval from state or local government agencies.³⁹ “Projects” are defined as “activities which have the potential to have a physical impact on the environment and may include the enactment of zoning ordinances, the issuance of conditional use permits and the approval of tentative subdivision maps.”⁴⁰ Historic and cultural resources are considered to be part of the environment. In general, the lead agency must complete the environmental review process as required by CEQA. In the case of a proposed project at 901 Hermosa Avenue, the City of Hermosa Beach will act as the lead agency.

STATUS AS A HISTORICAL RESOURCE UNDER CEQA

In completing an analysis of a project under CEQA, it must first be determined if the project site possesses a historical resource. A site may qualify as a historical resource if it falls within at least one of four categories listed in California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14, Section 15064.5(a). The four categories are:

1. A resource listed in, or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission, for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (Pub. Res. Code SS5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4850 et seq.).
2. A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in Section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1 (g) of the Public Resources Code, shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.
3. Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering,

³⁸ Public Resources Code (PRC), Section 21000 et seq.

³⁹ Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines), California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.

⁴⁰ 14 CCR § 15378: Project.

scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California may be considered to be an historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record. Generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be "historically significant" if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (Pub. Res. Code SS5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4852).

4. The fact that a resource is not listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, not included in a local register of historical resources (pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the Pub. Resources Code), or identified in an historical resources survey (meeting the criteria in section 5024.1(g) of the Pub. Resources Code) does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be an historical resource as defined in Pub. Resources Code sections 5020.1(j) or 5024.1.

In general, a resource that meets any of the four criteria listed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a) is considered to be a historical resource unless "the preponderance of evidence demonstrates" that the resource "is not historically or culturally significant."⁴¹

The subject property at 901 Hermosa Avenue is not currently listed in the California Register and this HRA finds that the property is not eligible for listing in the California Register. The property is not included in a local register of historic resources, nor has it been included in a survey meeting the requirements of PRC § 5024.1(g).⁴² Therefore, 901 Hermosa Avenue does not appear to meet the thresholds for status as a historical resource under CEQA.

⁴¹ 14 CCR § 15064.5(a)(2).

⁴² Refer also to **Section II. Existing Historic Status** of this report relative to 14 CCR § 15064.5(a)(2) and PRC § 5024.1(g).

VII. CONCLUSION

Constructed in 1922 as a vernacular commercial automobile showroom and repair facility with Mission Revival style features, 901 Hermosa Avenue was previously identified as potentially eligible for local landmark designation in a 2014 windshield survey. This HRA finds that the property remains eligible for local listing. However, the property does not rise to the level of significance require to meet the eligibility criteria for individual listing in the National Register or the California Register.

Per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (14 CCR § 15064.5(a)), as 901 Hermosa Avenue is not currently listed in a local register of historic resources or in the California Register, and is not eligible for listing in the California Register, the property is not a historic resource for the purposes of the CEQA.⁴³

⁴³ 14 CCR § 15064.5(a).

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IX. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Preparer Qualifications

This Historic Resource Evaluation was prepared by Page & Turnbull of Los Angeles, California. Page & Turnbull staff responsible for this report include Christina Dikas, Principal-in-charge; Hannah Simonson, Senior Associate, Cultural Resources Planner, project manager; and Stephanie Hodal, Cultural Resources Planner, primary author, all of whom meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for Architectural History.

Appendix B – 2014 DPR Form for 901 Hermosa Avenue

PRIMARY RECORD

Other Listings
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

Page of Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder)

P1. Other Identifier:

P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

a. County *Los Angeles*

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

b. USGS 7.5' Quad Date T ; R ; 1/4 of 1/4 of Sec ; B.M.

c. Address: 901 Hermosa Ave City Hermosa Beach Zip 90254

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone ; mE/ mN

e. Other Locational Data (e.g. Parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

Parcel No. 4187-003-028

P3 Description: (Describe resources and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, and boundaries)

This one-story commercial building maintains its integrity and is potentially eligible as a good example of the Art Deco/Moderne style.

P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) *HP 6. 1-3 story commercial building*

P4. Resources Present: Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other (Isolates, etc.)



P5b Description of Photo:
(View, date, accession #)
North West, 12/12/13

P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:
 Prehistoric Historic Both
1928

P7. Owner Address:

P8. Recorded by:
(Name, affiliation, and address)

*PCR Services
201 Santa Monica Blvd, Ste 500
Santa Monica, CA 90401*

P9. Date Recorded: *1/1/2014*

P10. Survey Type: (Describe)
Windshield Reconnaissance

P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

Hermosa Beach General Plan Update, 2014

Attachments: NONE Continuation Sheet District Record Rock Art Record
 Location Map Building, Structure, and Object Record Linear Feature Record Artifact Record
 Sketch Map Archaeological Record Milling Station Record Photograph Record
 Other: (List)



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