

### 3.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section describes the existing setting of the project site and vicinity, identifies associated regulatory requirements, evaluates potential impacts, and identifies mitigation measures related to implementation of the proposed project. The analysis of the potential project impacts related to historical resources is summarized from the *Robertson Lane Hotel and Commercial Development Project, Historic Resources Technical Report*, prepared by Architectural Resources Group. This report is included as Appendix D of this EIR.

#### 3.3.1 Environmental Setting

Locally, the project site is situated on an alluvial apron at the base of the Hollywood Hills known as the La Brea Plain. Fill materials underlying the project site consist of silty sands to sandy and clayey silts, which are dark brown in color, moist, medium dense to stiff, fine grained, with occasional construction debris. Fill thickness ranging from 2 to 5 feet was encountered in the exploratory borings and test pits. Native soils consist of stratified layers of silty sands, clayey sands, sands, and sandy clays. The native soils are brown, dark gray and grayish brown in color, moist to wet, medium dense to dense, stiff, fine to medium grained. The native soils consist predominantly of sediments deposited by river and stream action typical to this area of Los Angeles County (Geotechnologies, Inc. 2014).

The project area built environment consists of a densely developed urban landscape with no remnants of any natural environmental setting. The northern portion of the project area contains a paved parking lot bounded by commercial development to the north and west. The central portion of the project area contains a large industrial building (i.e., “The Factory” which currently houses a nightclub, restaurant, and commercial space) that extends across the project area from La Peer Drive on the west to Robertson Boulevard on the east. Another paved parking area for this building is located in the southwest corner of the project area. The southeast portion of the project area consists of retail space for several commercial businesses. The southern portion of the project area is bordered by additional commercial development to the south.

#### Existing Conditions

##### *CHRIS Record Search*

Dudek requested a search of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC), located on the campus of California State University, Fullerton. Dudek received the search results on October 13, 2014. The search included any previously recorded cultural resources and investigations within a 0.5-mile radius of the project area. The CHRIS search also included a review of the National Register of Historic

Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historic Places (CRHP), the California Points of Historical Interest list, the California Historical Landmarks list, the Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility list, and the California State Historic Resources Inventory list. A letter from the SCCIC summarizing the results of the records search, along with a bibliography of prior cultural resources studies, is provided in the Appendix D.

#### Previously Conducted Cultural Resources Studies

Fifteen cultural resources studies have been previously conducted within a 0.5-mile radius of the project area (Table 3.3-1). One of these studies (LA-10568) overlaps the current project area and is discussed in greater detail. A brief description of this study and its findings is provided below. An additional three previously conducted studies (LA-01968, -03525, and -03765) occurred adjacent to the northwest side of the project area along Santa Monica Boulevard, but they did not include any portion of the current study area. Appendix D provides a detailed report bibliography from the SCCIC.

**Table 3.3-1  
Previously Conducted Cultural Resources Studies Within 0.5 Mile of the Project Area**

SCCIC Report No.	Title of Study	Author(s) and Date	Proximity to Project Area
LA-00236	Report of Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey of the Proposed West Hollywood Civic Center Esa Project #8178 West Hollywood, California	Salls, Roy A. 1988	Outside (0.15 mile to northeast)
LA-00847	Surveyed a 1/4 Acre Lot on the Northwest Corner of San Vicente Blvd. and Beverly Blvd.	Botkin, Steven G. 1973	Outside (0.5 mile to southeast)
LA-01968	Cultural Resources Literature Review of Metro Rail Red Line Western Extension Alternatives, Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California	Bissell, Ronald M. 1989	Adjacent to northwest portion of project area
LA-02271	An Archaeological Assessment of the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center -located Adjacent to San Vicente Blvd. in the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County	White, Robert S. 1991	Outside (0.4 mile to southeast)
LA-03525	Ucas-092 Route 2 Freeway Los Angeles County West, Los Angeles, Beverly Hills	Chartkoff, Kerry and Joe 1966	Adjacent to northwest portion of project area
LA-03678	Request for Determination of Eligibility for Inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places	Anonymous (no date)	Outside (0.2 mile to southwest)
LA-03679	Request for Determination of Eligibility for Inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places	Anonymous (no date)	Outside (0.2 mile to southwest)
LA-03680	Request for Determination of Eligibility for Inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places	Anonymous (no date)	Outside (0.2 mile to southwest)

**Table 3.3-1  
Previously Conducted Cultural Resources Studies Within 0.5 Mile of the Project Area**

SCCIC Report No.	Title of Study	Author(s) and Date	Proximity to Project Area
LA-03765	Historic Property Survey 07 La 02 P.m. 3.65/9.57 Route 405 to Fairfax Avenue Los Angeles County California 07204-051280	Casen, George (no date)	Adjacent to northwest portion of project area
LA-04553	Cultural Resource Assessment for Pacific Bell Mobile Services Facility La 619-06, in the County of Los Angeles, California	Duke, Curt 1999	Outside (0.3 to southeast)
LA-06128	Cultural Resource Assessment Cingular Wireless Facility No. Sm 014-01 Los Angeles County, California	Duke, Curt 2001	Outside (0.45 mile to east)
LA-08095	Cultural Resource Assessment the Melrose Triangle Project, City of West Hollywood, Los Angeles County, California	Carmack, Shannon and Judith Marvin 2004	Outside (0.1 mile to southwest)
LA-10568	City of West Hollywood Historic Resources Survey 1986-1987 Final Report	Unknown of Johnson Heumann Research Associates 1987	<b>Within</b> (city-wide survey)
LA-11005	Westside Subway Extension Historic Property Survey Report and Cultural Resources Technical Report	Unknown of Cogstone 2010	Outside (0.1 mile to east)
LA-11383	Cultural Resource Records Search and Site Survey and Historic Architectural Resource-Inventory and Assessment -AT&T Site: EL0417-10 8950 Beverly Boulevard, West Hollywood, Los Angeles County, California 90210 CASPR #3551016879	Loftus, Shannon 2011	Outside (0.4 mile to south)

### LA-10568

Between 1986 and 1987, Johnson Heumann Research Associates prepared the *City of West Hollywood Historic Resources Survey (1986-1987)*. This city-wide survey/inventory of West Hollywood's historic resources was conducted with a grant from the State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), which the City applied for in 1985. As a result of the study, 118 buildings (including 47 individual properties and 7 groupings of buildings) were documented. One building within the current project area was identified as a result of this survey: 652 La Peer Drive (the Mitchell Camera Manufacturing Company building). The final report on file with the State OHP lists this building with a NRHP status code of 3 (an outdated code that means the property appears eligible for the NRHP by the person completing or reviewing the form). The updated status code is reflected in the current California State Historic Resources Inventory list, which lists this property as a 3S (an individual property that appears eligible for the NRHP).

### Previously Recorded Cultural Resources

Fifteen previously recorded cultural resources were identified within a 0.5-mile radius of the project area (Table 3.3-2). One of these resources (19-176819) is located within the current

project area. This resource consists of the former Mitchell Camera Manufacturing Company factory building, which occupies the central portion of the proposed project area. No prehistoric or historic archaeological resources were identified within the 0.5-mile radius as a result of the records search. A detailed listing of each previously recorded resource is provided in Appendix D.

**Table 3.3-2**  
**Previously Recorded Cultural Resources Within 0.5 Mile of the Project Area**

Primary Number	Resource Description	Recorded By/Year	NRHP/CRHR Eligibility Status	Proximity to Project Area
19-175985	Historic: West Hollywood Elementary	McAvoy, C. 1996	Unknown	Outside (0.38 mile north)
19-176742	Historic: Lloyd Wright Home & Studio	Wright, E. 1986	1S (NRHP listed)	Outside (0.3 mile northwest)
19-17657	Historic: Pacific Design Center	Gustafson, A. 2001 and URS Corp 2010	7N (reevaluate)	Outside (715 feet east)
19-176819	Historic: Mitchell Camera Manufacturing Co, Studio One.	Amorena, D. 1987	3S (appears eligible for NRHP)	<b>Within</b>
19-176871	Historic: Craftsman Grouping	Amorena, D. 1987	5S2 (appears eligible for local designation)	Outside (0.45 mile northeast)
19-176900	Historic: Stop Bar	Amorena, D. 1987	5D2 (contributor to eligible local district)	Outside (0.5 mile north)
19-176905	Historic: 8866-8878 Sunset Blvd.	Amorena, D. 1987	5D2 (contributor to eligible local district)	Outside (0.5 mile north)
19-176909	Historic: Sunset Strip District	Amorena, D. 1987	5S2 (appears eligible for local designation)	Outside (0.5 mile north)
19-177327	Historic: Beverly Gardens Park District	Lortie, M. 1985	2S2 (NRHP-eligible)	Outside (0.2 mile southwest)
19-187323	Historic: 633 N. Almont Dr.	Marvin, J. and Carmack, S. 2004	6Z (found ineligible)	Outside (440 feet southwest)
19-187324	Historic: 9080 Santa Monica Blvd.	Marvin, J. and Carmack, S. 2004	3CS (appears eligible for CRHR)	Outside (785 feet southwest)
19-189252	Historic: San Vicente Branch Library	URS Corp 2010	Unknown	Outside (360 feet east)
19-189255	Historic: 8703 Santa Monica Blvd.	URS Corp 2010	Unknown	Outside (0.4 mile northeast)
19-189798	Historic: ELO417-10 Light Pole	Loftus, S. 2011	Unknown	Outside (0.35 mile south)
19-189801	Historic: ELO417-9 Light Pole	Loftus, S. 2011	Unknown	Outside (0.5 mile southwest)

### *Native American Coordination*

Because the proposed project would result in the amendment of the General Plan Land Use designation, the City of West Hollywood is required to comply with Senate Bill (SB) 18 (California Government Code, Sections 65352.3 and 65352.4), which requires that the City consult with applicable Native American tribes/groups/individuals before the adoption or amendment of a general or specific plan. The SB 18 contact list was requested from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on October 13, 2014. Initially, the NAHC faxed a response on October 22, 2014. Because several of the contacts provided were well outside the current project area, a revised list was subsequently requested from the NAHC. The revised NAHC response and contact list was received on December 24, 2014. The Sacred Lands File search “failed to indicate the presence of Native American cultural resources in the immediate project area,” but it was noted that other sources should also be contacted for additional information. The SB 18 consultation list was provided to the City, who mailed letters to each of the contacts provided. No significant issues were raised as a result of the SB-18 consultation process. Because SB 18 is a government-to-government process, all records of correspondence related to SB 18 consultation are on file with the City of West Hollywood.

Note: Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), which includes additional Native American tribal consultation provisions, does not apply to projects for which a lead agency issued a notice of preparation of an EIR prior to July 1, 2015. The notice of preparation for the proposed project was distributed on December 11, 2014; therefore, the AB 52 requirements do not apply to this project.

### *Cultural Resources Survey*

An intensive pedestrian survey of the project area was conducted by Dudek on March 5, 2015. The purpose of the survey was to identify, record, and evaluate any cultural resources located within the project area. Because the entire project area is developed, intensive archaeological survey methods (i.e., parallel transects) were not warranted. No archaeological resources were identified as a result of the survey. A survey for historic built environment resources was conducted by Architectural Resources Group in 2016 (see Appendix D). A total of four buildings constructed over 45 years ago were identified within the project area. Table 3.3-3 provides a breakdown of all parcels and buildings within the project area.

**Table 3.3-3  
Buildings Located Within the Project Area**

APN	Street Address	Current Use	Built Date (per Assessor)
4336-009-003	n/a	Parking lot	1967
4336-009-004	n/a	Parking lot	1967

**Table 3.3-3  
Buildings Located Within the Project Area**

APN	Street Address	Current Use	Built Date (per Assessor)
4336-009-005	n/a	Parking lot	1967
4336-010-005	645-653 Robertson Blvd.	645 Robertson Blvd: vacant storefront 647 Robertson Blvd: Raphael (retail) 653 Robertson Blvd: The Digital Concierge (retail)	1945
4336-009-006	655-657 Robertson Blvd.	655 Robertson Blvd: Phyllis Morris & Circa (retail) 657 Robertson Blvd: Christian Louboutin (retail)	1941
4336-009-007	665 Robertson Blvd.	665 Robertson Blvd: The Pearl (closed restaurant)	1941
4336-009-007	661 Robertson Blvd./ 650-652 N. La Peer Dr.	661 Robertson Blvd: Ultra Suede (nightclub) 650 La Peer Dr.: Fitness Factory (gym) 652 La Peer Dr.: The Factory (nightclub)	1929

### Description of Identified Resources

#### 645-653 North Robertson Boulevard

645-653 Robertson Boulevard is located on a rectilinear parcel that spans half the length of the block located between Robertson Boulevard and La Peer Drive. The parcel is flanked by a small driveway (accessed by a curb cut from Robertson Boulevard) and landscaped parking lot to the north, servicing 655-657 Robertson Boulevard. It abuts a commercial building at 641 Robertson Boulevard on the south. The topography slopes slightly south, but is generally flat.

The property contains a one-story building, constructed circa 1945, with a one-story, double-height addition at its east (primary) elevation, constructed between 2004 and 2005. The building is rectangular in shape; the original portion is set back on the lot, while the addition is flush with the sidewalk along Robertson Boulevard. It is fronted by foundation plantings and mature Italian cypress trees. The addition is largely clad with stucco, though a projecting entrance portal is constructed of exposed concrete. The building has a flat roof with a parapet, and a slatted wood screen that appears to enclose mechanical equipment. The primary façade faces east and is symmetrical in configuration; it features a storefront assembly of fixed metal windows and a central entrance of paired, fully glazed metal doors. A sign is affixed to the center of the façade above the entrance. The north façade, which faces the shared driveway and parking lot, is bordered by a staircase with a low slope and wide treads leading to a pedestrian walkway along the rear (west) portion of the building. An additional entrance features a single metal door, fully glazed. The rear portion of the building constitutes the original 1945 building. Due to the large addition on the front, the original building is only partially visible from the public right-of-way and features a lower roofline.

As evidenced by historic aerial photographs, the large addition was constructed at the primary (east) façade between 2004 and 2005. Additional alterations, as observed from the site visit, include modification of the storefront, recladding on the rear (original) building, and replacement of all windows and doors. (Appendix D)

655-657 North Robertson Boulevard

The building at 655-657 Robertson Boulevard occupies a rectilinear parcel that appears to be double the width of parcels typically found on the block. It spans half the length of the block located between Robertson Boulevard and La Peer Drive. The parcel is flanked on the north and south by landscaped parking lots, accessed by driveways with curb cuts extending from Robertson Boulevard. Though Robertson Boulevard gradually slopes south, the parcel itself is generally flat.

The one-story building is slightly set back on the parcel and is fronted by foundation plantings (including shrubs and other vegetation) and young Italian cypress trees. Constructed circa 1952, the building features an irregular plan. It is clad with various materials including stucco, cut stone veneer and textured tile, and is capped with a flat roof; a screen on the roof appears to enclose mechanical equipment. The primary façade faces east and is characterized by a narrow, double-height wing (herein referred to as the east wing) that projects east from the rest of the building, which is deeply recessed on the lot. A small, single-height wing is appended to the south façade of the east wing and defines the eastern boundary of the south parking lot. The double-height portion of the east façade is symmetrical in configuration; a single-height, concrete entrance portal projects from the center of the façade. The primary entrance is recessed behind a decorative metal gate shaded by a fabric awning. Fenestration comprises fixed metal windows with fabric awnings and transoms. The storefront features fixed metal windows that are slightly recessed and flanked on either side by smooth concrete columns. An identical, single-height edifice sits at the northeast corner of the lot, detached from the main building. The recessed portion of the main building comprises the western boundaries of the north and south parking lots on either side of the east wing. The east façades of this portion of the building are clad with stucco and feature a vertical strip of applied stone veneer on the end bays. The building can be entered on either side of the east wing from the parking lots; entrances are characterized by double metal doors that are fully glazed, flanked by a sidelight and shaded by a fabric awning.

The lot on which the building sits was previously occupied by a different building that was constructed in 1941 and destroyed by a fire in 1951. The current building on site was constructed soon after. City permits revealed the following alterations to the current building:

- **2003:** existing furniture factory renovated into a furniture showroom; mezzanines added (B03-3357)
- **2004:** foundation footings for mezzanines added (B04-3905)

- **2012:** steps removed; doorways enclosed (B12-000-390)
- **2012:** tenant improvements to retail store (B12-000-516)
- **Circa 2011-2014:** storefront remodeled; cladding replaced with textured tile (Appendix D)

661-665 North Robertson Boulevard/648 North La Peer Drive

The parcel at 661-665 Robertson Boulevard/648 La Peer Drive is L-shaped and spans the width of a city block, with frontage on both La Peer Drive and Robertson Boulevard. Like the surrounding area, the parcel's overall topography has a slight northwesterly slope. To the north and south of the two-story building, along the west side of the property, are surface parking lots. Each of the parking lots is partially enclosed by a concrete block wall and is accessed via curb cuts along La Peer Drive and Robertson Boulevard. The north and south property lines both abut adjacent buildings.

The parcel is occupied by a two-story industrial building (the Factory building) and adjoining one-story office building, both of which were constructed in 1929 as a manufacturing plant and office for the Mitchell Camera Corporation. The Factory building spans the length of the parcel, with frontage on both La Peer Drive and Robertson Boulevard, and is slightly set back from both streets. The one-story office building faces Robertson Boulevard, projecting in front of the Factory building to the property line. The Factory building assumes a utilitarian aesthetic. While the main section of the building is linear in plan and oriented on an east-west axis, a volume that projects from its north elevation ("north projection") gives it a T-shaped footprint. The building sits on a concrete foundation; its east portion (facing Robertson Boulevard) sits atop an elevated basement that is constructed of poured-in-place concrete and is confined to the east (Robertson) side of the building. The office building originally had a simplified Art Deco appearance, but has been significantly altered to the extent that its original design cannot be discerned. Landscaping is sparse and is limited to small shrubs and hedges inside the patio on the east (Robertson) elevation. Various street trees are planted in the parkways along La Peer Drive and Robertson Boulevard.

The Factory building is of a modular design and is constructed almost entirely of prefabricated steel. It features a free-flowing interior plan and fireproof structural system. The building is of steel frame construction, with steel beams and joists between the first and second floors and steel trusses supporting the roof. Exterior walls are clad with embossed steel panels. Capping the building is a low-pitched monitor roof with overhanging eaves. Along either side of the monitor roof is a horizontal band of clerestory windows that spans the length of the building. The clerestory windows on the west (La Peer) side of the building are multi-light industrial steel sash windows and those on the east (Robertson) side are fixed, single-light windows that are not original to the building. The north projection is capped by an identical roof structure, also with overhanging eaves and a raised monitor roof containing horizontal bands of steel sash windows.



The west elevation, facing La Peer Drive, is symmetrically composed. At its center are three non-original metal doors that are fully glazed and flush with the profile of the building. These doors are sheltered by a metal canopy that projects from the building and is supported by four metal posts. Immediately south of these three doors is a large sliding metal door that provides access to an interior freight elevator. Along the upper story is a band of multi-light industrial steel sash windows, all of which have been painted over, that wrap around the building's north and south elevations to create a continuous, uninterrupted band of fenestration. A metal fire escape ladder is appended to the south end of the west elevation. Adjacent to the entrance are two concrete masonry unit walls that are appended to the building at an angle and extend out to the west property line along La Peer Drive. The wall located to the south of the entranceway encloses a small patio.

Historical photographs indicate that the east (Robertson Boulevard) elevation historically served as the building's primary entrance when it was constructed in 1929. A pair of metal doors at the south end of the east elevation lead into the basement, while a second entrance located on the upper story and accessed by an exterior metal staircase consists of a non-original metal sliding door. Several multi-light industrial steel sash windows are also found on the concrete basement wall and are covered by metal grilles. Much of the east elevation is enclosed by a concrete masonry unit wall that creates a small patio. This wall is punctuated by two sets of fully glazed doors with divided lights.

The north elevation features single unarticulated metal doors that function as secondary exits and are flush with the face of the building. This elevation includes the north projection, which is perforated by multi-light steel sash windows.

Appended to the west face of the north projection (facing La Peer Drive) is a small, single-story wood frame addition with a low-pitched shed roof, overhanging eaves, exposed rafters, and a single entrance with a security door.

The south elevation is similar in appearance, though several of the original steel windows near the east side of the south elevation have been replaced with single-light windows. Many, but not all of the original steel windows have been painted over. Several entrances to the building are located on the south elevation including a single, partially-glazed door with a fabric awning; a metal roll-up door; and two unarticulated metal doors that function as secondary exits. An exterior metal staircase grants access to the building's second story. A small, wood-framed addition is appended to the south elevation and abuts an adjacent building to the south.

The one-story office building abuts the Factory building's north façade and extends to the eastern property line. The building was constructed in 1929 to house the Mitchell Camera factory's office and administrative functions, and originally featured simple Art Deco design. In 1940, a two-story office addition was appended to the rear (west) façade of the office building. It was

adaptively reused as a restaurant in the 1970s and since that time has been extensively altered in such a way that its original appearance is unrecognizable. Permitted alterations to the office building included an interior remodel to accommodate new restrooms, two bars and a dance floor (1978); the addition of a storage room (1998) and a detached office (1999); and an interior renovation and exterior canopy addition (2000). The east (primary) façade of the building was remodeled in 2008 such that there are no remaining original Art Deco features.

The Factory building has had numerous uses and occupants over time, and has been altered to accommodate changes in use. Some of these changes are associated with significant periods of the building's history, and certain alterations associated with those periods are considered to have attained significance in their own right. The following description of the building's construction and alteration history places changes to the building within the chronology of the building's identified periods of significance.

The Factory building endured few alterations during its original use as the Mitchell Camera Corporation factory (1929-1946). These alterations include the following:

- **1940:** Construction of a two-story office building at its north elevation, west (to the rear) of the 1929 office building.
- **1942:** Addition of employee restrooms and locker rooms.
- **1943:** Construction of a one-story building assumed to be the adjacent plumbing and woodworking building at the northwest corner of the property (no longer extant).

Alterations made to the building between its period of significance as the Mitchell Camera Corporation factory and its period of significance as Studio One (1974-1992) include the following:

- **1952:** Addition of a loading dock to the building's south elevation

No permits are available (or legible) for the period immediately before and during which the building was used as the Studio One discotheque. However, several additional alterations were identified through an inspection of the property, an assessment of historic photographs, and additional property-specific research:

- Complete alteration of the Mitchell Camera Corporation office building. This building, which was constructed in 1929 as a one-story Art Deco building to house the Factory building's office and administrative functions, has been modified in such a way that it does not retain any of its original Art Deco features.
- The modification of the front (east, or Robertson Boulevard) façade of the factory, including removal of Mitchell Camera Corporation signage, removal of original Truscon windows (replaced with incompatible single- light windows), the addition of a second-

story nightclub entrance, the addition of an exterior staircase, and the construction of a patio area accessed via French doors.

- Addition of the south elevation to accommodate another commercial entrance.
- The modification of the west façade to accommodate a new nightclub entrance. The Studio One entrance was fronted by a fabric canopy; this canopy has been removed and replaced with a large steel canopy.
- Numerous interior alterations throughout the history of the building, although little is known about the extent and dates of these modifications (Appendix D).

### ***Previously Evaluated Resources within the Project Area***

A search of the California Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) and City of West Hollywood’s historic resources surveys and designated Cultural Resources revealed that the buildings located at 645-653 Robertson Boulevard and 655- 657 Robertson have not been previously surveyed or identified as potential historic resources.

The Factory building at 652 La Peer Drive/661-665 Robertson Boulevard has been previously evaluated for historical significance. A search of the HRI and City of West Hollywood documents revealed the following:

- Between 1986 and 1987, the preservation firm of Johnson Heumann Research Associates conducted a citywide survey of historic resources within the City of West Hollywood, funded by a grant from the State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO). Survey findings identified 118 significant or potentially significant buildings. The survey gave the property at 652 La Peer Drive (the Factory building) a 5 status code, which (at the time) indicated the building was “worthy of consideration under a future local ordinance.” However, the final report on file with the SHPO assigns the building a 3 status code, also outdated, which preliminarily found that the building was potentially eligible for the National Register “by the person completing or reviewing the form.” The property currently has a code 3S in the HRI, reflecting this finding.
- In 1994, staff from the West Hollywood Department of Community Development filed an application for the nomination of the Factory building as a West Hollywood Cultural Resource, based upon the finding of the 1987 survey. The City of West Hollywood’s Cultural Heritage Advisory Board (CHAB) adopted Resolution No. CHAB 91-14, recommending that the City Council deny the designation of the building as a local resource. In 1995, the City Council reviewed the CHAB staff report and denied the designation, citing the following:
  1. While the structure at 652 La Peer Drive/665 Robertson Boulevard once housed an industry important to the City and to the region in general, the structure itself does not

- contribute to this importance; therefore, the structure does not exemplify special elements of the City’s cultural, social, and architectural history, nor does it possess integrity of location, design, feeling, and association.
2. The structure is of an undistinguished industrial design, which has further been significantly altered on the interior.
  3. While these buildings once housed an important manufacturer of movie cameras in the early years of the film industry, there is nothing about the structure or design of these buildings that contributed to this importance. Further, the interior of the building has been significantly altered.
  4. The builder, designer, and architect are unknown (Appendix D).

## **Historic Context**

### ***Early History of West Hollywood and Environs***

Like many Southern California communities, what is now the City of West Hollywood was originally inhabited by the Gabrieleño/Tongva, a Native American people whose roots in the region run deep. The area’s indigenous settlers are believed to have resided at the base of several canyons that meander up into the Hollywood Hills. During the Spanish (1769-1821) and Mexican (1821-1848) colonial periods, almost all of California was partitioned into a series of expansive land grants, or ranchos, which were conferred to an elite class of early Californians and used primarily for cattle and sheep grazing. Almost all of West Hollywood was located in what was known as Rancho La Brea, which encompassed an area roughly bounded by Robertson, Sunset, and Wilshire Boulevards and Gower Street. A sliver of the city fell within the adjacent Rancho Rodeo de las Aguas, which extended west into present-day Beverly Hills. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the area became known as the Cahuenga Valley and was used primarily for the cultivation of citrus and various other cash crops. Much of the area was owned at the time by Thomas and Leander Quint, nephews of eminent land surveyor John Hancock.

The West Hollywood community’s roots can be traced to the construction of an interurban rail line at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1895, transit tycoons and brothers-in-law Moses H. Sherman and Eli P. Clark set out to build an electric rail line between Los Angeles and Santa Monica as a notable addition to their expansive streetcar empire. The Santa Monica Line, as the route was known, would chart an east-west course between the two cities by way of the Cahuenga Valley, along what is now Santa Monica Boulevard. As part of this endeavor, Sherman and Clark acquired 5.56 acres near the geographic center of the line (now the corner of Santa Monica and San Vicente Boulevards) and erected a power plant and rail yard, which “contained all the equipment necessary to build and repair the line’s railroad cars.” The maintenance plant was named Sherman Yards, and the surrounding area also became known as Sherman. The Santa Monica Line opened in 1896 as part of the Pasadena and Pacific Railway Company.

The town of Sherman was conceived in response to the need to house workers who built and repaired the cars and equipment associated with the rail line. “Its first residents were the engineers, railway workers, carpenters, conductors, and maintenance crews on the line,” who lived in vernacular cottages that were interspersed throughout the town’s five blocks. However, by the turn of the twentieth century Sherman had experienced a period of marked growth and witnessed the construction of many new dwellings, as well as a commercial strip and post office along Santa Monica Boulevard. By the 1910s, boosters began to promote the town for its development potential, touting its mild climate and idyllic location.

The 1920s proved to be a particularly prosperous period for Los Angeles and its environs, and Sherman was no exception. By this time, it had shed its roots as a peripheral railroad town and had matured into a robust settlement with an increasingly diverse population base and economy. Throughout the decade Sherman’s population swiftly and regularly increased, sometimes doubling in a single year. Various factors coalesced to catalyze the town’s maturation, but a particularly powerful agent of growth was the rise of the entertainment industry in nearby Hollywood, which attracted more and more newcomers to Sherman and “joined the railroad as the second major source of employment within the community.” Bit by bit the boundaries of Sherman shifted east while those of Hollywood gravitated west, culminating in a blurring of lines between the two communities.

With this rapid growth came increased pressure for Sherman to consider annexation to Los Angeles, as Hollywood had elected to do, but an annexation proposal was strongly opposed and resolutely rejected by the local electorate in 1924. Shortly thereafter, an effort was spearheaded to change the town’s name to reflect its coming-of-age and underscore the allure of its location. In 1925, Sherman changed its name to West Hollywood to capitalize on the glamour and fame of its eastern neighbor. It would remain an unincorporated community until 1984. (Appendix D)

### ***Early Development of Sherman/West Hollywood***

In the formative years of Sherman, development consisted almost entirely of modest residences that were primarily inhabited by those employed at the Sherman yards or were otherwise affiliated with Sherman and Clark’s Los Angeles and Pacific Railroad. Early development was confined to those streets comprising the original subdivision, which included Clark (now San Vicente Boulevard), Sherman (now Santa Monica Boulevard), Cynthia, Palm, and Larrabee.

By 1910, the fledgling settlement had witnessed its first period of punctuated growth and now boasted a permanent population of 900. A significant number of new dwellings had been constructed on the residential blocks that stretched north of Santa Monica Boulevard and the Sherman Yards, helping to fill in the town’s once-sparse blocks. Almost all of these dwellings were one story, single- family bungalows and cottages that were modest in scale and vernacular in appearance. Rounding out this early phase of growth was a single-room schoolhouse at the

corner of Clark Street (San Vicente Boulevard) and Harratt Street, and several small commercial edifices on Sherman Avenue (Santa Monica Boulevard) that formed the town's commercial core. Housed within these buildings was an eclectic mix of enterprises that provided for residents' daily needs: "two restaurants, three grocery stores, two barbershops, two pool halls, a bank, cobbler, ice cream parlor, Chinese laundry, church, hotel, drugstore, and post office."

Initially dominated by rail operations, the economic character of Sherman underwent a notable shift upon the conception of Southern California's film and entertainment industry in the 1910s. By decade's end, the industry had blossomed, and new studio plants had sprouted up in the nearby communities of Edendale, Culver City, and Hollywood. Some of these plants – specifically those in Hollywood – were located near Sherman and would prove to have an impact on the economy and development patterns of the small town. Two in the vicinity of Sherman were Charlie Chaplin Studios (now Jim Henson Studios) near La Brea Avenue and Sunset Boulevard, built in 1917, and Jesse Durham Hampton's studio at the corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Formosa Avenue, built circa 1918, which became the Pickford-Fairbanks Production Studio in 1922 and is now known as The Lot.

The rise of the local film industry, coupled with Los Angeles' prevailing sense of prosperity in the 1920s, brought scores of newcomers to the Hollywood area. Many of these new arrivals elected to settle in nearby communities including Sherman, and by the early 1920s the once-peripheral railroad town was experiencing marked population growth. "In 1921, more than 1,000 lots were sold," and new dwellings were erected at an unprecedented rate. This pattern of growth continued as the decade progressed.

By the 1920s, Sherman had shed its roots as a working-class railroad town and had matured into a more established and well-rounded community. As the town was unincorporated and lacked an authoritative municipal body, stakeholders coalesced to form a Chamber of Commerce in 1920 that lobbied County officials for much-needed services and undertook a variety of civic improvement efforts. Among the Chamber's earliest and most consequential endeavors involved the 1924 widening of Santa Monica Boulevard, "a project which involved the moving and rebuilding of almost every commercial structure in town. A major facelift was given to most of the major business establishments at the time." The Chamber published promotional pamphlets touting the merits of the community, and played a hand in squelching an annexation proposal in 1924 and the rebranding of Sherman as West Hollywood in 1925.

The character of development in Sherman/West Hollywood evolved as the community came of age. The 1920s witnessed the construction of significant new institutions including a new fire station on Hancock Avenue (1926) and county library branch on Westbourne Avenue (1929) to keep pace with the growing population. The community also saw the beginnings of industrial development at this time as several manufacturers erected facilities along the Santa Monica Boulevard corridor,

particularly in the areas adjacent to the Sherman Yards on its west end and the motion picture plants on its east end. The arrival of new industries helped to bolster and diversify the local economy by adding jobs and infusing the area with new economic engines (Appendix D).

### ***Industrial Development Related to the Motion Picture Industry***

With existing rail infrastructure at Sherman Yards, West Hollywood was capable of supporting industrial development introduced by the rise of the film industry. Hollywood had been established as the birthplace of the film industry with the locally-filmed production of DW Griffith's *In Old California* in 1910. Shortly after, Cecil B. DeMille shot *The Squaw Man* in the burgeoning community. In 1916, Triangle Film Company filmed *Casey at the Bat* at West Hollywood's own Sherman Field; beginning in 1920, Union Film Company was regularly filming pictures in West Hollywood. By the 1920s, entire movie studios had moved their operations to Hollywood, and industry giants such as Warner Brothers Pictures, Paramount, Metro Goldwin Meyer (MGM) and 20th Century Fox had studios there. As a neighbor to the flourishing community, West Hollywood experienced associated growth, including an influx of transplants to Los Angeles, hoping to make it big onscreen. Similarly, support services aiding the production of films brought both residents and economic growth to the area. Land formerly used for agriculture slowly developed into housing and businesses supporting the motion picture industry.

In the mid-1920s, Hollywood studios began concerted efforts to synchronize sound with film. Though experiments in the production of sound films were widespread, studios were unable to seamlessly integrate the two elements. In 1927, the first feature-length film to incorporate sound, *The Jazz Singer*, was released to the public. Produced and distributed by Warner Bros., the film did little to jumpstart the "sound film revolution," but did demonstrate "the importance of star voices in the sound film, the appeal of popular music, and the potential rewards for adding dialogue and singing to otherwise silent films." Though moviegoers and studio employees alike were initially skeptical about talking films, the years following the release of *The Jazz Singer* saw an increase in the development of sound production as the studios raced to "anticipate the outcome of the audible cinema trend." By 1929, studios were increasingly and consistently abandoning silent films for sound films.

The advent of talking films paved the way for an entirely new field of manufacturing in Hollywood and West Hollywood, as it became necessary to produce motion-picture machinery to accommodate the rapid advancement of sound technology. A Los Angeles Times article chronicling the major industrial growth resulting from the motion-picture industry remarked,

"The motion-picture industry has had the greatest technical development in the past two years that has been experienced in its entire history. Although many believe that talking pictures are only in the experimental stage, as they improve in

quality it may be expected that the purely industrial demands which will be made upon motion- picture producers will make this business more and more industrially- minded. Only a few years ago the actors themselves formed the center of operations, while today the technique of film making and developing is occupying the major attention of this industry.”

Unsurprisingly, the neighborhoods adjacent to the major film studios became the most attractive areas to erect large, industrial enterprises catering to their production needs. Studios and manufacturers even collaborated to research and develop the new, elaborate equipment required to perfect the revolution of sound on film.

In the years between 1928 and 1930, the film industry witnessed an expansion in its technical service sector. Several equipment production companies established or expanded their own factories or moved to larger facilities. In 1930, Hollywood was regarded as one of the chief manufacturing centers for technical film equipment in the country. Multicolor Ltd. (a color film manufacturer owned by Howard Hughes), Consolidated Film Industries, Inc. (a laboratory service for processing film), the Eastman Kodak Company (a multi-service motion-picture company), J.E. Brulacour, Inc. (a distributor for Eastman Kodak film), Electrical Research Products (an engineering firm that aided theaters in the transition to “talkies”), the Bell & Howell Company (a legendary motion-picture camera production enterprise), and RCA Victor Company (a sound-recording equipment manufacturer) were among the increasing number of industrial plants that settled in Hollywood or West Hollywood by 1930. Moving to West Hollywood in 1929, the Mitchell Camera Corporation was among the new industries that arose in the area and were associated with the community’s early patterns of industrial development.

The tremendous growth experienced by the film industry in the late 1920s and early 1930s as a result of the transition to talking films was seemingly limitless. However, in the mid-1930s, a severe recession in Europe and the persisting economic impact of the Great Depression all but halted film production as movie attendance fell. Movie studios cut back on experimental technologies and instead focused on streamlining techniques to produce sound and increasing the efficiency of film production overall. When the United States entered World War II in 1941, virtually all industries reorganized to assist with war-related production. The year 1941 was expected “to be one of the greatest years in the history of Southern California growth,” and industrial growth and expansion was encouraged and even funded by national defense programs. Auxiliary film industries also adapted to the changing economic climate; the Mitchell Camera Corporation stayed afloat by manufacturing cameras used to film major wartime events. As evidenced by an addition to its West Hollywood factory plant in 1941, the Mitchell Camera Corporation, and the film service industry as a whole, was in no danger of succumbing to the cutbacks seen by the film industry at large.



By 1950, portions of West Hollywood still catered to the film industry. However, other industrial services also occupied these areas. Per a 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the block that had originally housed the Mitchell Camera Factory (which moved to a larger factory in Glendale in 1946 to facilitate increased production) also included a sheet metal works shop, furniture refinishing company, lumber storage building, iron works building, wood finishing business, auto repair garage, metal stamping facility, plastics manufacturing warehouse, ice cream plant, and laboratory. The Factory building once occupied by Mitchell was noted as occupied by a cosmetics warehouse at that time. Similar industries are evident on surrounding blocks, particularly along Robertson Boulevard. While not entirely related to the film industry, which had by that time standardized their methods of production, the industrial climate introduced by the film industry, and the railyards before it, was still readily apparent. The film industry perhaps most drastically set the stage for industrial production, both related to the film industry and ancillary services in the 1920s and beyond (Appendix D).

### ***George Alfred Mitchell and the Mitchell Camera Corporation***

The motion picture industry's transition from silent films to "talkies" was an innovative and prosperous time, and an expansion in technological production was at the forefront of this shift. During the silent film era, prior to the nineteen- teens, "innovation tended to be sporadic, casual and impelled by individual inquiry." It was not until 1920 that larger institutions embarked on systemized ways to produce and manufacture the equipment and processes needed to advance technology within the film industry. Research became an invaluable asset and was often completed by the manufacturers and suppliers of equipment themselves. Though larger, legacy institutions such as the Eastman Kodak Company (more commonly known as Kodak) were especially equipped to experiment with new technology and conduct basic research, smaller industrial enterprises such as Bell & Howell and the Mitchell Camera Corporation served the industry by rapidly producing cutting-edge equipment as new technologies developed.

Formed in 1907, Bell & Howell was arguably one of the most successful firms specializing in motion-picture machinery design and production. The company's Bell & Howell 35mm metal camera (known as the Bell & Howell Standard/2709) became the most successful of its kind when it was introduced in 1912. The company had trouble transitioning to the talking film era however, as it was unable to produce cameras quiet enough for use in the "talkies." Nevertheless, their cameras served as important precedents, as well as original competitors, to those developed by the Mitchell Camera Corporation, the company that would create some of the most popular and widely used motion-picture cameras on the market. The innovative designs of the company's namesake, George A. Mitchell, led the company to continued success and growth as the film industry made the extraordinary leap to the age of talking films.

The Mitchell Camera Corporation was cofounded by optics expert and former- cameraman George Alfred Mitchell in 1919. After training in the U.S. Army Signal Corps, Mitchell operated the camera maintenance shop at Universal Pictures where he eventually transitioned to a role as production cameraman. While at Universal, Mitchell met cameraman John E. Leonard, a revolutionary camera designer who was exhibiting a new model. In 1919, through his connection with Leonard, Mitchell became manager of the National Motion Picture Repair Company, a manufacturing firm owned by the National Motion Picture Camera Corporation. Leonard had formerly held stock in the company, which had been incorporated to finance his patented camera.

Initially, the National Motion Picture Repair Company made its money by repairing popular motion-picture cameras, such as those manufactured by Bell & Howell, Pathé, and DeBrie. However, Mitchell soon embarked on a new camera design using Leonard's patented rack-over technology, which was seen in the latter's original camera. The device "allowed the cameraman to frame and compose through the lens, in the photographing position, merely by the twist of a handle." In contrast, the Bell & Howell standard model required several shifts of the camera in order to properly position it for filming. While Mitchell's new design utilized some of the basic concepts of the Bell & Howell Standard camera, such as the "design of the single plane film travel" and a double compartment magazine, Leonard's rack-over device set Mitchell's camera apart. The prototype (known as Model A) was used in the filming of United Artist's 1920 production *The Love of Light*, ultimately proving the effectiveness of Mitchell's design. The camera was particularly noted for its focusing and framing capabilities, and the fact that it was built with two parts rather than one, as compared to the Bell & Howell model. Soon after this development, Henry F. Boeger took over the assets of the company and renamed it the Mitchell Camera Corporation, appointing Mitchell as the chief designer.

Between 1920 and 1929, cameras designed by George Mitchell and produced by the Mitchell Camera Corporation became increasingly popular in Hollywood film production and, over time, Mitchell's Model A prototype evolved into several variants. Between 1920 and 1924, 50-60 units of the Model A camera alone were produced. In 1923, approximately 30 Mitchell Cameras were in use in Hollywood studios, a significant portion of the 104 cameras produced between 1920 and 1927. By 1929, the company was backlogged with orders, having already produced 110 Mitchell Cameras that year. In order to better accommodate the influx of orders, the company moved its manufacturing operations west from a factory at 6025 Santa Monica Boulevard in Hollywood to a larger factory in an industrial neighborhood within the community of West Hollywood. Ground broke for the Factory building in the spring of 1929; located on Robertson Boulevard just south of Santa Monica Boulevard, the prefabricated building was to be constructed by the Truscon Steel Company at a total estimated cost of \$260,000.

In 1929, the Mitchell Camera Corporation was contracted by Fox Film Corporation to build a camera that could accommodate wider film; this wide screen development was introduced as the

“Fox Case Grandeur” process. The endeavor was financed by Grandeur, Inc., a subsidiary company owned by Harley L. Clarke and William Fox (of Fox Film). Through Grandeur, Inc., Clarke organized the purchase of the Mitchell Camera Corporation from Mitchell and Boeger, and the transaction was ultimately executed on June 6, 1929. In July of 1929, Clarke organized General Theatres Equipment, Inc., an umbrella company that absorbed the Mitchell Camera Corporation (now under ownership of Clarke and Fox), as well as several other equipment production companies such as the International Projector Corporation.

In selling their company, Mitchell and Boeger forfeited their stockholdings which, as of 1929, had been one-third and two-thirds, respectively. However, they continued to be involved in the company. As part of the contract executed by Clarke, the sellers (Mitchell and Boeger) agreed to continue in their same roles for a period of at least one year. In fact, a legal brief filed in 1947 clarifies that Mitchell “continued to be employed by [the Mitchell Camera Corporation under ownership of Grandeur, Inc.] as engineer in charge of production and development for a period of approximately five years from the date of incorporation [1929] at a salary of \$25,000.” Additionally, both Boeger and Mitchell sat on the company’s Board of Directors in 1930. As part of their contracts, they were “not to engage in or become interested in any motion- picture camera business other than with the buyer for a period of five years from the date of the June 6, 1929 agreement.”

In the years following, Mitchell patented several innovative camera mechanisms used in two of the company’s most successful cameras. In 1932, the firm successfully redesigned its basic model, the Mitchell Standard, using Mitchell’s newly patented “film movement” which reduced the noise output by the camera’s moving parts. The new model, known as the NC or “News Camera,” became the “universally used studio camera of the decades before 1960” and “the most important Mitchell camera design.” The company manufactured 356 NC models between 1932 and 1946; in some instances, the company would produce special versions of the camera for major studios such as Paramount, to fit their specifications. Mitchell improved on this model in the design of the BNC – “Blimped Newsreel Camera” – in 1934. Described as a “highly-modified NC ‘box’,” the BNC was even quieter than the NC. Though the BNC model had a slow start, primarily due to the onset of the Great Depression and World War II, it became a standard soundstage camera locally and internationally in the years post-war. The BNC models were used in the production of several renowned films, including *Wuthering Heights* (1939) for which cinematographer Gregg Toland won an Academy Award.

The precise location where Mitchell’s innovations occurred during the period of significance of the Mitchell Camera Corporation factory building (1929-1946) is not known based on historic record, as his work involved collaboration with Fox Films through Grandeur, Inc., and his designs were not strictly limited to those he produced for the Mitchell Camera Corporation. In 1934, Mitchell was enlisted to oversee the design of Technicolor’s first three-strip color cameras.

The cameras, at one time considered the “Rolls-Royce of movie cameras,” were built by Mitchell, but designed and repaired at Technicolor’s labs. The new process provided a wider and more accurate range of colors. Though ultimately effective, the process was found to be too expensive, and initially failed to be picked up by the major Hollywood studios. After delivering both the three-strip camera and the BNC, Mitchell officially left the company.

In 1940, the Mitchell Camera Corporation added a two-story office building to the north façade of its factory, behind the existing Art Deco office building, reflecting the company’s continued success. As industrial growth increased during World War II, the Mitchell Camera Corporation would continue manufacturing cameras in a capacity accommodating wartime needs. For example, photographs from the Signal Corps Photographic Center convey the integral role Mitchell cameras would play in the filming of the atomic bomb. In the years after the war Mitchell returned briefly to the Mitchell Camera Corporation to assist the company as production increased and the BNC model gained popularity.

In 1946, the Mitchell Camera Corporation responded to increased demands and moved its operations to a larger facility - a former motor plant in Glendale - effectively closing the West Hollywood chapter of its history. In the 1950s, the company ventured into the realm of theater projectors and introduced the Mitchell background process projector. The 35mm projector became commonly used in several Hollywood studios. The company also created the Mitchell Reflex 35mm camera which, when “used in conjunction with a solid-state Vidicon camera provided a continuous view of the scene being filmed on a distant TV monitor.” (Appendix D).

### ***The Early 20th Century Factory***

Innovation in building engineering coupled with a global need for efficiency in production fostered a change in the approach to industrial building design at the turn of the 20th century. Factory typologies moved away from the standard 19th century industrial mill type as those in manufacturing grew increasingly frustrated that it was no more than “a simple shell in the design of which little thought was given to the relationship between manufacturing operations and internal layout.” In contrast, new factories had to accommodate increasingly larger and heavier machinery and simultaneously reduce labor inputs. In the early twentieth century, architects, engineers and manufacturers worked together to transform industrial building design, as “the factory was seen as a building type deserving of architectural treatment in order to enhance the production of goods and dignify the workplace, as well as forge corporate identities.”

Over the course of the early 20th century, the factory building type took on several new qualities in response to certain needs. The first incorporated a modular or “cellular” structure, which allowed for spaces to be easily replicated and thus changed as needed. This modular factory space was more advantageous as production operations shifted from vertical to horizontal.

Second, experiments in materiality at the turn of the century found that inexpensive materials such as reinforced concrete and high tensile steel allowed for longer building spans and, consequently, larger, more flexible interior spaces. As a result, production operations could be placed in sequential order throughout the factory; in contrast, earlier factories restricted these operations to certain areas dictated by light and circulation. These qualities formed the crux of the 20th century factory: the idea that building itself functioned as a machine, facilitating efficient production by design.

To adapt to changing conditions, several architects began specializing in industrial architecture and factory building. One of the most successful architects who took on this challenge was Albert Kahn. Kahn's contributions to industrial architecture began with his experimentations with reinforced concrete at the turn-of-the- century, but he was soon highly regarded in the field for his work with the Ford Motor Company; the plants he designed for Ford between 1900 and 1925 are representative of the evolution of factory design, from the concept of factories enabling a standardized production system to the factory as machine. In fact, the ease and efficiency with which Ford was able to standardize and produce its automobiles was not only attributed to the designs of its factories, it also became a symbol for customized industrial building: the "rational factory."

Between 1905 and the late 1910s, Kahn refined and popularized the design of the reinforced concrete factory, before experimenting with steel-framed factory design in the 1920s and 1930s. Simultaneously, he perfected several qualities of earlier factory design to better facilitate efficient production. For example, Kahn's first reinforced-concrete factory, the Packard Motor Car Company Building, No. 10 (1905) was both seismically safer and more fireproof than their 19th century mill counterparts; additionally, Kahn improved ventilation and lighting by incorporating more windows, resulting in the modern daylight factory. The advent of steel framing allowed for the integration of glass curtain walls, while the introduction of steel industrial sash from England could be used for large expanses of glazing. This innovation maximized the amount of light that entered industrial buildings, and consequently, the amount of hours a laborer could work. Like the use of steel in concrete reinforcement, this type of construction was also found to be advantageously fireproof. To account for cross ventilation within the buildings, the industrial sash was commonly designed to pivot into an awning position that kept out rain. Five years later, Kahn's 1910 Highland Park, Michigan, plant for Henry Ford made another breakthrough in factory building design, in that it was built to "fit the manufacturing requirements of Ford, to the extent that Ford's engineers could predict those needs."

By the late 1910s, Kahn, in collaboration with Ford, had concluded that multi- story factories were less efficient in production, and introduced another type of factory typology: "the tall, single-story, steel-framed building encased in glass." With this revelation they found that the advantages of reinforced concrete became obsolete in the presence of a one-story factory building. The fact that

structural steel also allowed for faster completion time, more flexibility within spaces, and an increase in natural light made the single-story, steel-framed factory the most efficient method of construction in industrial building design. Ultimately, Kahn’s factory became:

“...a distinctive building style with single-story steel-framed designs encased in glass curtail walls and topped by glass roof monitors. His steel-and-glass buildings are long, rectangular forms with vast, uninterrupted expanses of glass. The exteriors do not make any distinctions between floors or bays and give no sense of the building’s steel frame. The exteriors are entirely devoid of decoration or detail and are purely utilitarian. Decoration would have been a wasteful extravagance on buildings that only workers saw up close and other viewed from a distance.”

Kahn’s innovative contributions to industrial building design, along with the evolution of the factory typology in response to 20th-century manufacturing demands, made it clear that the factory itself did not need to be a standardized property type. Factory design was to be controlled by its program and production operations, unlike the 19th century industrial mill. At the same time, the factory was adaptable to changing needs; the “ability to refashion the factory’s internal structure” was inextricably linked to innovation. Therefore, it became common for manufacturers to select from a variety of factory types that could be customized to its particular needs, while adapting Kahn’s unique design elements. As industrial conditions changed, the types of factories grew. However, while Kahn was at the forefront of this method of design and construction, other companies capitalized on the mode of construction: bringing the modern 20th century factory to the masses. This resulted in the creation of companies that manufactured the buildings themselves, and “offered a comprehensive building service: they would take charge of every aspect of construction, from site selection to the design and installation of equipment” (Appendix D).

### ***The Truscon Steel Company and Industrial Building Design***

The Factory building was constructed in 1929 by the Truscon Steel Company, which was founded as the Trussed Concrete Steel Company in 1903 by industrial pioneer Julius Kahn. Kahn practiced civil engineering; his education at the University of Michigan was financed by his older brother, Albert Kahn. The duo’s early work is representative of experimental reinforced concrete techniques commonly developed at the turn of the twentieth century. However, in 1903 Julius Kahn designed and patented the groundbreaking “trussed concrete steel reinforcement system.” Christened the Kahn Trussed Bar, the system more evenly distributed stress in concrete to provide 20-30% more strength in a concrete beam. In addition to its unprecedented strengthening capabilities, the new system was cost-effective. In Kahn’s system, less precision was needed in placing steel members, so that concrete could be poured and cured faster than in previous concrete reinforcement methods; this accounted for the time lost in concrete construction as compared to traditional wood construction. In an effort to produce, market and manufacture his design, Julius

Kahn formed the Trussed Concrete Steel Company. Originally headquartered in Detroit, the company moved its executive offices and operations to a production plant in Youngstown, Ohio in 1914, where sources of steel were more readily available.

The 1906 San Francisco earthquake revealed the seismic strength and fire-resistant qualities of the Kahn Trussed Bar in reinforced concrete construction, which had until that time been limited in favor of brick construction. The Bekins Van and Storage Co. Building, which utilized Kahn's method, can be seen in historic photos as the sole building standing amongst piles of rubble resulting from the quake; this stark image ultimately increased confidence in Kahn's designs. By 1907, the Kahn Trussed Bar was used in more than 15,000 structures in the U.S. and 90 in the U.K. Realizing the potential of other steel products that could be used in building construction, Kahn began manufacturing a line of steel products in Youngstown.

In 1915, around the same time Albert Kahn was experimenting with steel-framed construction, his brother Julius's Trussed Concrete Steel Company began offering the fabrication of entire industrial buildings, which could be constructed by the company using its standardized steel parts. While Albert Kahn's architectural firm was designing customized, "high-style" representations of the modern factory for high-profile clients like Henry Ford, his brother's Truscon Steel Company (which had changed its moniker in 1918) was attempting to make the elder Kahn's lauded factory typology more accessible to the masses, through the mode of prefabrication. Truscon Steel found its niche in the production of several building types, catering to the needs of manufacturing companies nationwide who wanted a factory customized to their production specifications.

Advertised as Truscon Standard Buildings, the prefabricated building options ranged from machine shops to warehouses, and cafeterias to hospitals. A typical publication would guide the reader through the entire process of collaborating with Truscon Steel, from selecting a standard building type suitable to the building's use, to customizing it with Truscon Standard wall panels, doors, roofing plates and windows. Truscon Steel Company publications boasted that their buildings retained an attractive appearance in addition to being flexible, durable and inexpensive to erect and maintain. Although the company stressed the ease in constructing and deconstructing a Truscon Standard Building, the structures were ultimately intended to be permanent.

The Truscon Steel Company promoted the advantages of prefabrication and incorporated the method into the company's business model:

After you have selected the particular building which fully meets your requirements, we prepare complete erection plans... The entire building is shipped promptly from our warehouse stocks. On its arrival, the building is ready for erection which can be done by our own organization. Owing to the simple

standard construction, the erection proceeds very rapidly so that the building is ready for occupancy much sooner than would be possible with other types of permanent construction.

Similarly, the company marketed the modularity of its factory designs. Truscon Steel advertised the Truscon Sawtooth Building as “easily enlarged by adding bays in any direction,” made possible by the fact that the columns and trusses functioned independently of the walls. The idea that the size and functionality of a factory could be easily adaptable reflected the notion that industrialization could solve any foreseeable obstacles in construction and manufacturing at large.

The 20th-century realization that the building itself could affect production also had an impact on Truscon Steel’s designs. Like Albert Kahn’s innovative approach to factory design, Julius Kahn’s Truscon Steel Company addressed issues such as poor lighting and ventilation, which had inhibited production in workshops and factories prior to the twentieth century, as workers depended on these uncontrolled conditions to work. For example, the company introduced their own line of operable Truscon Daylight Panels, which could be installed in endless curtain wall and daylight panel combinations. It was Truscon’s line of complete, prefabricated industrial buildings that fully addressed these issues: Truscon Standard Buildings - in particular the sawtooth and monitor building types - were heavily marketed for their natural light and ventilation. The company also offered the addition of a “lantern” on any one of their basic models, which could secure additional light, while circulating hot air up and out of the lantern windows.

The Truscon Steel Company, and the Truscon Standard Building subsidiary, was incredibly successful in bringing the early 20th century factory building to the masses. By 1914, the company had established warehouses and sales offices in fourteen major cities, including one in Los Angeles; in 1919, its capital was increased to \$4,500,000 (up from \$3,500,000 in 1917). The concept of making the modern factory building more easily accessible was one that contributed to the success of all industries in the first half of the 20th century (Appendix D).

### ***The Truscon Steel Company in Los Angeles***

By 1927, the Truscon Steel Company estimated annual sales at \$30,000,000; as a result of this success, the company announced the relocation of its Los Angeles operations from a warehouse at 1480 E. 4th Street to a larger plant employing 300 steel workers in the Laguna-Maywood industrial district, located near present-day City of Commerce. Fabricating products for the Pacific Coast, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, Mexico and the Hawaiian Islands, the company predicted annual fabricated steel production of \$5,000,000.

In 1929, the Mitchell Camera Company contracted Truscon Steel to build its factory in West Hollywood. The Factory building was chosen from Truscon Steel’s Standard Building catalog and entirely constructed of Truscon Steel materials. The model chosen for the two-story Mitchell



Camera factory appears to be a Truscon Standard Building, Type 1 (Clear Span), with an added lantern running the length of the building. The Type 1 buildings offered the narrowest widths, which would have been necessary on the Factory building's constricted lot. With the additional ventilation and light offered by the lantern, the Mitchell Camera Corporation could ensure maximized efficiency and production.

Though the Truscon Steel Company experienced increased expansion into the late 1920s, the onset of the Great Depression in the early 1930s and sharp decrease in production nationwide contributed to its demise in the mid-1930s. The Truscon Steel Company ceased production of the Kahn Trussed Bar in 1936, when new technology and an expired patent rendered it obsolete. Soon after, the company sold to the Republic Iron and Steel Company (later shortened to The Republic Steel Company), a transaction that would result in the third largest steel company in the world (Appendix D).

#### ***“The Factory”: Tenancy after Mitchell Camera Corporation***

The evolving use of the Factory building after the departure of the Mitchell Camera Corporation is reflective of the changing landscape of West Hollywood in the postwar era, from a railroad town to a Hollywood neighborhood where people lived, worked, and played. While the industrial use of the building became increasingly obsolete in West Hollywood, its industrial character made it adaptable to several alternate uses and occupants.

The building saw a variety of industrial and commercial tenants and uses in the years immediately following World War II. Between 1946 and circa 1951, a cosmetics warehouse and the Veteran Salvage Depot, a processor of military salvage, occupied the property. In 1951, a fire at a plastics manufacturing warehouse at 655-657 Robertson Boulevard destroyed the warehouse and a neighboring ice cream plant. It also damaged several other industrial buildings along Robertson Boulevard, including the former Mitchell Camera factory, which suffered only minor impairment. Following the incident, the factory was occupied by various retail establishments from 1956 until around the end of the decade. There are reports that claim the building was used as a furniture warehouse in the 1950s, but by all accounts it was abandoned by the early 1960s.

In 1967, architect, attorney, and artist Ronald Buck purchased the building for use as an invitation-only, celebrity-backed nightclub aptly named “The Factory.” Though it was owned and fronted by Buck, the Factory nightclub was overseen by an all-star board that included Paul Newman, Pierre Salinger, Peter Lawford, Jerry Ohrback, Peter Bren, Richard Donner and Sammy Davis, Jr. To maintain its exclusivity, members were charged a one-time fee of \$1,000 and paid monthly membership dues. The enormous club included a restaurant, bar, and multiple performance spaces divided by repurposed stained glass windows. The club appears to have been accessed via an entrance on La Peer Drive, historically the rear of the building, and was located

on the second floor. Buck rented at least part of the ground floor of the building to Nancy Gould and Barbara Dulien, young entrepreneurs, for use as a fashion boutique called the Garment Works in 1968 and to a design-merchandising firm called Hamilton-Howe in 1969.

In September of 1968, the Los Angeles Times called The Factory nightclub “the most successful discotheque in the world,” asking: “Isn’t it rather incredible that a discarded factory off Santa Monica Boulevard could become a center and symbol of America in 1968?” The Factory nightclub experienced such initial success that it opened a second location in Chicago in 1969. That same year, news channel KTLA aired “A Night at The Factory,” describing it as “musical and fast and designed to make you feel like somebody with his nose pressed against the window of a private Hollywood nightclub.” Despite this success, Buck told the Times that he doubted the club would stay open long, recognizing the fickleness of the public and the constant quest for the latest, newest thing.

The Factory nightclub ultimately remained open until 1973, though Buck’s foreboding predication came true as success waned around 1971. In efforts to revitalize the hotspot, the club was re-envisioned as a classical music club and restaurant. Additionally, Buck integrated “hippie-oriented stalls” on the building’s first floor and opened a weekend Whole Earth Swap Meet and Flea Market in its parking lot. In 1971, Metzler’s, an electronics retail store, occupied part of the building. In 1972, plans to open the nightclub space to the public as a small, experimental children’s theater called the Paradise Ballroom ran into complications with County Regional Planning and ultimately never got off the ground.

In 1973, following permanent closure of the nightclub, the Factory building reopened under an entirely new concept: as a rustic, themed restaurant called the Old-Fashioned Spaghetti Village. Open seven nights a week, the restaurant featured a “turn-of-the-century village atmosphere” conceptualized by interior designer and project coordinator Graham S. Gelfat. It featured dining areas in themed rooms such as the “village jail,” “fire house,” and “dry goods store,” as well as two saloons, a penny arcade and an antique boutique. The restaurant survived at the Factory building location for only one year before closing.

Following the closure of Spaghetti Village, the Factory building became home to perhaps its most well-known venue, a discotheque called Studio One. In 1974, the dance club was opened by Scott Forbes, an optometrist from the east coast. The club was immediately successful amongst gay men, as it was “planned, designed and conceived for gay male people.” Studio One also included a cabaret dinner theater program at the east of the building and accessed from a Robertson Boulevard entrance, known as the Backlot Showroom (or Backlot Theatre). Both would occupy the building until circa 1992.

In addition to the nightclub functions in the second story of the Factory building, the property often maintained various other business ventures, easily incorporated into the enormous space. In 1976, an Italian restaurant establishment named Mario Palagi's occupied the office building that abuts the east portion of the north façade (along Robertson Boulevard) of the Factory building. During its tenancy, several alterations were made to the interior and exterior of the building to accommodate the restaurant. The restaurant later relocated to Riverside and was renamed Mario's Place. In 1982, Koontz Hardware, a retailer specializing in hard-to-find hardware items, moved briefly to the property (661 Robertson Boulevard) after its Santa Monica Boulevard location was damaged in a fire.

As early as 1986, the Factory building also housed a cabaret club known as the Rose Tattoo, which was operated by lesbian cabaret performer Linda Gerard (1938-2014). The club was described as "a room swathed with green carpet, mirrored wall and pink tinted art-deco bas-relief," and often filled with celebrities. By 1992, the venue was known as the Rose Garden Performance Center, incorporating three performance areas: Erika's at the Rose, the Rose Cabaret and Ellington's at the Rose. In 1993, Gerard sold the club and relocated to Palm Springs. A "hip art 'n' rock" club called Luna Park leased the formerly Art Deco office building at 665 Robertson Boulevard for several years between the early-1990s and early 2000s. The space has operated as a series of different clubs since 2008.

In recent years, the Factory building has continued to be a popular location for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) businesses and activities. Around 1993, after the closure of the Rose Tattoo, the property was operated by "influential lesbian proprietress, Sandy Sachs," an employee of Brent Raines who had acquired the Factory building. Sachs previously ran a lesbian club night called Girl Bar in the former Backlot Theatre with business partner Robin Gans. The club became successful in its own right, and Sachs and Gans eventually moved it to a new locale. In 2000, Sach's entered a partnership with Nathan Goller, and the duo's enterprise, Factory, Inc., continued to operate Girl Bar and other promotions. The Factory building was again refurbished as a dance club that has been the site of various West Hollywood nightclubs, including Axis, Rasputin and Ultra Suede. Today, it houses a gym called the Fitness Factory on the ground floor and nightclubs on the second floor (Appendix D).

### ***LGBT Cultural Development and Equality***

The Factory building is also associated with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) movement and West Hollywood's transformation into a center for gay rights and equality.

Los Angeles appears to have had an LGBT subculture as early as the late nineteenth century, corresponding with the first major population boom to hit the growing city. "Already in the 1880s and early 1890s, there were many places where like-minded men might find one another

in the developing city,” although such encounters were forced into the shadows of mainstream culture. Known meeting places included Central Park (today’s Pershing Square), Westlake Park, and some of the city’s many saloons. Masked balls provided a cover for forbidden behaviors of many varieties, and the Los Angeles Times reported a number of such events with moral disdain. The Merced Theater (or Merced Hall), located near the Pico House in the historic center of Los Angeles (present-day El Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historical Park), hosted masked balls for male and female prostitutes and is known to have been a covert gay lodging house. In 1898, the City of Los Angeles enacted an anti-masquerading ordinance, and conservative Protestant groups began their own campaigns to change the city’s lawless reputation. Although their disapproval extended to a number of rowdy behaviors, one that they found most disturbing was cross-dressing. The turn of the twentieth century brought a period of isolation for Los Angeles’s LGBT community, enforced by social disapproval and increased efforts by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) to “discourage all public expressions of nonconforming sexual and gender behavior.” Sodomy was illegal in the state – mentioned in the California State Penal Code as early as 1872 – and by 1915, oral sex was punishable as a misdemeanor.

The 1920s were a time of incredible growth in Southern California and, for a number of reasons, a transformative period for the LGBT community. The motion picture industry boomed during this period, drawing scores of writers, actors, and designers to the city in search of new ways to practice their crafts. As these new residents made lives for themselves in the booming city, they brought with them a bohemian lifestyle and a nonconforming attitude to all aspects of life, including sex. “Gays, lesbians, and bisexuals enjoyed tremendous freedom and influence in the entertainment industry – with certain obvious limitations.” Although LGBT persons found acceptance within the Hollywood community (in fact, they often held positions of great influence), they still needed to hide their lifestyles from the American public.

The advent of Prohibition in 1919 brought the proliferation of an underground nightlife culture in Los Angeles, and the city’s numerous speakeasies provided places for people with different sexual orientations to mix. Live acts featuring cross-dressing performers were popular in the city’s speakeasies; so much so, in fact, that performers from New York came to Los Angeles during this time since that city had cracked down on drag shows. Venues in Los Angeles included B.B.B.’s Cellar, the Montmartre, and Jimmy’s Backyard, all of which featured female impersonator revues.

After the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, drinking was again legal but homosexuality was not. Ironically, Los Angeles’ nightlife declined in the post- Prohibition era, as there was a greater crackdown on the “immoral” behavior of the 1920s that some attributed to the decline of American life during the Depression. Bars that during Prohibition had featured female and male impersonator revues were less mixed with straight and gay patrons in the 1930s as the LAPD replaced Prohibition-related offences with those associated with being a homosexual. Instead of

liquor violations, the owners, performers, and patrons were charged with masquerading, indecency or lewd conduct. Since homosexual acts were against the law, those charged were classified as sex criminals equated with rapists and child molesters. Many were convicted with felonies and subjected to extensive imprisonment.

By the 1940s, the population of Los Angeles had reached 1.5 million people, and it would increase to two million by 1950. Continued public disapproval forced LGBT communities to be isolated from mainstream culture and, in many ways, from one another. The postwar era brought with it a politically conservative climate that even further stigmatized homosexuality. U.S. fears of communism during the Cold War gave rise to organizations such as the House Un-American Activities Commission (HUAC), which was notorious for its investigation of communist activities within the entertainment industry. The HUAC also targeted gays and lesbians because “they were believed to be susceptible to blackmail by Soviet agents because they were mentally unstable.” Investigation by the HUAC brought members of the LGBT community out in the open as they were treated as sexual perverts and criminals. Legislation in the 1950s further criminalized homosexuality; Executive Order 10450 banned gays and lesbians from working for the federal government, forcing the community further into the shadows.

Increased persecution spurred a movement of raised social consciousness and, later, political organization within the LGBT community. As a rapidly growing and increasingly diverse city, Los Angeles played a key role in the transformation of a largely underground community forced to communicate and operate in the shadows into a full-fledged gay pride movement, in which LGBT individuals not only came out into the open but organized and challenged the political structures that encouraged their persecution. The Mattachine Society, America’s first gay rights group, was founded in 1950 in the Los Angeles home of Harry Hay, and chapters soon sprang up across the southland. But as the LGBT community came more and more into public view, a societal backlash followed.

The 1960s brought a period of personal expression and nonconformity, and with it militant activism related to a number of social issues. The gay, lesbian and transgender community became more united during this time in their resistance to enforced isolation and arbitrary police harassment. The first known instance of the LGBT community resisting police arrests took place at Cooper’s Donuts in downtown Los Angeles in 1959. Customers threw coffee and food at the LAPD officers conducting the arrests, in a small but significant rebellion that preceded New York’s Stonewall Riots by ten years. In 1967, LAPD officers disrupted a New Year’s Eve celebration at the Black Cat in Silver Lake and arrested patrons for exchanging celebratory same-sex kisses. The raid sparked a demonstration that is thought to have been the largest public display of gay rights solidarity to date, and is also credited with inspiring the establishment of The Advocate, the newsletter of the Personal Rights in Defense and Education (PRIDE) organization.

Other reflections of a new and energized generation of gay political activists and organizations included the formation of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF), Gay Survival Committee, Christopher Street West, and the Gay Community Services Center. In 1970, the LAPD tried to block permission for a march down Hollywood Boulevard in commemoration of the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. Police Chief Edward Davis was quoted as saying that “granting a permit to a group of homosexuals to parade down Hollywood Boulevard would be the same as giving a permit to a group of thieves and robbers.” Sponsored by the GLF and the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), and with assistance from attorneys from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the march was held without incident and was the first of what would become an annual Gay Pride parade, a tradition that continues to the present day (Appendix D).

### ***West Hollywood and LGBT Equality***

While greater Los Angeles is critical in the study of the gay rights movement in the United States, West Hollywood, as a Los Angeles neighborhood and later its own incorporated municipality, can in many ways be seen at the forefront of the LGBT movement. Located adjacent to Hollywood and Beverly Hills and proximate to (as well as home to) many of the area’s motion picture studios, West Hollywood remained unincorporated until 1984. During Prohibition, a number of speakeasies were located in West Hollywood where they could remain outside of the jurisdiction of the notoriously harsh LAPD and under the watch of the far less active Los Angeles County Sheriff Department. Similarly, the community became the refuge for LGBT bars targeted by the LAPD as it carried out campaigns against them in the postwar era. A number of bars moved to West Hollywood’s Sunset Strip, contributing to its ascendancy as the fulcrum of the LGBT community during the late 1960s and 1970s. While establishments in the City of Los Angeles had to maintain a lower profile, businesses and institutions could openly cater to the gay community in West Hollywood.

By the mid-1970s, West Hollywood had come to epitomize a new gay lifestyle, earning it the moniker “Boystown” (in a reference to the 1948 Spencer Tracy film about a colony of orphaned newsboys). After decades of living in the shadows of Los Angeles society, West Hollywood residents were emboldened to express their gay freedom brazenly in daylight: holding hands, flirting, and cruising the area’s commercial corridors. Businesses owned by and targeted to the gay community boomed in West Hollywood, sporting names like Muscles, Big Weenie hot dog stand, Ah Men, International Male, and All American Boy. When the city incorporated in 1984 it became the first “gay city” in the US, as voters there decided to elect a largely gay city council. At the time of its incorporation, the population of the 1.9 square mile city was 35,000, an estimated 40% of which were gay or lesbian. (Appendix D).

### ***Gay Bars and Discotheques as Social Institutions***

The bar has long been an important focus of gay life in America, as they were often the only places where LGBT persons could meet like-minded individuals and explore methods of personal and sexual expression. In the pre-World War II era, bars and nightclubs were neither exclusively gay nor straight, but there were many in which those “in the know” could meet others like themselves. Los Angeles’ earliest known concentration of gay-friendly bars were centered downtown, along Main Street and on Bunker Hill, extending south to Pershing Square. During Prohibition a number of speakeasies and underground bars opened in Hollywood, on the side streets off Hollywood Boulevard, and West Hollywood, and their underground nature enabled the free expression of a number of behaviors otherwise seen as counterculture, including drag performances and revues.

In 1955, California made it illegal for a bar to serve as a “resort for illegal possessors or users of narcotics, prostitution, pimps, panderers, or sexual perverts.” Aimed at the gay community, this legislation provided the Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control with the right to suspend or revoke licenses of gay bars, further driving gay patrons into the underground. In 1959 the California Supreme Court confirmed that “a license may not be suspended or revoked simply because homosexuals or sexual perverts patronize the bar in question,” which may seem on its face as a victory for the gay community but in reality bolstered public opinion at the time that gay conduct was perverse.

There was an increase in gay and lesbian bars in Los Angeles in the 1960s, although they continued to operate under the radar as they were subject to unwarranted police raids. The incidents at the Black Cat Café and Stonewall Inn in the late 1960s brought national attention to the violent and unjust treatment of the LGBT community by law enforcement and strengthened the political organization of the community. By 1971, the ascendancy of the discotheque corresponded directly with a growing public gay movement in Los Angeles, and within several years there were dozens of discos in the city. The discotheque was inextricably linked to the gay community; LGBT newsletter *The Advocate* observed that “in this country discos are almost completely gay. Many straight people confess that they have more fun at gay clubs.” The importance of the discotheque to the gay community is indisputable: “Disco to a gay person is very much a social necessity. It’s where a gay person can meet people. To a straight person... it’s just another place to go out and party.” (Appendix D).

### ***Scott Forbes and Studio One***

The largest and most visible gay discotheque in Southern California was Scott Forbes’ Studio One. Forbes came to Los Angeles from Boston in the early 1960s. After graduating from the University of Southern California, he practiced optometry until deciding to open a discotheque

exclusively for gay men. Forbes asked Lee Glaze how he was able to draw an instant gay crowd when he revived *Ciro's* nightclub on the Sunset Strip in West Hollywood. Glaze offered his mailing list of gay patrons, and in two years – on May 1, 1974 – Forbes opened Studio One.

The former Mitchell Camera Corporation factory, which had already been used as a private club in the 1960s, was the selected location for Forbes' discotheque: it was located in unincorporated West Hollywood, away from the watchful gaze of the LAPD, and it was enormous. The second floor alone provided almost 10,000 square feet of usable space. The club was divided into two distinct spaces: Studio One, accessed via an entrance on La Peer Drive (what would have been the rear of the building during its Mitchell Camera Corporation days) and the Backlot Showroom (also referred to as the Backlot Theatre), a dinner theater with an entrance off Robertson Boulevard. During its peak, the club drew at least a thousand people a night and featured a deejay that *Billboard Magazine* named number one in Los Angeles in 1974. The Backlot featured live acts including Joan Rivers, Bernadette Peters, Chita Rivera, Liza Minnelli, and Peggy Lee. Studio One was featured on national television and was dubbed by many newspapers and magazines as one of the most exciting discos in the country.

Studio One was an incredible success and made Forbes an overnight millionaire. He insisted that his discotheque filled a vital community need: it celebrated sexual freedom for gay men. It had celebrity regulars and a restrictive door policy that kept out everyone except only the most attractive gay men (and their guests). Forbes told the *Los Angeles Times*, "Studio One was planned, designed and conceived for gay people, gay male people. Any straight people here are guests of the gay community. This is gay!" In addition to limiting admittance of straight men, and women of any sexual preference, Studio One's door policy also kept out all but only "the most remarkably attractive blacks, Latinos, and Asian" gay men. Forbes was criticized for this policy and created more controversy when he told the *Los Angeles Times* it was intended to keep out a "bad element." Despite protests from gay activists who complained bitterly of Studio One-types who would "rather dance than fight for gay rights," the popularity of the club didn't wane. The *Los Angeles Times* reported in 1977, three years after Studio One opened, that "many include it in their top five when you ask them to name L.A.'s best, and it's packed nearly every night, partly because they have one of the truly great sound systems."

The unprecedented success of Studio One made Forbes a local legend and rendered him a certain political power in the gay community. He was a member of the city business license commission and served on the boards of Los Angeles' most important gay organizations, such as the Gay Community Services Center and the Municipal Elections Committee of Los Angeles. In 1978, Forbes managed to book Disneyland for a private party under the guise of the Los Angeles Bar and Restaurant Association.



Approximately 18,000 people (nearly all of whom were gay) attended the party, which was met with protests by church groups outside the gates of the theme park and would become the first ever “Gay Day” at Disneyland.

When the AIDS epidemic gripped the gay community in the 1980s, many gay discos and bars held benefits and fundraisers for AIDS research and aid organizations. Studio One held an event in 1983 that netted \$8,000 for AIDS research. The epidemic had an impact on business at the area’s discos and nightclubs, since the uninhibited encounters that had once characterized a night out now potentially came with a deadly price. But many also sought a night of dancing with friends as a welcome escape from the realities of the epidemic that was killing hundreds of gay men in Los Angeles.

Studio One and the Backlot Showroom closed in 1992, nearly twenty years after they opened (Appendix D).

### **3.3.2 Relevant Plan, Policies, and Ordinances**

#### **State**

##### ***The California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR)***

In California, the term “historical resource” includes “any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which is historically or archaeologically significant, or is significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California” (California Public Resources Code (PRC), Section 5020.1(j)). In 1992, the California legislature established the CRHR “to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the state’s historical resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change.” (PRC, Section 5024.1(a).) A resource is eligible for listing in the CRHR if the State Historical Resources Commission determines that it is a significant resource and that it meets any of the following criteria:

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage;
2. Is associated with the lives of persons important to our past;
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristic of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### *California Environmental Quality Act*

As described further below, the following CEQA statutes and CEQA Guidelines are relevant to the analysis of archaeological and historical resources:

- Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21083.2(g) defines “unique archaeological resource.”
- PRC Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a) define historical resources. In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) defines the phrase “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource”; it also defines the circumstances when a project would materially impair the significance of a historical resource.
- PRC Section 5097.98 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e) set forth standards and steps to be employed following the accidental discovery of human remains in any location other than a dedicated ceremony.
- PRC Sections 21083.2(b)–(c) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4 provide information regarding the mitigation framework for archaeological and historical resources, including examples of preservation-in-place mitigation measures; preservation-in-place is the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to significant archaeological sites because it maintains the relationship between artifacts and the archaeological context, and it may also help avoid conflict with religious or cultural values of groups associated with the archaeological site(s).

More specifically, under CEQA, a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it may cause “a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource” (PRC, Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(b)). If a site is either listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or if it is included in a local register of historical resources, or identified as significant in a historical resources survey (meeting the requirements of PRC Section 5024.1(q)), it is an “historical resource” and is presumed to be historically or culturally significant for purposes of CEQA (PRC, Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(a)). The lead agency is not precluded from determining that a resource is a historical resource even if it does not fall within this presumption (PRC, Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(a)).

A “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource” reflecting a significant effect under CEQA means “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially impaired” (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(b)(1); PRC, Section 5020.1(q)).

In turn, the significance of a historical resource is materially impaired when a project:

1. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the CRHR; or
2. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the PRC or its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the PRC, unless the public agency reviewing the effects of the project establishes by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not historically or culturally significant; or
3. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the CRHR as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA. (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(b)(2))

Pursuant to these sections, the CEQA inquiry begins with evaluating whether a project site contains any “historical resources,” then evaluates whether that project will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource such that the resource’s historical significance is materially impaired.

Under CEQA, an Environmental Impact Report is required to evaluate any impacts on unique archaeological resources (PRC, Section 21083.2). A “unique archaeological resource” is defined as:

An archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

1. Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.
2. Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
3. Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person. (PRC, Section 21083.2(g))

An impact to a non-unique archaeological resource is not considered a significant environmental impact, and such non-unique resources need not be further addressed in the Environmental Impact Report (PRC, Section 21083.2(a); CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(c)(4)).

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 assigns special importance to human remains and specifies procedures to be used when Native American remains are discovered. As described below, these procedures are detailed in PRC Section 5097.98.

### ***California Health and Safety Code***

Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code requires that if human remains are discovered in any place other than a dedicated cemetery, no further disturbance or excavation of the site or nearby area reasonably suspected to contain human remains shall occur until the county coroner has examined the remains (Section 7050.5b). Furthermore, if the coroner determines or has reason to believe the remains are those of a Native American, the coroner must contact the NAHC within 24 hours (Section 7050.5c). The NAHC will notify the Most Likely Descendant. With the permission of the landowner, the Most Likely Descendant may inspect the site of discovery. The inspection must be completed within 48 hours of notification of the Most Likely Descendant by the NAHC. The Most Likely Descendant may recommend means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and items associated with Native Americans.

### **Local**

#### ***City of West Hollywood Municipal Code***

Chapter 19.58 of the City of West Hollywood Municipal Code describes the City's Cultural Heritage Preservation Ordinance, which was adopted based on the following findings of the Council:

- A. **Threatened Structures and Sites.** The Council has determined that the character, history, and spirit of the City, State, and nation are reflected in the historic structures, improvements, natural features, objects, sites, and areas of significance located within the City and that in the face of ever increasing pressures of modernization and urbanization, cultural resources, cultural resource sites, and historic districts located within the City are threatened with alteration, demolition, or removal.
- B. **Preservation of Structures and Sites.** The Council has further determined that these threatened structures, representing the City's unique cultural, historical, and social foundations, should be preserved as a living part of community life and development in order to build a greater understanding of the city's past and to give future generations the opportunity to appreciate, enjoy, and understand the city's rich heritage.
- C. **Methods of Preservation.** Recognizing that the use of historic preservation measures has become increasingly prevalent as a method for identifying and preserving cultural resources, the city joins with private concerns, the state, and the United States Congress to develop methods of preserving the city's unique aesthetic, architectural, cultural, and

historical heritage, in compliance with the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and state law (Government Code Section 37361).

19.58.050 Criteria for Designation of Cultural Resources

The Historic Preservation Commission may approve a nomination application for and recommend designation of, and the Council may designate a cultural resource, or any portion thereof (both interior and exterior) or historic district in compliance with Sections 19.58.060 (Designation of Historic Districts) and 19.58.070 (Review and Approval of Designations) below if it finds that the cultural resource meets one or more of the following criteria.

- A. **Exemplifies Special Elements of the City.** It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the city’s aesthetic, architectural, cultural, economic, engineering, political, natural, or social history and possesses an integrity of design, location, materials, setting, workmanship feeling, and association in the following manner:
  - 1. It embodies distinctive characteristics of a period, method, style, or type of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or
  - 2. It contributes to the significance of a historic area by being:
    - a. A geographically definable area possessing a concentration of historic or scenic properties; or
    - b. A thematically related grouping of properties which contribute to each other and are unified aesthetically by plan or physical development; or
  - 3. It reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of growth and settlement, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of community or park planning; or
  - 4. It embodies elements of architectural design, craftsmanship, detail, or materials that represent a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation; or
  - 5. It has a unique location or singular physical characteristic or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city; or
- B. **Example of Distinguishing Characteristics.** It is one of the few remaining examples in the city, region, state or nation, possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen; or
- C. **Identified with Persons or Events.** It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history; or
- D. **Notable Work.** It is representative of the work of a notable architect, builder, or designer.

### *City of West Hollywood General Plan*

Because the City’s “values, and seeks to recognize its built environment, its history, and its culture”, a Historic Preservation element is included in the City of West Hollywood General Plan. Goals and policies of the Historic Preservation Element relevant to the proposed project include the following:

- **Goal HP-1:** Expand the base of information on the City’s history.
- **Policy HP-2.2:** Continue to seek designation of eligible properties as West Hollywood Cultural Resources and/or Historic Districts.
- **Goal HP-3:** Protect cultural resources from demolition and inappropriate alterations.
- **Policy HP-3.2:** Ensure the protection of cultural resources through enforcement of existing codes.
- **Policy HP-3.4:** Continue to allow for adaptive reuse of cultural resources.
- **Goal HP-6:** Use historic preservation concepts as tools of economic development.

### **3.3.3 Thresholds of Significance**

The following thresholds of significance are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Based on these thresholds, implementation of the proposed project would have a significant adverse impact related to cultural resources if it would:

- a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5;
- b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resources pursuant to Section 15064.5;
- c. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature; or
- d. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

According to California CEQA Guidelines, a project has the potential to impact a historical resource when the project involves a “substantial adverse change” in the resource’s significance. Substantial adverse change is defined as “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.”

The significance of an historical resource is materially impaired when a project:

- a. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, the California Register of Historical Resources; or
- b. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, unless the public agency reviewing the effects of the project by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not historically or culturally significant; or
- c. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources as determined by a lead agency for the purposes of CEQA.

### **3.3.4 Methodology**

The following tasks were performed for research, documentation and analysis of historic built environment resources within the project area:

- Conducted a site visit for photography and evaluation purposes, in accordance with State Office of Historic Preservation guidelines on February 16, 2016.
- Conducted a search in HRI for previous surveys and evaluations of the properties within the project site.
- Reviewed state and local technical bulletins, ordinances, and other materials related to the evaluation of historical resources.
- Conducted extensive primary and secondary source research related to the history of West Hollywood and the buildings evaluated herein.
- Evaluated potential historical resources against eligibility criteria of the CRHR and the City of West Hollywood's Cultural Heritage Preservation Ordinance.
- Analyzed the potential of the project to impact historical resources in accordance with significance thresholds delineated in Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit 14, §15000, et seq.).

The following archives and repositories were consulted as part of the research methodology for this project: University of Southern California (USC) Digital Archives, ONE Archives, Cinematic Arts Library, and Architecture and Fine Arts Library; Los Angeles Public Library

(multiple collections); County of Los Angeles Public Library, West Hollywood Library; Proquest, including historic Los Angeles Times and Los Angeles Sentinel databases; and Sanborn Fire Insurance Digital Maps. A variety of online blogs and websites related to the history of the motion picture industry and LGBT history and culture were also consulted.

### **Historical Resource Evaluations**

Three existing buildings within the proposed project site were evaluated for potential historical significance in consideration of CRHR and City of West Hollywood evaluation criteria. Evaluated buildings include:

- 645-653 Robertson Boulevard
- 655-657 Robertson Boulevard
- 652 La Peer Drive/661-665 Robertson Boulevard (Factory building)

#### ***645-653 North Robertson Boulevard***

The building at 645-653 Robertson Boulevard does not appear eligible for listing on the CRHR. The property has associations with the industrial history of West Hollywood, but due to extensive exterior alterations, it does not retain sufficient integrity to convey these associations. The building is associated with the industrial history of West Hollywood, as home to a machine shop constructed around 1945. Within the following decade, the property retained its industrial use as the location of a cabinet shop. However, the building transitioned to retail space at the turn of the 21st century and extensive alterations to accommodate retailers, including a large addition to the property's primary (east) façade, recladding and the replacement of doors and windows, have rendered the property unrecognizable as an industrial building.

Although the property was for a time associated with renowned furniture designer Phyllis Morris as the site of her company's factory, the building was primarily used for the production of furniture rather than as the site where Morris designed or displayed her work. Furthermore, it was significantly altered after 2003, when Morris's factory moved out and the building was adapted for new use. Therefore, it does not appear eligible under CRHR Criteria 1 or 2 for its association with significant events or persons. The building is not architecturally significant and has been extensively altered within the past decade, rendering it ineligible under CRHR Criterion 3. Finally, the property does not and likely will not yield any information important to the prehistory or history of the state and is ineligible for listing under CRHR Criterion 4.

The building also does not appear eligible for local listing as a Historic or Cultural Resource under the City of West Hollywood's Cultural Heritage Preservation Ordinance. Though the original 1945 edifice reflects significant geographical patterns relating to industrial development



within West Hollywood, a condition of local Criterion A, the building has been significantly altered and no longer conveys this historic association. Overall, the building does not exemplify special elements of the City, and is not eligible for listing as an historic resource under local Criterion A. The building is also not an example of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type. Therefore, it does not appear eligible under local Criterion B. Though it was for a time the factory of renowned furniture designer Phyllis Morris, it is not the location where she designed or displayed her work and as such, the property is not eligible under local Criterion C. As a nondescript and altered industrial building, the property is not representative of the notable work of an architect or builder and is also ineligible under local Criterion D.

### ***655-657 North Robertson Boulevard***

The property at 655-657 Robertson Boulevard does not appear eligible for listing on the CRHR. Extensive research did not indicate any significant historical associations with the building. Furthermore, it retains little integrity to convey its original use. The building does not appear eligible for listing under CRHR Criterion 1 for association with a significant event or pattern of events. Constructed circa 1952 to replace industrial buildings destroyed by fire, it does not share the same relationship to the industrial history of West Hollywood possessed by other buildings in the area. Similarly, the building is not associated with significant persons. Though it has housed the Phyllis Morris Originals showroom since 2005, the notable furniture designer passed away in 1988; as such, the property is not directly associated with Morris or her productive period. Therefore, the building does not appear eligible under CRHR Criterion 2. The building is not architecturally significant and has been extensively altered within the past decade, so it is also ineligible under CRHR Criterion 3. Finally, the property does not appear to have the potential to yield any information important to the prehistory or history of the state and is ineligible for listing under CRHR Criterion 4.

The building also does not appear eligible for local listing as a Historic or Cultural Resource under the City of West Hollywood's Cultural Heritage Preservation Ordinance. The building does not exemplify special elements of the City, nor does it convey distinguishing characteristics of a rare example of an architectural type. Therefore, it is not eligible as a historic resource under local Criterion A or B. The property is now partially occupied by the Phyllis Morris Originals showroom, the legacy of renowned furniture designer Phyllis Morris.

However, having moved to the site in 2005, nearly two decades after Morris' untimely passing, the showroom is not directly associated with Morris or her productive period. Further research did not reveal any other associations with significant persons or events and as such, the property is not eligible under local Criterion C. Finally, as a nondescript and altered commercial building, the property is not representative of the notable work of an architect or builder and is also not eligible under local Criterion D.

***661-665 North Robertson Boulevard/648 North La Peer Drive***California Register of Historical Resources

The Factory building appears eligible under CRHR Criteria 1 and 3, as follows:

**Criterion 1** It is associated with events or patterns of 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

*Early Motion Picture Industrial Development in West Hollywood*

The Factory building is associated with industrial development in West Hollywood related to the motion picture industry during the late 1920s, '30s and '40s. As a purpose-built factory for the production of motion picture cameras, the subject building has direct association with the pattern of events and history related to the advancement of film technology within the motion picture industry as Hollywood emerged as the national center of film production.

West Hollywood historically developed as Sherman, an industrial company town servicing the Sherman Railyards at the turn of the twentieth century. However, by the 1910s, the nearby community of Hollywood was establishing itself as the heart of the entertainment industry, particularly in the production of films. In response, several major studio plants had opened in or moved their operations to Hollywood by the early 1920s. These studios included United Artists, Warner Brothers, 20th Century Fox and MGM. The town of Sherman, which eventually changed its name to West Hollywood to capitalize on the success its neighbor, was located near Charlie Chaplin Studios (now Jim Henson Studios) near La Brea Avenue and Sunset Boulevard, built in 1917, and Jesse Durham Hampton's studio (later Pickford-Fairbanks Studio) at the corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Formosa Avenue, built circa 1918.

The transition from silent films to "talkies" in the late 1920s ushered in an entirely new era of manufacturing for the film industry. Major studios and equipment manufacturers collaborated in research and development in the race to seamlessly integrate sound with moving picture. As a result, it became necessary for the production of motion-picture machinery to match the rapid advancement of sound technology. Neighboring communities like West Hollywood, which was well suited to industrial development due to its existing rail infrastructure, became the ideal locations for large manufacturing plants that produced equipment catering to the rapidly growing motion picture industry. In the years between 1928 and 1930, the film industry saw unprecedented expansion of its technical service sector. Constructed in 1929, the Factory building was built for and occupied by the Mitchell Camera Corporation, a company specializing in the manufacturing of motion-picture cameras and equipment, which had outgrown its previous plant. The advent of sound in film revolutionized the making of motion pictures and, as a result,

ushered in new opportunities for manufacturing related to film technology and equipment production. Mitchell Camera Corporation was at the forefront of the industry and manufactured motion picture cameras in the subject building until 1946, when the company moved to a larger facility. At the time of its construction, the Factory building was located in an industrial area at the west end of West Hollywood, adjacent to the Sherman Yards. Today, there are very few remaining buildings in West Hollywood that have direct association with its industrial past, which played a significant role in the development of the city and the larger motion picture industry (Appendix D).

Therefore, the Factory building is eligible for the California Register under Criterion 1 for its association with early motion picture industrial development in West Hollywood. The period of significance has been identified as 1929-1946, or the period during which the building was used for the fabrication of motion picture cameras.

#### *LGBT Cultural Development and Equality*

The Factory building is also directly associated with the social and cultural history of West Hollywood and greater Los Angeles, particularly as it relates to broad patterns of LGBT cultural development and equality.

In 1974, Scott Forbes opened Studio One and the Backlot Showroom (also called the Backlot Theatre) in the Factory building. The discotheque occupied the second floor of the building and could accommodate more than a thousand people on its dancefloor. Although there are known to have been places for the LGBT community to meet and congregate in the first half of the twentieth century, widespread public condemnation and persecution by the police largely kept these places in the shadows and the community in isolation. During Prohibition, speakeasies and underground clubs provided covert places for gay people to meet and mingle with one another and non-gay patrons. However, in the 1930s the LAPD openly and aggressively targeted homosexual people, convicting them of masquerading, indecency or lewd conduct, and gay people were once again forced into hiding. In the 1950s, the gay community began to formally organize its efforts for increased social consciousness about human sexuality, resulting in a series of violent clashes with the police.

Opened in 1974, Studio One (located in the Factory building) is representative of a pattern of gay bars and discotheques in the 1970s that enabled the community to act freely, in the open, as themselves. While bars and nightclubs have long been an important focus of gay life in America, most had to exist undercover. In contrast, Studio One's owner, Scott Forbes, proclaimed in the Los Angeles Times that his club was "planned, designed and conceived for gay people, gay male people. Any straight people here are guests of the gay community. This is gay!" (Appendix D).

Studio One remained open in the Factory building until circa 1992, a total of 18 years. During its tenancy, it was featured on national television, written about in newspapers and magazines across the country, and gave Scott Forbes a certain political power in the gay community. Although there were other gay bars and discos in Los Angeles and West Hollywood at the time, few were as big, popular, or garnered as much national attention as Studio One and the Backlot.

For these reasons, the Factory building is eligible for the California Register under Criterion 1 for its association with LGBT cultural development and equality. The period of significance has been identified as 1974-1992, or the period during which Studio One and the Backlot Theatre operated out of the Factory building.

**Criterion 2** It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history

The Factory building is associated with renowned camera designer George A. Mitchell, who co-founded the Mitchell Camera Corporation and worked as its chief of engineering from 1919 to 1934. Mitchell is a significant figure in the history of motion picture camera design and manufacturing, as the creator of several renowned and widely used camera models, including the Mitchell Standard (Model A) prototype around 1920, and the News Camera (NC), and Blimped News Camera (BNC) in 1932 and 1934, respectively.

Mitchell designed the Mitchell Standard model at the company's previous factory in Hollywood, before it moved its operations to the Factory building in 1929. That same year Mitchell and his partner Henry F. Boeger sold their shares in the company to Grandeur Inc. (owned by Harley L. Clarke and William Fox of Fox Films), and Mitchell forfeited his rights to any previous and future designs.

Though Mitchell remained in the same role as chief engineer of production and development of the corporation for an additional five years (during which time he patented the camera mechanisms used in the NC and BNC models), it could not be determined based on existing documentation whether the innovations for which he is renowned occurred within the Factory building or elsewhere. For example, documentation shows that Mitchell did engage in innovative work at other locations during this period, including the development of Technicolor's first three-strip color cameras that were designed at Technicolor's labs. For these reasons, although Mitchell is a significant individual, extensive research did not suggest that Factory building is directly associated with his productive period.

In addition, the Factory is associated with Scott Forbes, proprietor of the Studio One discotheque and Backlot Showroom between 1974 and 1992. Although Forbes became a relatively well-known figure in West Hollywood due to the popularity of Studio One, it does not appear that he was an important figure to local, state, and/or national history.

Therefore, the property is not eligible under Criterion 2 for its direct association with George A. Mitchell or Scott Forbes.

**Criterion 3** It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values

The Factory building embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural type and method of construction: the 20th century prefabricated factory. The building is an excellent and rare local example of a distinct and significant building type that was developed as a direct response to the changing industrial conditions at the turn of the 20th century, as manufacturers, engineers and architects sought to create buildings that would better serve the dramatically changing industrial landscape. Compared to its predecessors, the early 20th century factory building took on several new qualities, including modularity, reinforced concrete and steel design, and the overarching idea that the factory itself should function as a machine. Albert Kahn, an early pioneer in the development and implementation of reinforced concrete construction on a large scale, refined and popularized several of these qualities, ultimately perfecting the 20th century factory and providing a model that would be widely imitated throughout the world.

The Factory building was constructed in 1929 by the Truscon Steel Company, an industrial fabrication company founded by industrial pioneer Julius Kahn (brother of Albert), who designed and patented the groundbreaking Kahn Trussed Bar concrete reinforcement system in 1903. In an effort to produce, market and distribute his designs, Julius Kahn formed the Trussed Concrete Steel Company. Originally headquartered in Detroit, the company moved to Youngstown, Ohio in 1914, where sources of steel were more readily available. In 1915, the Truscon Steel Company created a subsidiary company called Truscon Standard Buildings, which capitalized on the development of the modern factory by promoting the fabrication of entire industrial buildings that could be manufactured, transported, and assembled by the company using standardized steel parts. Using the popular trend of prefabrication as the mode of construction, the company incorporated properties of day lighting and modularization (also popularized by Albert Kahn) into its catalog of factory building types. Truscon Steel Company publications boasted that their buildings retained an attractive appearance in addition to being flexible, durable and inexpensive to erect and maintain. Furthermore, they promised that a Truscon Standard Building, although featuring a standardized mode of construction and chosen from a catalog, could be customized to the needs of the manufacturer. The company stressed the ease in construction and deconstruction of a Truscon Standard Building, though the structures were intended to be permanent. Through this approach, the Truscon Steel Company successfully made Albert Kahn's innovative factory typology available to the masses.

In 1929, the Mitchell Camera Corporation contracted Truscon Steel to build its factory in West Hollywood; the building, chosen from Truscon Steel's Standard Building catalog, was entirely

constructed of Truscon Steel materials and appears to be a two-story Truscon Standard Building, Type 1 (Clear Span), with an added lantern running the length of the building. The Type 1 buildings offered the narrowest widths, which would have been necessary on the factory's constricted lot.

The Factory building's architectural significance relates to the innovation of its industrial typology and method of construction, rather than its architectural design, craftsmanship, or artistic value. The building itself does not have high artistic value, nor is it an example of fine craftsmanship, as these modest qualities were replicated in thousands of Truscon Steel Standard Buildings across the country at one point in time. Although the building's materials (concrete, steel and glass) are intrinsic to the significance of the building type, they are common materials of the era and not significant in and of themselves.

However, the Factory building plays a significant role in the broader understanding of the 20th century prefabricated factory and how it was supplied to the masses. It is one of the only known examples of the type in the greater Los Angeles region. For this reasons, the Factory building is eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3. The period of significance has been identified as 1929, or the date of the Factory building's construction by the Truscon Steel Company.

**Criterion 4** It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area state or the nation.

There is no evidence that the Factory building yields or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory. Additionally, the Factory building is not associated with a known archaeological site. As such, the Factory building does not appear to be eligible under California Register Criterion 4.

#### City of West Hollywood Cultural Heritage Preservation Ordinance

The Factory Building appears eligible for West Hollywood Cultural Resource Criteria A.1, A.3, A.5, B and C, as follows:

**A.1.** It embodies distinctive characteristics of a period, method, style, or type of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship

As previously discussed in the evaluation of California Register Criterion 3, the Factory building embodies the distinctive characteristics of an architectural type and method of construction: the 20th century prefabricated factory. It is the only known example in West Hollywood. Therefore, it is both a valuable and rare example for its embodiment of a significant industrial building system that was the manifestation of the innovations of industrial designer and innovator Julius Kahn. The Factory building is eligible under this criterion.

**A.2.** It contributes to the significance of a historic area by being:

- a. A geographically definable area possessing a concentration of historic or scenic properties; or
- b. A thematically related grouping of properties which contribute to each other and are unified aesthetically by plan or physical development

The Factory building is not part of a concentration of historic or scenic properties, nor does it contribute to a thematically related grouping unified by plan or physical development. Though the block it occupies was once industrial in character, the area and its original industrial buildings no longer convey their historic associations. Additionally, the Factory building is distinguished aesthetically from its surroundings in scale and design.

The Factory building does relate to other properties in the area based on its use as an LGBT bar and nightclub. However, there is no clear aesthetic that communicates the subject property's association to other LGBT institutions. Therefore, the Factory building is ineligible under City Criterion A.2.

**A.3.** It reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of growth and settlement, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of community or park planning

The Factory building reflects geographical patterns associated with industrial growth and development in West Hollywood, a significant era of the community's growth and settlement. Nearly all of West Hollywood's industrial resources have been demolished, making the Factory building an extremely rare physical remnant of this pattern of the community's history. Therefore, the Factory building is eligible under City Criterion A.3. The period of significance has been identified as 1929-1946, or the period during which the building was used for the fabrication of motion picture cameras, reflecting its association with the community's industrial past.

**A.4.** It embodies elements of architectural design, craftsmanship, detail, or materials that represent a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation

The Factory building's architectural significance relates to the innovation of its industrial typology and method of construction, and not its architectural design, craftsmanship, or detail. Although its materials (concrete, steel and glass) are intrinsic to the significance of the building type, they are common materials of the era and not significant in and of themselves. Therefore, the Factory building is ineligible under City Criterion A.4.

**A.5.** It has a unique location or singular physical characteristic or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city

The Factory building is an established and familiar visual feature within its neighborhood and the City of West Hollywood at large. As the only remaining industrial building in the area, the Factory building possesses several characteristics that distinguish it as a focal point within its immediate neighborhood, which largely comprises non-descript commercial buildings. It has also been in continuous (though evolving) use for nearly 90 years. Because the building is an established feature within the community, it is eligible under City Criterion A.5. The period of significance has been identified as 1929 to 1992, or the building's date of original construction through the period during which it was occupied by Studio One.

- B.** Example of Distinguishing Characteristics. It is one of the few remaining examples in the city, region, state or nation, possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen

The Factory building appears to be one of, if not the only, remaining example of an architectural type in West Hollywood: a 1920s prefabricated steel factory building. The early 20th factory building represented a change in industrial conditions in which larger spaces were needed to accommodate advanced mechanical machinery. As an industrial community in the early 20th century, West Hollywood was capable of housing such massive structures. However, as the community changed over time, the new residential and commercial landscape rendered large industrial factories obsolete. There no longer appears to be any easily identifiable buildings of the same building type, or of the same scale or materiality, as the Factory building in West Hollywood. Therefore, the building is eligible under City of West Hollywood Criterion B. The period of significance is 1929, or the year the Factory building was constructed.

- C.** Identified with Persons or Events. It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history

The Factory building is identified with patterns of events and history related to West Hollywood's industrial past (1929-1946), and with its development as a cultural and social hub for the LGBT community (1974-1992), as described above under the analysis of California Register Criterion 1. Therefore, it meets City of West Hollywood Criterion C.

- D.** Notable Work. It is representative of the work of a notable architect, builder, or designer.

The Factory building is not directly representative of the work of a notable architect, builder or designer. Although the Truscon Steel Company was founded by Julius Kahn, a notable engineer significant for his invention of the "Kahn Trussed Bar" and other industrial building systems and technologies, the products of the company (both whole buildings and building parts) were prefabricated and published in a catalog from which buildings could be selected and produced from a kit of parts. Therefore, it cannot be said that the Factory building is, in and of itself, a notable work of Julius Kahn, rendering it ineligible under City Criterion D.



### Integrity Analysis

The Factory building is significant under multiple historical contexts and themes, some having to do with its early industrial history and design, and others having to do with its association with LGBT culture and equality. These reasons for significance are related to different historical periods and are conveyed by different physical characteristics. Therefore, this analysis includes two evaluations of the building's integrity, in order to better understand its eligibility under the different contexts and themes. The first analysis relates to the 1929-1946 period of significance, which relates to the building's industrial past. The second analysis relates to the 1974-1992 period of significance, or the period during which Studio One and the Backlot Showroom occupied the building.

#### Period of Significance: 1929–1946

In summary, the Factory building retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance as it relates to West Hollywood's motion picture industrial past and industrial building types. Its integrity of location, materials, and workmanship are largely intact. Its setting has been compromised by the changing character of the building's immediate surroundings in the latter portion of the twentieth century. Alterations made to the building over time have somewhat compromised its integrity of design, feeling, and association. No aspects of integrity have been lost altogether. Following is a detailed discussion of the building's integrity as it relates to the 1929-1946 period:

**Location:** The Factory building is in its original location; it has not been moved. Therefore, it retains its integrity of location.

**Design:** The Factory building is a prefabricated industrial building, constructed by the Truscon Steel Company in 1929. Its original design was characterized by the following features: its two-story form, with a monitor roof; prefabricated construction of steel frame, embossed metal sidewall panels, and steel sash windows; concrete foundation, particularly at the east end of the building; and signage on the Robertson Boulevard façade advertising the Mitchell Camera Corporation. The overall design of the property also included a one-story office building, previously Art Deco in style, abutting the Factory building at its Robertson Boulevard (east) façade. The building has endured the following alterations to its original design: modification of the east façade of the building, including the removal of Mitchell Camera signage and the replacement of original steel sash windows at the second story and monitor roof; addition of commercial entrances and replacement of some windows along the south and west elevations; the painting over of most of the originally unpainted exterior materials, including glazing in windows; the addition of a commercial entrance and canopy at the west façade; and the modification of interior spaces (including the addition of new partition walls and finishes, particularly at the second floor). Additionally, the

former Art Deco office building to the north of the building, facing east towards Robertson Boulevard, has been entirely modified so that its original appearance is unrecognizable. Although the overall form and materials of the building are intact and collectively convey its original design intent, alterations to the building over time have compromised its integrity of design.

**Setting:** At the time of its construction in 1929, the Factory building was located in a predominantly industrial section of West Hollywood, directly west of the Sherman Yards. It was surrounded on all sides by a mix of low-scale industrial buildings and surface parking lots. The industrial nature of this part of West Hollywood gradually transitioned from industrial to commercial in the late twentieth century, and several buildings adjacent to the Factory building were either modified to reflect new commercial uses or replaced with new commercial buildings. The area currently appears to be a mix of commercial uses, punctuated by surface parking lots. Buildings in the immediate vicinity retain a low scale; similarly, the area has not become any more or less dense. As the character of the area has changed in use over time, the Factory building's integrity of setting has been somewhat compromised. However, because the area retains the same physical qualities of scale and density as it did during its 1929-1946 period, the building's integrity of setting is not entirely lost.

**Materials:** The Factory building is constructed of relatively few materials: steel, concrete and glass. It has a concrete foundation, steel truss frame, embossed steel sidewall panels, and steel sash windows. Alterations to the building's materials include the replacement of some original windows at the east end of the building, and the painting over of all exterior materials (which were originally unpainted). Despite these alterations, the building's materials remain predominantly intact.

**Workmanship:** The workmanship of the Truscon Steel Company is evident in the technology and aesthetic principals of their prefabricated buildings; since the Factory building's form, construction and materials are largely intact, it retains its integrity of workmanship.

**Feeling:** Feeling is the quality that a historic property has in evoking the aesthetic or historic sense of a past period of time. There are alterations that have been made to the building that have compromised its integrity of feeling, including the complete modification of the commercial building at the east end of the property; changes to the east façade of the building, including replacement windows, the addition of an exterior staircase, and the removal of signage; the addition of block walls in front of the Robertson Blvd (east) façade, somewhat obscuring it from view; and the painting of most exterior materials, including window glazing, which has changed the transparent "daylighting" nature of the building. For these reasons, the integrity of feeling has been compromised.

**Association:** The direct link between the Factory building and its industrial past is conveyed by its utilitarian appearance. Its overall form and materials are largely intact. Although Mitchell Camera Corporation signage has been removed and other changes have been made to the building, its industrial appearance is still evident and therefore its integrity of association is largely intact.

*Period of Significance: 1974-1992*

In summary, the Factory building retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance as it relates to LGBT cultural development and equality. Generally, it retains all aspects of integrity and has only been minimally altered since Studio One closed in 1992. Following is a detailed discussion of the building's integrity as it relates to the 1974-1992:

**Location:** The Factory building is in its original location; it has not been moved. Therefore, it retains its integrity of location.

**Design:** Scott Forbes chose an existing industrial building as the home for his discotheque in 1974. The cavernous interior spaces and unassuming exterior appearance made it an optimal location for an exclusive nightclub. Forbes made very few alterations to the building when he acquired it for Studio One: he added an entrance and canopy to the west façade, utilized an existing exterior staircase (likely added in the 1960s) for the east façade entrance, painted over many of the building's exterior finishes, and made some minimal modifications to the building's interior as it was outfitted for a nightclub. The exterior of the building has only been minimally altered since Studio One closed in 1992. Alterations include the replacement of original steel sash windows at the second story and monitor roof at the east end of the building, and the addition of a new entrance canopy and doors at the building's west façade. The design of the second floor interior space (where Studio One and the Backlot Showroom were located) has been modified with reconfiguration of demising walls and addition of new finishes on walls and, in some places, over original wood floors. Despite these alterations, overall the building continues to retain its integrity of design.

**Setting:** The overall setting of the Factory building has not changed since the 1974-1992 period. Therefore, its integrity of setting is intact.

**Materials:** Aside from the replacement of some original windows, the building's materials remain intact to the 1974-1992 period. It retains its integrity of materials.

**Workmanship:** Since Studio One occupied an existing building and few changes were made in its adaptive reuse, integrity of workmanship remains intact.

**Feeling:** The Factory building continues to be used as a nightclub and appears very much today as it did during the 1974-1992 period. It retains integrity of feeling.

**Association:** Although Studio One and the Backlot Theatre closed in 1992, the building has been in continuous use as a nightclub ever since. Since the Factory building has only been minimally altered since 1992 and it appears today much as it did during the 1974 to 1992 period, its integrity of association is intact.

### 3.3.5 Impact Analysis

***Threshold A: Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?***

The proposed project would retain the buildings located at 645-653 Robertson and 655-657 Robertson, and would relocate and reconfigure a portion of the Factory building located at 652 La Peer Avenue / 661-665 Robertson Boulevard. The project would entail dismantling the Factory building, storing it during subterranean construction and reassembling a 140-foot-long portion of the structure in a north-south configuration along Robertson Boulevard. The reassembled portion of the building would be adaptively reused as retail and a small café.

Three existing buildings within the project site were evaluated for potential historical significance, including:

- 645-653 Robertson Boulevard
- 655-657 Robertson Boulevard
- 652 La Peer Drive/661-665 Robertson Boulevard (Factory building)

The historical resource evaluations concluded that the two buildings located at 645-653 Robertson Boulevard and 655-657 Robertson Boulevard are not eligible under CRHR and City of West Hollywood criteria. In addition, the 6,764 square foot former Factory building office building, which abuts the main Factory building at its northeast corner and was originally Art Deco in design, is not eligible under CRHR and City of West Hollywood criteria due to extensive alterations such that the office building's original design and appearance can no longer be discerned. Therefore, the buildings at 644-653 and 655-657 Robertson Boulevard are not considered historical resources under CEQA and project-related impacts are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required for these properties.

The main Factory building (excluding the adjoining office building) has been determined eligible under CRHR Criteria 1 and 3, and City of West Hollywood Cultural Resource Criteria A.1, A.3, A.5, B, and C. In addition, it retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance as it relates to

West Hollywood's motion picture industrial past (1929-1946), its building typology and method of construction (1929), and LGBT cultural development and equality (1974-1992). Therefore, the Factory building is a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA and project-related impacts must be addressed.

### **Character Defining Features**

Character-defining features are those elements which give a building its visual character. Such features can be elements of style, materials, and construction, as well as feeling and association with significant events and people. Character defining features are important in conveying the significance of a historic resource; a building that no longer retains the character-defining features from its period(s) of significance does not have sufficient integrity to convey its importance. The following list of character-defining features of the Factory building was compiled based on the findings of the historical analysis, a visual inspection of the building, and a review of historic photographs and other documentation (Appendix D).

The Factory building is a prefabricated industrial building with minimal ornamentation. As a result, it has relatively few character-defining features.

#### ***Site***

- Location adjacent to Santa Monica Boulevard and near the former Sherman Yards, in an area that was formerly an industrial/manufacturing district.
- Situation of the building on the property in such a way that it extends the width of the block on an east-west axis between La Peer Drive and Robertson Boulevard), optimizing natural daylight into interior spaces used for manufacturing.
- Large volume of the building, which was necessary for the production and fabrication of motion picture cameras.

#### ***Factory Building: Exterior***

- Prefabricated construction of steel frame, embossed metal sidewall panels, and Truscon Daylight Panel windows.
- Monitor roof with lantern.
- Concrete foundation, particularly on the eastern portion of the property where the building is taller to conform to the natural topography of the site.
- Steel windows in punched openings in the concrete foundation wall.

- Door location and opening on the La Peer Drive (west) façade, which is the former location of the entrance to Studio One (the current awning and doors themselves appear to be recent additions and are therefore not character defining).

#### ***Factory Building: Interior***

- Two-story, lateral interior division.
- Entrance sequence off La Peer Drive (first floor lobby, staircase, and dance club on the second floor).
- Original wood floor at first and second stories.
- Exposed steel truss roof system in the first and second floor spaces.
- Open volume of the interior spaces, without many interior partitions.
- Freight elevator off the lobby at the west end of the building.

#### **Impacts to Historical Resources**

The proposed project would disassemble the existing Factory building and reassemble an approximately 140-foot-long, two-story portion of the building on-site. The Factory building would be repositioned from its current location spanning east-west between Robertson Boulevard and La Peer Drive to a new location on a north-south axis along Robertson Boulevard at the eastern edge of the project site. The applicant's original project request included complete demolition of the Factory building. The City conducted a preliminary review of the application and determined that the complete demolition of the Factory building would likely create an unavoidable significant impact.

To avoid creating an unavoidable significant impact, the applicant consulted and collaborated with the City of West Hollywood, Architectural Resources Group, and members of the preservation community including the Los Angeles Conservancy, the National Trust and the West Hollywood Preservation Alliance to establish a revised proposal that includes a restored and repositioned portion of the Factory building along Robertson Boulevard. This revised proposal with the restored and repositioned portion of the Factory Building is the project that is described in the Chapter 2 and evaluated in Chapter 3 of this EIR.

#### ***Threshold A: Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?***

The ARG Historical Resources Technical Report evaluated the proposed project and identified six aspects of the proposed project that have the potential to result in substantial adverse changes in the significance of the on-site historical resource (i.e., the Factory building) in the absence of

mitigation. The following aspects of the proposed project would impact the Factory building's character-defining features and integrity, and thus eligibility:

1. Removal of portions of the Factory building, leaving a section that measures 140 feet by 40 feet. The north wing of the building, currently 50 feet by 40 feet in size, would be disassembled and its component parts stored. The Factory building's main volume is currently 240 feet long by 40 feet wide in size and constructed on a 20-foot modular grid – meaning that it was fabricated at an off-site factory in 20-foot pieces, transported to the site, and assembled into the original structure. As part of the proposed project, seven of the twelve modules, or components, that comprise the building's length would be retained, reassembled on site, and rehabilitated, including both of the building's street-facing façades.
2. Relocation of the retained section of the building on site. The retained section of the building would be resituated at a 90-degree angle so that its length runs on a north-south axis along Robertson Boulevard and the former east-facing façade would front north onto the proposed Robertson Lane; its former west-facing façade would front south.
3. Installation of three new fully glazed storefront assemblies along the east façade, at the base of the building.
4. Increase in height of the southern portion of the building and south-facing façade (formerly facing La Peer Drive), due to a higher foundation necessary to address the natural southward slope of the project site.
5. Integration of a new vehicular access opening near the south end of the east façade of the building.
6. Development of a multi-use hotel project of approximately 262,315 square feet that would vary from three to nine stories in height (approximately 27 feet to 125 feet, inclusive of rooftop structures and a rooftop helipad to address fire department requirements) to the west of the Factory building. The new hotel development would be set back from the west façade of the Factory building at a distance of approximately 11 feet 3 inches, and the nearest volume to the west would be approximately 46 feet tall.

In contrast to the potential impacts listed above, there are several components of the proposed project that would, upon its completion, repair and rehabilitate the building and its original materials, much of which are currently in a state of disrepair; restore missing historic elements that have been removed; and in doing so, maintain the historic character of the building:

1. Rehabilitation of the relocated Factory building, including rehabilitation and reuse of original Truscon construction materials and features (concrete, embossed metal sidewall panels, and steel windows).

2. Rehabilitation and reuse of character-defining interior features, including the wood floor and exposed truss roof system in both the first and second floor spaces, and the freight elevator at the west end (which will become the south end) of the building.
3. Restoration of missing character-defining features and conservation of original materials on the historic east façade of the building (which will face north onto Robertson Lane) to the 1929-1946 period of significance, including the removal of the exterior staircase, replacement of non-historic windows with salvaged original windows, conservation and reuse of original embossed steel cladding, and removal of paint from windows and panels to restore the original finish of exterior materials.
4. Restoration of the historic west façade of the building (which will face south) to the 1974-1992 period of significance, including the removal of a non-historic entrance canopy and walls, reproduction of the Studio One doors in materials and configuration, retention and conservation of wall panels and windows, and possible re-integration of the Studio One canvas entrance canopy.

While these four project design elements would reduce potential impacts to historical resources, the proposed project would result in a potentially significant impact on historical resources by causing a substantial adverse change in the significance of the Factory building, which has been identified as a potential historical resource. As such, mitigation measures (**MM-CUL-1 through MM-CUL-11**) would be implemented to reduce potential impacts to historical resources below a level of significance. **MM-CUL-1 through MM-CUL-11** include measures to document the building and retain/salvage non-used modular building components; treatment and conservation measures for reassembly of the building; interpretation and commemoration measures; and rehabilitation/restoration measures in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The Historic Resources Technical Report includes a post-mitigation integrity evaluation, which concludes that the Factory building would retain sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance under City of West Hollywood local criteria as well as the California Register of Historical Resources criteria upon completion of the project, including implementation of the rehabilitation design features and mitigation measures (See Sections 4.6 and 4.7 of Appendix D for additional details). Impacts would therefore be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

***Threshold B: Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resources pursuant to Section 15064.5?***

No archaeological resources were identified within the project area as a result of the CHRIS records search, field survey, or Native American coordination. Furthermore, the project site has been previously developed and is underlain by fill materials consisting primarily of silty sands to sandy and clayey silts with occasional construction debris. While the entire project area has been



heavily disturbed by urban development over the years, intact archaeological deposits may be present below the original layer of fill material. If intact archaeological deposits are located on site, ground-disturbing activities associated with construction of the proposed project, such as excavation of the four-level subterranean parking garage and grading of the site during site preparation, have the potential to destroy archaeological resources. As such, the project site is considered to be sensitive for archaeological resources and without mitigation, the potential for substantial adverse change in the significance of a previously unknown archaeological resource during construction would be potentially significant. As such, mitigation measure **(MM-CUL-12)** which requires certain protocol be followed in the event that previously unknown archaeological resources are encountered, would be implemented to reduce potential impacts to archaeological resources below a level of significance. Impacts would therefore be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

***Threshold C: Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?***

The project site is located along the northern margin of the Los Angeles Basin. The Los Angeles Basin, also referred to as the Coastal Plain of Los Angeles, is situated between the Santa Monica Mountains to the north, the Puente Hills and Whittier fault to the east, the Palos Verdes Peninsula and Pacific Ocean to the west, and the Santa Ana Mountains and San Joaquin Hills to the south. Formed during the early Miocene epoch, the central portion of the Los Angeles Basin contains marine and alluvial sedimentary deposits ranging in age from the Late Miocene to the present. Within the project area there are two recorded geologic units, young alluvial-fan deposits, undivided (Holocene and late Pleistocene) and alluvial fan deposits (Holocene) (USGS 2005, Dibblee and Ehrenspeck 1991). These alluvial fan deposits are comprised of loose gravel, sand, silt, and clay sourced from ancient and active streams.

Past excavation and trenching activity in the area surrounding the project site have encountered paleontological resources. Previously discovered fossils in the areas have been most frequently found in clays and silts as opposed to gravels. Sewer trenches and storm drain excavation in this region typically yield fossils. During trenching nearby for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) Hollyhills Drain Units 7 and 8 Project in 2007, mammalian fossils were recovered from sedimentary units spanning the Pleistocene age (Stantec 2007). The north and mid-section of the Hollyhills Drain Units 7 and 8 Project (generally, the area north and south of Santa Monica Boulevard centered along San Vicente Boulevard within the West Hollywood city limits) passed through Quaternary alluvial gravels, sand, silt, and clay and older surficial alluvial fan sediments derived from the Santa Monica Mountains. The entire route of the Hollyhills Drain Units 7 and 8 Project was described as passing through “known fossil producing sediments and potentially fossil producing sediments” (Stantec 2007). Given the proximity of past fossil discoveries nearby and the underlying alluvial fan deposits, ground disturbance of previously

undisturbed sedimentary deposits on the project site is moderately to highly likely to yield paleontological resources.

The project site has been previously developed and is underlain by fill materials consisting primarily of silty sands to sandy and clayey silts with occasional construction debris. As such, the project site is not anticipated to be underlain by unique geologic features or paleontological resources. While the entire project area has been heavily disturbed by urban development over the years, intact paleontological resources may be present below the original layer of fill material. If intact paleontological resources are located on site, ground-disturbing activities associated with construction of the proposed project, such as excavation of the four-level subterranean parking garage and grading of the site during site preparation, have the potential to destroy paleontological resources. As such, the project site is considered to be sensitive for paleontological resources and without mitigation, the potential damage to paleontological resources during construction would be potentially significant. As such, mitigation measure (MM-CUL-13), which requires review and monitoring by a qualified paleontologist prior to and during all grading and excavation activities, would be implemented to reduce potential impacts to paleontological resources below a level of significance. Impacts would therefore be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

*Threshold D: Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*

While the entire project area has been heavily disturbed by urban development, intact archaeological deposits including human remains may be present below the original layer of fill material and it is possible that construction activity could unearth previously unknown human remains. As such, the project site is considered to be potentially sensitive for archaeological resources (including human remains). Absent mitigation, impacts would be potentially significant. As such, a mitigation measure (MM-CUL-14), which establishes specific protocols to be followed in the event that previously unknown human remains are encountered, would be implemented to reduce potential impacts to human remains below a level of significance. Impacts would therefore be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

### 3.3.6 Mitigation Measures

**MM-CUL-1 Documentation.** Prior to project commencement of any building disassembly, relocation, and partial restoration activities associated with the Factory building, Historic American Building Survey (HABS) Level 2 documentation of the building shall be performed and submitted to the following archives/organizations: Library of Congress, HABS/HAER/HALS Collection; West Hollywood Preservation Alliance; West Hollywood Heritage Project; Los

Angeles Conservancy; National Trust for Historic Preservation; ONE Archives at the University of Southern California (USC); County of Los Angeles Library, West Hollywood Library; and other entities/repositories to be identified by the City of West Hollywood.

**MM-CUL-2 Documentation.** Upon completion of the Factory building rehabilitation and restoration activities in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, the applicant shall submit a complete application for designation of the Factory building under W.H.M.C. Section 19.58.070 for listing as a West Hollywood Cultural Resource.

**MM-CUL-3 Salvage.** Modular components of the Factory building that are in good condition and are not used as part of the project – in particular, embossed steel sidewall panels and steel windows –shall be stored at a location nearby for future use as needed. The applicant shall consult with a qualified architectural conservator on the appropriate storage of retained modular components.

**MM-CUL-4 Sensitive Treatment/Conservation.** Prior to commencement of construction activities, the applicant shall develop Treatment Specifications for the cleaning, repair, and installation of modular components of the Factory building during and after construction. Prepared by a preservation architect meeting the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards in Architecture and/or Historic Architecture, these specifications will ensure the appropriate conservation of materials to be retained as part of the project, including cataloguing of component parts and site preparation during dismantling and reassembly, as well as future cleaning and treatment of the building’s materials as part of regular building maintenance.

**MM-CUL-5 Interpretation/Commemoration (Mitchell Camera Corporation).** The applicant shall provide on-site interpretation/ commemoration of the Mitchell Camera Corporation use of the building, such as public art, historic photographs, display of Mitchell cameras, amongst others. The interpretation/commemoration plans shall be presented to the City of West Hollywood Historic Preservation Commission for comment prior to installation, and completed to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the hotel.

**MM-CUL-6 Interpretation/Commemoration (Oral History Project: Studio One).** The applicant shall commission an oral history project in which patrons of Studio One and others are interviewed and given the opportunity to discuss the experience of visiting the nightclub and being part of the LGBTQ community in West

Hollywood and Los Angeles during the 1970s and '80s. These interviews shall be digitally recorded (audio and/or visual) and made available on site, so that visitors will be able to listen to (and possibly see) the interviews in a location related directly to the original Studio One use of the building, as well as online. These interviews shall also be donated to organizations/entities/repositories such as the West Hollywood Preservation Alliance, West Hollywood Heritage Project, Los Angeles Conservancy, One Archives at USC, Los Angeles County Public Library, West Hollywood Branch, and LGBTQ Coalition. The oral history project shall be developed in coordination with the City of West Hollywood and to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director.

**MM-CUL-7 Interpretation/Commemoration (Studio One).** The applicant shall provide on-site interpretation/ commemoration of the Studio One use of the building, such as historic photographs, permanent display of the oral history project (see MM-CUL-6) and/or public art. All interpretation/commemoration will be placed inside of or immediately adjacent to the Factory building. The interpretation/commemoration plans shall be presented to the City of West Hollywood Historic Preservation Commission for comment prior to installation and completed to the satisfaction of the Community Development Director prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the hotel.

**MM-CUL-8 Rehabilitation/Restoration.** The applicant shall rehabilitate the retained portion of the Factory building in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (the Standards). The design of new components at the Factory building's base, including new storefronts and a vehicular entrance to the subterranean parking area, shall also conform to the applicable Standards. All work will proceed under the direction of a historic preservation architect meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards in Architecture and/or Historic Architecture.

**MM-CUL-9 Rehabilitation/Restoration.** The applicant shall remove non-historic features and restore missing character-defining features on the historic east façade (which under the project will become the north façade) of the Factory building dating to the 1929-1946 period of significance in compliance with the Standards, including, at minimum:

- a. Removal of a non-original exterior staircase.
- b. Removal of non-original concrete masonry unit walls that currently sit in front the building, enclosing a non-historic courtyard space (and obscuring the façade).

- c. Replacement of non-historic windows with salvaged original steel windows.
- d. Conservation of exterior materials, including removal of paint from poured-in-place concrete foundation, steel sidewall panels, window frames, and glazing; and replacement of broken glazing as necessary.

**MM-CUL-10 Rehabilitation/Restoration.** The applicant shall remove non-historic features and restore missing character-defining features on the historic west façade (which under the project will become the south façade) of the Factory building, dating to the 1974-1992 period of significance, including at minimum:

- a. Removal of non-historic steel entrance canopy and low concrete walls.
- b. Replacement of non-original entrance doors with replica doors dating to the period of significance.
- c. Conservation of exterior materials, including removal of paint from poured in place concrete foundation, steel sidewall panels, window frames, freight elevator doors, and glazing; and replacement of broken glazing as necessary.

**MM-CUL-11 Construction Monitoring.** Prior to commencement of any construction activity associated with the Factory building, the applicant shall retain a qualified architect meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards in Architecture and/or Historic Architecture to monitor all disassembly, construction and rehabilitation activities to ensure appropriate treatment of the building and character-defining features and materials during the construction project.

**MM-CUL-12 Inadvertent Discovery of Archaeological Resources.** In the event that archaeological resources (sites, features, or artifacts) are exposed during construction activities for the proposed project, all construction work occurring within 100 feet of the find shall immediately stop until a qualified archaeologist, meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards, can evaluate the significance of the find and determine whether or not additional study is warranted. Depending on the significance of the find under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; 14 CCR 15064.5(f); PRC, Section 21082), the archaeologist may simply record the find and allow work to continue. If the discovery proves significant under CEQA, additional work such as preparation of an archaeological treatment plan, testing, or data recovery may be warranted.

**MM-CUL-13 Paleontological Resources.** Prior to commencement of any grading activity on site, the applicant shall retain a qualified paleontologist, subject to the review and approval of the City's Building Official, or designee. The qualified paleontologist

shall be on site during all rough grading and other significant ground-disturbing activities in depths greater than 10 feet below ground surface.

The paleontologist shall prepare a Paleontological Resources Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP) for the proposed project. The PRIMP should be consistent with the guidelines of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontologists (2010) and should include but not be limited to the following:

- a. Attendance at the pre-construction conference by a qualified paleontologist or his/her representative.
- b. Monitoring of excavation activities by a qualified paleontological monitor in areas identified as likely to contain paleontological resources. The monitor shall be equipped to salvage fossils and/or matrix samples as they are unearthed in order to avoid construction delays. The monitor must be empowered to temporarily halt or divert equipment in the area of the find in the event paleontological resources are discovered.
- c. Because the underlying sediments may contain abundant fossil remains that can only be recovered by a screening and picking matrix, these sediments shall occasionally be spot screened through one-eighth to one-twentieth-inch mesh screens to determine whether microfossils exist. If microfossils are encountered, additional sediment samples (up to 6,000 pounds) shall be collected and processed.
- d. Preparation of recovered specimens to a point of identification and permanent preservation. This includes the washing and picking of mass samples to recover small invertebrate and vertebrate fossils and the removal of surplus sediment from around larger specimens to reduce the volume of storage for the repository and the storage cost for the developer.
- e. Identification and curation of specimens into a museum repository with permanent retrievable storage.
- f. Preparation of a report of findings with an appended itemized inventory of specimens. When submitted to the City of West Hollywood, the report and inventory would signify completion of the program to mitigate impacts to paleontological resources.

**MM-CUL-14 Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains.** In accordance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, if human remains are found, the Los Angeles County Coroner shall be notified of the discovery. No further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie

adjacent remains shall occur until the county coroner has determined, within 2 working days of notification of the discovery, the appropriate treatment and disposition of the human remains. If the county coroner determines that the remains are, or are believed to be, Native American, he or she shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) in Sacramento within 48 hours. In accordance with California Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98, the NAHC must immediately notify those persons it believes to be the Most Likely Descendant from the deceased Native American. The Most Likely Descendant shall complete his or her inspection within 24 hours of being granted access to the site. The designated Native American representative would then determine, in consultation with the property owner, the disposition of the human remains.

### **3.3.7 Significance after Mitigation**

Upon completion of the project, including reconfiguration of the Factory building and implementation of MM-CUL-1 through MM-CUL-11, the Factory building would retain sufficient integrity to convey its historical significance to justify its eligibility for the California Register and City of West Hollywood Local Cultural Resource designation. While the overall integrity of the Factory building would be reduced due to relocation, reconfiguration and partial removal of the existing building, the site would maintain sufficient association with the Mitchell Camera Corporation as well as themes of LGBT cultural development in West Hollywood to retain eligibility for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1. The project would also retain a sufficient portion of the building to convey its architectural history as a 20<sup>th</sup> Century pre-fabricated industrial building type, and continue to be eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 3.

Furthermore, the Factory building would retain sufficient integrity, for reasons similar to those discussed above, to maintain eligibility for listing as a City of West Hollywood Local Cultural Resource under Criteria A.1, A.3, A.5, B and C. See Sections 4.6 and 4.7 of Appendix D for an in-depth evaluation of the building's integrity after mitigation. Because the on-site historical resource would retain sufficient integrity after mitigation, impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level.

Implementation of MM-CUL-12, MM-CUL-13, and MM-CUL-14 would ensure that unanticipated archaeological or cultural resources would be identified by a qualified paleontologist monitoring the site, and would put in place strict protocols to follow in the event that unknown archaeological or cultural resources are discovered during construction of the project thereby reducing the project's impacts on archaeological resources, paleontological resources, and human remains to a less than significant level.

### 3.3.8 Additional Information

In April 2016, the West Hollywood Heritage Project filed an application requesting that the State Historical Resources Commission nominate the Factory building for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. At its July 29, 2016, meeting, the State Historical Resources Commission voted not to make such a nomination. The West Hollywood Heritage Project then revised its application, and, at its October 28, 2016, meeting, the State Historical Resources Commission voted to nominate the Factory building for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. As of the drafting of this EIR, it is anticipated that the State Historic Preservation Officer will submit that nomination to the National Park Service for the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places to make a determination about whether the Factory building is eligible for the National Register. It is not currently known whether the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places will determine that the Factory building is eligible for the National Register.

Regardless of the ultimate resolution of whether the Factory building is eligible for the National Register, the proposed project will preserve the character-defining attributes of the Factory building and, as discussed in detail above, will have no significant unmitigated impact on a historical resource under CEQA. According to the CEQA Guidelines, a project may have a significant impact on a historical resource if it “demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner” the physical characteristics of a historical resource that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in, the California Register of Historical Resources or a local register of historical resources (CCR, Title 14, Section 15064.5). The CEQA Guidelines direct lead agencies to evaluate whether a proposed project adversely affects a historical resource’s eligibility for either the California Register or a local register, including whether a historical resource would continue to meet the California Register or local register criteria following project implementation (CCR, Title 14, Section 15064.5(b)(2)). Applying that standard, the proposed project has been determined not to have a significant unmitigated impact on a historical resource due to the proposed project’s preservation of the character-defining attributes of the Factory building such that the building will continue to meet California Register and City of West Hollywood Local Cultural Resource criteria. If the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places concludes that the Factory building is eligible for the National Register, this conclusion would not change. A project’s eligibility for listing in the National Register is not a factor in the CEQA Guidelines’ instructions on how to assess the potential significance of impacts to historical resources. Since the nomination application was filed after the date of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for this EIR, it is also not part of the baseline condition from which the City measures whether an impact is significant. Nevertheless, in the interest in providing the public all known information on the project site, this information is included in this document for informational purposes.



Given the exhaustive review concerning impacts to the project under state and local requirements and evidence from an expert that it will not impair the resources, the City is satisfied that there is substantial evidence to support the conclusion that the proposed project would not significantly impact an historic resource upon implementation of MM-CUL-1 through MM-CUL-11.

### **3.3.9 References**

Dibblee, T.W. and Ehrenspeck, H.E., ed., 1991, Geologic map of the Beverly Hills and Van Nuys (south 1/2) quadrangles, Los Angeles County, California: Dibblee Geological Foundation, Dibblee Foundation Map DF-31, scale 1:24,000.

Society of Vertebrate Paleontologists (SVP). 2010. Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources. 11 p. Available; <http://vertpaleo.org/PDFS/68/68c554bb-86f1-442f-a0dc-25299762d36c.pdf>.

Stantec. 2007. Report of Archaeological and Paleontological Mitigation Program, Hollyhills Drain Units 7 and 8 Project, Los Angeles, California. Prepared for County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. July 31, 2007.

USGS. 2005. Preliminary Geologic Map of the Los Angeles 30' X 60' Quadrangle, Southern California.

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