

CHULA VISTA SEARS

EXPERT TECHNICAL ANALYSIS REPORT

565 BROADWAY, CHULA VISTA, CALIFORNIA



MAY 24, 2013

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. INTRODUCTION**
- II. OVERVIEW OF THE RESOURCE**
- III. METHODOLOGY**
- IV. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OVERVIEW**
- V. EVALUATION OF THE RESOURCE**
- VI. INTEGRITY STATEMENT**
- VII. CONCLUSION**
- VIII. DPR FORM**
- IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE AND REPORT ORGANIZATION

The purpose of this Expert Technical Analysis Report is to evaluate the potential eligibility for listing in national, state, and local register of the Chula Vista Sears, located at 565 Broadway, Chula Vista, California. This report contains the following information:

- Review of the existing exterior conditions of the property.
- Review of the history of the property and its physical development.
- Review of the required consideration of historic resources under local, state, and national register criteria.

This Expert Technical Analysis Report has been prepared in compliance with the City of Chula Vista's Historic Preservation Program's Expert Technical Analysis Report Content (§4.3.1). This report is organized into nine sections. The first section is the Introduction providing purpose and overview of the report and resource location information. The Introduction is followed by the Overview of the Resource, which includes a description of the resource. The third section, Methodology, describes the work that was completed, such as research and field assessments. The Historical Context Overview section provides a brief narrative of the patterns and trends by which the Chula Vista Sears was constructed in order to understand its historic significance. Section five evaluates the resource using applicable local, state, and national register criteria. Next, the Integrity Statement discusses whether the resource has retained its integrity over the years. The Conclusion includes a summary of the evaluation criteria used, historical resource eligibility determination, and any further recommendations. A completed DPR form is included at the end of this report followed by the bibliography.

B. RESOURCE INFORMATION AND LOCATION

The existing Chula Vista Sears store is located within the Chula Vista Center mall between H and I Street and Broadway and Fig Avenue in the City of Chula Vista.

Current Property Address: Chula Vista Sears
565 Broadway
Chula Vista, CA 91950
Assessor Parcel Number: 5720104400

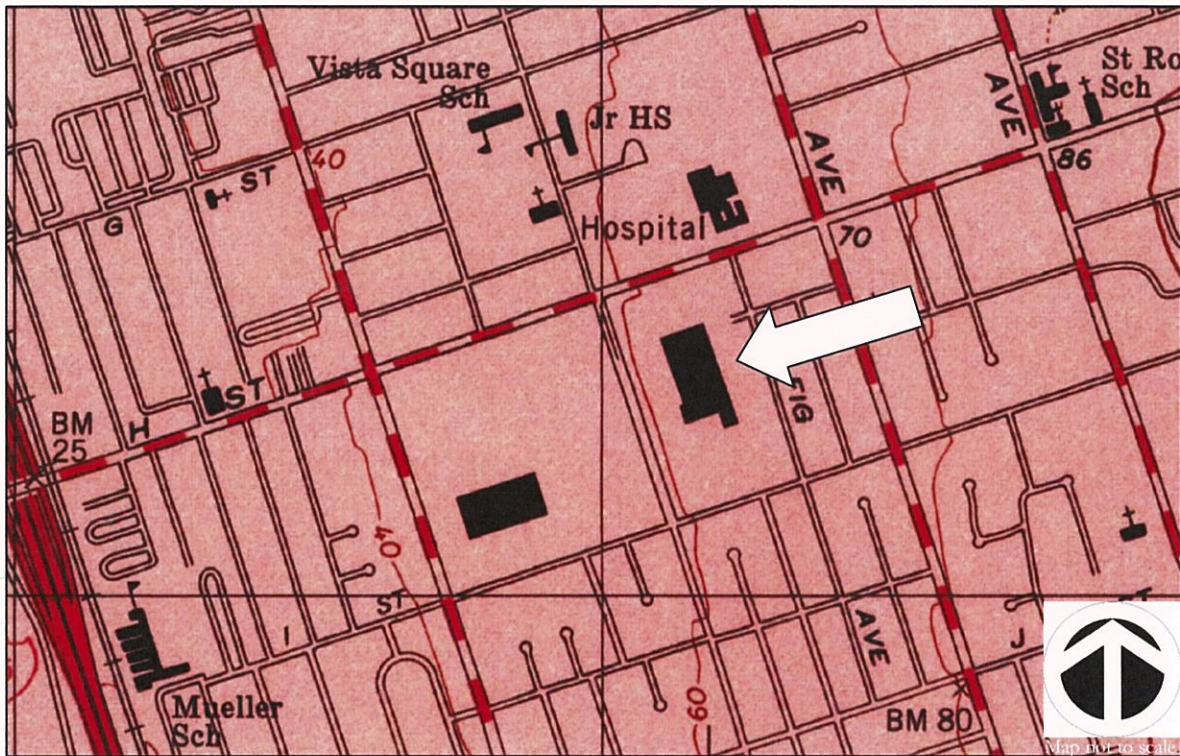


Figure 1-1: Location Map.

Source: USGS, National City, CA 1996.



Figure 1-3: Most recent aerial of Chula Vista Center including the Chula Vista Sears store location. Source: Google maps.

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II. OVERVIEW OF THE RESOURCE

A. Building History

Architect: Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers
 General Contractor: Nielsen Construction Co.
 Original Address: 549-579 Fifth Avenue, Chula Vista, CA (Notice of Completion)
 555 Fifth Avenue, Chula Vista, CA (Directories 1966-1992)
 Current Address: 565 Broadway, Chula Vista, CA

Chronology

October 5, 1964	Date on Construction Documents
January 4, 1965	Ground Breaking
February 21, 1966	Notice of Completion filed
February 24, 1966	Grand Opening
1979	Garden Center renovated and integrated with store
1980s	Exterior renovations
1988	Closure of Fifth Avenue
	Demolition of Gas Pump Island
1989	Tenant Improvements to enlarge basement retail for storage area (approximately 18,000 SF)
1993	Tenant Improvements (Hub Offices)
1997	Exterior sign renovation at three locations
2003	Enclosed existing canopy over loading dock

Modern Commercial Style Architecture

Modern Commercial style department stores and shopping centers were often comprised of one- to two-story buildings encircled by an abundance of free surface parking. They were often horizontally oriented, encompass minimal architectural detailing on wall surfaces, and have strong roof forms including flat roofs some with deep overhangs. Character defining features also include expansive display windows at the ground level, no upper floor windows, awnings, integrated planters, projecting vertical elements, overhanging trellises, sunshades, pergolas, large free-standing letters attached to the buildings facades, shadow block accents, distinctive triangle, parabolic, or arched forms, textile block screens or metal sheathing, and eyebrow overhangs.¹ In Chula Vista, Modern Commercial character-defining-features were described as single story; large storefront windows that are nearly floor to ceiling and comprise most of the main façade; shed or flat roof; widely

¹ City of San Diego. *San Diego Modernism Context Statement*. (San Diego: City of San Diego, 2007). The San Diego Modernism statement refers to this style as “Contemporary” commercial. The 2012 City of Chula Vista’s Revised Draft Historic Survey notes this style as “Modern” non-residential.

overhanging eaves; angular lines; and aluminum sliding windows. These buildings were located mostly at the commercial strip and not as large mall anchor tenants.²

B. Description

Constructed in 1965 and completed in 1966 the Chula Vista Sears, designed by Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers, is located at the Chula Vista Center and faces H Street to the north, Fig Avenue to the east, I Street to the south, and portions of Fifth Avenue and Broadway to the west. The surrounding neighborhood encompasses commercial uses along H Street and Broadway and residential at I and Fig Street. The department store is surrounded by minimal landscaping and surface parking along the north, east, south, and portions of the northwest end. An original freestanding Sears Auto Center building is located at the southwest portion of the parking area.

The resource is a one- and two-story building with basement designed in the Modern Commercial architectural style.³ The building is approximately 250,000 square feet and the building has a flat roof covered with built-up roofing material. The brick and concrete block building rests on a reinforced concrete foundation. A covered walkway surrounds the building with retrofitted posts that have a reinforced casing.

The primary façade faces north toward H Street. Its central bay includes a metal screen wall element at the upper “penthouse” level flanked by large charcoal gray Mirawall panels with aluminum mullions and affixed contemporary “Sears” signage. The original signage was centrally located on the “penthouse” screen wall. Beneath both large panels are glass metal storefronts with multiple entrance doors. The original entrance doors included a scored anodized aluminum push plate detail with “Sears” etched at the center. These doors are no longer extant and have been replaced with contemporary doors. The original display windows adjacent to the entrances have been enclosed and the original stone veneer at the central bay is no longer visible. Tall open-frame gabled canopies were added to the entrances in the 1980s. The original canopy has been notched in these areas to make room for the contemporary entrance structures. Low planters are located at the base of the central bay and along the northeast and northwest corners.

Up until the 1980s, the west portion of the parcel included surface parking and access to Fifth Avenue, which was open to traffic. Mall renovations conducted in the late 1980s officially closed Fifth Avenue to traffic in 1988, physically linked the department store with the remaining Chula Vista Center, and added stores and a courtyard between Sears and Macy’s. Contemporary motifs were embellished upon the exterior existing mall structures. This included the two open-frame gabled canopies at the entrances of the Sears’ north façade and one at the southwest façade facing the shopping center. Specific renovations during this period to the Chula Vista Sears included all

² ASM Affiliates, Inc. *Revised Draft Historic Resources Survey, Chula Vista, California*. Prepared for the City of Chula Vista. (Chula Vista: City of Chula Vista, September 2012), p. 50, 55-56, and 66. The report defines this style as “Modern Style (Non-Residential)”.

³ The Riverside Modernism Context Statement provides a similar architectural style term for this sub-style referring to it as “Mid-Century” Modern design. Recent Modern Age context statements developed by Pasadena, San Diego, and Fresno, California, have defined region-specific versions of Midcentury Modern design. Fresno and San Diego deemed their regional versions the Contemporary Style, while Pasadena defined its Midcentury Modern style the postwar iteration of the International Style.

CHULA VISTA SEARS

storefront entrances and signage and display windows enclosed along at the west façade. The now-connected Chula Vista Center was officially dedicated October 27, 1988.⁴

The south façade contains an original barrel-roof canopy that covers the entrances. Entrance doors have been changed and the central display windows have been boarded-over. The original signage above has been replaced with a contemporary sign. The original Garden Center section, located at the southwest corner of the building, was renovated in 1979 and its space incorporated with the remaining retail area. The original truck ramp with a large central planter and loading dock for deliveries located at the southeast corner is extant. The walkway above the loading dock had been enclosed in 2003 and the original entrance reduced.

The east façade faces a surface parking. The two original store entrances have been renovated and the store display windows enclosed. The stone veneer cladding located between the entrances is no longer extant. A contemporary “Sears” sign replaced the original above the entrances.

A separate 1966 Auto Center is located at the southwest portion of the lot. At the time it was originally constructed it boasted the ability to service up to 24 automobiles simultaneously. Similar changes occurred to the Auto Center building throughout the years including the removal of the brick and stone veneer cladding, enclosure of the window displays, and the replacement of the original signage with contemporary signs. The original Gas Pump Island located to the west of the Auto Center was demolished in 1988 as part of the shopping center renovation.

⁴ <http://mall-hall-of-fame.blogspot.com/2009/03/circa-199-physical-layout.html>. Accessed 1/22/2013.

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Figure 2-1: Looking south at the primary façade.

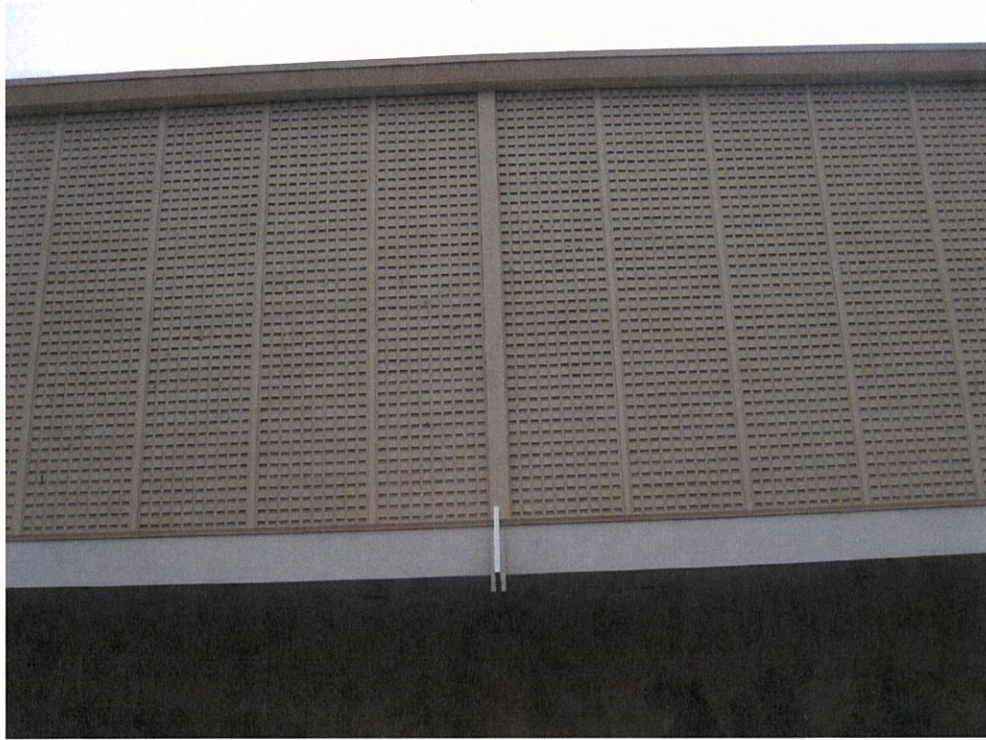


Figure 2-2: Detail of the metal screen wall element at the upper “penthouse” level.



Figure 2-3: View of renovated entry at the north façade with contemporary signage and original large charcoal gray Mirawal panels. The entry canopy has been notched at the storefront entry for the 1980s open-frame gabled canopies.

CHULA VISTA SEARS

Expert Technical Analysis Report

Section 2 – Overview of the Resource

May 24, 2013

Page 2-7



Figure 2-4: Detail of original storefront display windows (now enclosed) and planters at the northwest corner.



Figure 2-5: Looking southeast at the Chula Vista Sears building.



Figure 2-6: Looking south at the covered walkway and the store's relationship to the rest of the shopping center along the now closed Fifth Avenue.



Figure 2-7: Renovated northwest entry with enclosed display windows and contemporary signage.



Figure 2-8: Renovated southwest entry showing notched canopy at entry and 1980s open-framed gabled entry structure.



Figure 2-9: Looking north at the south façade. The original Garden Center, located to the left, has been enclosed and its space integrated with the interior retail area.



Figure 2-10: Detail of the barrel roof canopy, retrofitted posts, and enclosed original display windows at the south entry.



Figure 2-11: View of the original truck ramp with large central planter and loading dock for deliveries at the south façade.



Figure 2-12: Southeast corner showing enclosed walkway.



Figure 2-13: East façade showing the enclosed display windows.



Figure 2-14: Looking west at the Sears Auto Center building.



Figure 2-15: Looking west at the Sears Auto Center service entry.



Figure 2-16: Looking northwest at the Sears Auto Center building. All signage has been replaced. The original brick and stone veneer cladding are no longer extant.



Figure 2-17: Looking southeast at the Sears Auto Center building. The north façade's original storefront windows and original brick wall to the right of the west storefront are no longer extant. All original signage have been replaced with contemporary ones.

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III. PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The architectural investigation is a critical first step in assessing impacts to historical resources located within the project study area. The following steps were taken in the documentation process:

1. Preliminary Walk Through and Existing Conditions Survey

A site walk through and existing conditions survey was conducted by Eileen Magno, Historian. The survey was conducted to understand the existing condition of the site and assess its integrity. Analysis focused on the building's exterior and did not include detailed assessment of the landscape, archaeological, structural, electrical, mechanical systems, or building interiors.

2. Background Information

This report was prepared using primary and secondary sources related to the resource's site development history. Research was conducted at the following depositories: City of Chula Vista Planning Department and Building Division, City of Chula Vista Public Library, County of San Diego Assessor's Office, San Diego History Center, and the San Diego Public Library California Room. Materials included previous documentation of historic status, photographs, architectural drawings, news articles, City/County directories, title information, and maps. Published sources focusing on local history were consulted, as well as material relating to federal, state, and local designation requirements. Research for the report was not intended to produce a large compendium of historical and genealogical material, but rather to provide selected information necessary to understanding the evolution of the site and its significance.

3. Drawings and Photographs

Drawings were provided by Sears. Photographic documentation was conducted by Heritage during the site visit and is noted throughout this report.

4. Evaluation

The process of evaluation occurs throughout the study as information is gathered, compared, and reviewed. Typically, historical data and physical evidence are reviewed to help evaluate the historical, architectural, engineering, and cultural significance of a property, its surrounding context, its construction and use, and occupants or other persons associated with its history and development. Evaluations were completed by a team made up of Secretary of the Interior's Qualified Historic Architect, Architect, and Historian.

5. Project Personnel

The primary investigators from Heritage Architecture & Planning are David Marshall, AIA, Senior Principal Architect, Eileen Magno, Historian/Architectural Historian, Elizabeth Hammack, Architectural Historian, and Thomas Saunders, Intermediate Designer/Intern Architect. All staff members meet or exceed *The Secretary of the Interior's Qualification Standards* as published in the Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61 as well as Sections 4.3 and 7.2 of the City of Chula Vista's Historic Preservation Program.

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IV. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Originally part of the Rancho de la Nacion, the city of Chula Vista is rich in history. First inhabited by the Diegueno Indians, the area that is now Chula Vista fell into the hands of the Spanish in the mid-1700s. These conquered lands were deeded to the Catholic Church, and later the King of Spain awarded land grants to various individuals. The Mexican government eventually came into possession of large parcels of land in the area and in 1845, the last Mexican Governor of California granted John Forster the Rancho de la Nacion. Part of the 42 square mile parcel included all of Chula Vista, National City, and Bonita. In 1868, the Kimball family purchased the Rancho for \$30,000. Frank Kimball commissioned famed town planner Colonel W. G. Dickinson to design the town site that is now Chula Vista.

Dickinson set out to make Chula Vista a community of fine residences where permanent settlement that would improve the land's value was encouraged. To this end, the 5,000 acre tract was first cleared of brush and subdivided into gridiron pattern. Streets were laid out one-quarter mile apart and hundreds of trees were planted.¹

Homes and citrus groves soon dotted the landscape, making Chula Vista the center of the nation's citrus industry. To meet the growing agricultural demand, the construction of Sweetwater Dam was begun in 1886 and a railroad line running from San Diego through Chula Vista to San Ysidro was completed two years later. By 1896, nearly 1,400 acres of lemon and orange trees had been planted and two packing plants were in operation. The City's legacy as Lemon Capital of the World was born.²

By the turn of the century, private citizens alone could no longer provide basic services for the growing community. In 1911, Chula Vista incorporated with a population of 550 people, electing a five-member Board of Trustees and City Marshall. Although the city remained mostly agricultural, commercial and civic services began developing around Third Avenue, mostly consisting of popular revival styles.

The War also brought new industry to the City. During World War I, Hercules Powder Plant established a munitions plant. After the war, San Diego Oil Products Corporation took over Hercules' buildings, turning them into the largest cottonseed warehouse in the United States. Following WWI, veterans returned to Chula Vista with its newly paved roads and other city improvements. A steady flow of revival style residential buildings were constructed throughout the area reflecting the trends found throughout the state.

With the advent of World War II, lemon production declined and manufacturing increased. Chula Vista began its transition during this era from agriculture-based economy to industrial economy.³ In 1941, Rohr Aircraft Corporation, a manufacturer of defense and aerospace products, moved its

¹ Chula Vista Community Development, "Chula Vista History 90 Years of Spirit." (Chula Vista: September 2000), p. 13.

² Ibid.

³ ASM Affiliates, "Revised Draft Chula Vista Historic Resources Survey, Chula Vista, California" prepared for the City of Chula Vista, September 2012. p. 42.

plant from San Diego to Chula Vista becoming the world's largest manufacturer of aircraft power packages by 1945.⁴

The post war boom garnered a demand for housing. Hundreds of California ranch houses were constructed in the new subdivision carved out of 500 acres of former citrus groves. These small rectangular houses with low pitched hip or gable roofs had no attics and no front porches. The exteriors were sheathed with stucco, board and batten, shingles, clapboard, or a combination of two or more of these.⁵ In addition to newer neighborhoods, areas once occupied by Navy housing were purchased by the City to help relieve some of the housing demand. Areas such as Vista Square Housing, which housed approximately 600 families, was purchased from the Navy in 1944 for \$108,000.⁶ By 1950, the population of Chula Vista had risen to 16,505. In order to meet the population growth, public facilities became urgent. Soon, development of a civic center complete with City Hall, courthouse, fire station, library, and police wings was erected along F Street and Fourth Avenue in central Chula Vista.

Changing trends in convenience and shopping, underscored by the continuing growth of suburbia, kept retailers and developers busy into the 1960s.⁷ Commercial amenities outside the main street area were in demand in order to accommodate the surrounding suburbs growing needs. The commercial development of this era reflected both modern values in architecture and the growing presence of automobiles.

*The shopping center's rise in the decade following the war was shaped by several related factors. Large new areas around population centers were being occupied by middle-class and prosperous working-class residential developments. These tracts were generally far removed from existing retail outlets....By 1950 the shopping center was transforming [retail stores] from a lone-wolf operation into an anchor unit of considerably larger enterprise....Not only were major stores several times the size of their precursors, but there was often a more extensive supporting cast.*⁸

This new type of retailing destination represented a radical break from traditional, unplanned retail growth. Rather than individually owned buildings facing the street and built to the full extent of the lot, these shopping centers were separated from the streets by large parking lots and often featured internal entrances and courtyards. Massive in scale, shopping centers were anchored by one or several department stores and numerous smaller retail shops. Unlike strip malls, shopping centers incorporated pedestrian courtyards and walkways, creating a unique shopping environment sheltered from traffic and parking lots.⁹ The grouping of stores in areas where parking could be made available and access from major highways was a growing trend in San Diego County. By the mid-

⁴ Chula Vista Community Development, p. 13.

⁵ Karna Webster. *Chula Vista Heritage 1911-1986* (Chula Vista: City of Chula Vista, 1986), p. 81.

⁶ "Site Once Housed 600 Families." *The Star News*, November 11, 1960.

⁷ Iris Engstrand, *San Diego California's Corner* (San Diego: Sunbelt Publications, 2005).

⁸ Richard Longstreth, *The Drive-In, The Supermarket, and the Transformation of Commercial Space in Los Angeles, 1914-1941* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000), p. 162.

⁹ Mary Brown, "San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement" (San Francisco: City of San Francisco, September 30, 2010).

CHULA VISTA SEARS

1960s, the county would have four major regional shopping centers backed up by major department stores.¹⁰ The Chula Vista Center would be South Bay's anchor shopping center.

The Chula Vista Center was constructed in 1962 on a 35-acre site on Broadway between H and I Streets where the former Vista Square Housing development was located. It was developed to meet the growing need for Chula Vista's suburban area and south bay to have a large, one-stop commercial area with abundant parking. The new shopping center featured an open mall 40 feet wide by 640 feet long. The center, designed by Charles Luckman Associates, included a fountain that duplicated one at the Alhambra, a palace in Granada, Spain. The Sav-On Drug Store was the first store than opened followed by Marston Department Store a year later and J.C. Penny the subsequent year. Sears opened its doors at the east end of the Chula Vista Center across Fifth Avenue in 1966. Renowned Los Angeles architectural firm Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers designed the store in 1964-1965. The Chula Vista Sears not only catered to the ubiquitous motoring public with a generous surrounding parking lot and Auto Center, its size and contemporary look were designed to meet all of the needs of the modern consumer.

Site

The original site for the "Vista Square Center" included a total of 57 acres of the former Vista Square Housing development which was a naval surplus development purchased by the City to help with the increased demand for housing during the 1950s.¹¹ During its boom, approximately 600 families occupied the site.¹² With the development of newer private apartment complexes in surrounding areas, the Vista Square began to decline in occupancy. In the late 1950s, the City began extensive planning efforts to redevelop the land into a large scale commercial shopping mall. Development proposals were submitted and reviewed in 1958 and included issues such as the permanent closure of Fifth Avenue to through traffic.¹³

Three firms, Broadway-Hale Company, the May Company, and Gladstone & Company submitted detailed proposals to the City. Two of the submittals included Sears Roebuck & Company as one of the anchor tenants. An early artist's sketch noted the "Vista Square Center" as a "giant regional shopping center" and depicted a May Company store and a Sears Roebuck Department Store on site.¹⁴ Only the Broadway-Hale Company proposal included a desire to "take possession of the land on the east side of Fifth Avenue" as part of their development.¹⁵

By 1960, the Broadway-Hale Company secured the site at the cost of \$1,174,700 and set on development of the shopping center. The agreement included the option of an additional 14.4 acres to the east of Fifth Avenue. With impending development, Vista Square Housing vacated its

¹⁰ By late 1959, the shopping center race was on in San Diego. May Company Department Stores had their eyes on San Diego's Mission Valley area, Walker Scott Company had been successful in the College Grove area, The Marston Company began development of the Grossmont Shopping Center, and Broadway-Hale acquired Chula Vista. Richard F. Pourade, "The Auto – The Rise of Shopping Centers." *City of Dreams*. www.sandiegohistory.org/books/pourade/dream/dreamchapter8.htm. Accessed 12/12/2012.

¹¹ New commercial development outside the downtown core was usually sited on vacant land or in older neighborhoods that had been razed for redevelopment project areas.

¹² *The Star News*, November 11, 1960.

¹³ "Vista Square Shopping Center Proposals Studied: May Co, Penny, Broadway, Sears Stores Included." *The Star News*, September 6, 1959.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

remaining 180 families with most of the houses given away at no cost to the City. Many of the houses were also relocated to Mexico with the remaining being razed that same year so that construction could begin. At the time of its completion in 1962, the Chula Vista Center stood on 35 acres of the former Vista Square Housing development.¹⁶ It would be boasted as the largest commercial development of its time.¹⁷

Following the opening of the Chula Vista Center, the Broadway-Hale Company sold the 14.4 acre parcel east of Fifth Avenue to the Sears Roebuck and Company in 1963.¹⁸ Construction of the \$3.7 million dollar complex was started January 4, 1965 and completed a year later.¹⁹ Included in the development plans was a 24-car automotive center located adjacent to the store on Fifth Avenue. Opening day celebrations commenced on February 24, 1966 with thousands attending.

Sears Roebuck & Company

Catalogue sales made Sears Roebuck & Company one of the leading retailers in the United States. Founded in Chicago in the early 1890s, it initially catered to rural America, shipping thick catalogues and mail-order merchandise to outlying areas where large stores seldom existed and consumer choice was limited. Sales increased fourfold during the 1910s and large mail-order distribution centers were developed by Sears in Dallas (1913-25), Seattle (1915), and Philadelphia (1920).

Sears entered the retail field in 1925. These urban department stores would dominate Sears' retail until the 1950s. At first, many stores were part of existing mail-order facilities. This strategy substantially reduced initial start-up costs and appealed to suburban customers who often lived in the vicinity. Robert E. Wood, who became Sears' vice president for factories and stores in 1924 and president in 1928, oversaw the company's rapid expansion into retail sales. His program was an enormous success and by 1929 it ranked third in the country in net sales, behind such established national chains as J.C. Penny and F.W. Woolworth. Sears would open three distinct types of retail locations: free-standing department stores, referred to as "A" stores, smaller "B" stores that addressed a specific market, and "C" stores which emphasized appliances or automotive products.

It was during Wood's tenure in 1928 that San Diego would gain its first Sears in the county located at 12th and Broadway in San Diego with 25 employees. Then in November 1935, Sears moved to 6th and C Streets in San Diego and expanded to larger quarters where they had 85 employees to serve local residents.²⁰ The company, in general, thrived throughout the Depression, growing to 400 stores in 1933, and more than 600 stores in 1941.

From the 1950s, Sears would expand into suburban markets as reflective in their move to a larger store in the Hillcrest area of San Diego in 1952, which employed nearly 800.²¹ By the 1960s and 1970s, Sears would expand into suburban malls much like the Chula Vista Sears.²² The Chula Vista

¹⁶ *The Star News*, November 11, 1960.

¹⁷ "Shopping Center: Read All About It." *Chula Vista Star News*, November 11, 1962.

¹⁸ Grant Deed, September 26, 1963.

¹⁹ "Sears Roebuck Ready to Start Construction." *The Star News*, January 3, 1965.

Notice of Completion notes the project was completed on February 21, 1966.

²⁰ "Newest Sears Store Creates Many Jobs." *The Star-News*, February 20, 1966.

²¹ "Sears Executives Look Back on First Year in Chula Vista." *The Star-News*, February 23, 1967.

²² "Newest Sears Store Creates Many Jobs." *The Star-News*, February 20, 1966.

CHULA VISTA SEARS

store would boast its larger square footage and over 1,100 parking spaces adjacent to the store, plus an Automotive Service Center that could service 24 cars simultaneously.²³

By the mid-1960s, Sears Roebuck was a superpower. As huge shopping centers began to cover the landscape, entire developments were predicated on the presence of a Sears store, and fundamental alterations in surrounding marketing areas occurred because of corporate advertising that made Sears part of everyday life.²⁴

Builders

Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers, 1955-1965

Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers designed the Chula Vista Sears. Stiles Oliver Clements (1883-1966) was born in Centerville, MD. He received a Bachelor of Architecture at the Drexel Institute of Technology, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a Master of Architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris, France. After graduation he worked for various New York firms until he moved to Los Angeles in 1911 at the age of 28.

In 1923, Mr. Clements became a partner at Morgan, Wall & Clements Associates. During the 1920s and 1930s, Morgan, Wall & Clements Associates, designed numerous commercial buildings, mainly in Los Angeles, specializing in food stores, public markets, and drive-in markets. Mr. Clements was credited for being responsible for much of the development of modern commercial architecture in Los Angeles having designed 69 buildings along the portion of Wilshire Boulevard known as the Miracle Mile.²⁵ With each era “[Clements] proved ever adroit at perceiving shifts in taste, manifesting them in ways that made it seem as though he had precipitated the change”.²⁶

The firm was also known for its design of supermarkets, an emerging property type in early 20th century, and in particular for Ralphs supermarket prototypes, having designed an early Ralphs supermarket branch outlet in 1926. In 1937, Clements acquired the firm and renamed it Stiles O. Clements.²⁷ The firm Stiles O. Clements continued the close association with Ralphs supermarkets that was established during the Morgan, Wall & Clements, Associates era.

Stiles O. Clements designed several shopping centers during the 1940s and 1950s: Windsor Hills Shopping Center, Los Angeles (1948) and Barnsdall Square Shopping Center, Los Angeles (ca. 1952-1956). These shopping centers had large surface parking lots located in front of the stores, a new strategy that many retailers and developers had embraced by the mid-1950s.²⁸ Deliveries were made via efficient and inconspicuous rear delivery ways. It was Stiles O. Clements’ Valley Plaza Master

²³“Sears Executives Look Back on First Year in Chula Vista.” *The Star-News*, February 23, 1967.

²⁴ Donald R. Katz, *The Big Store: Inside the Crisis and Revolution at Sears* (New York: Viking Press, 1987), p. 15.

²⁵ “Fox Fullerton Theatre Complex National Register of Historic Places.” March 21, 2006.

²⁶ Richard Longstreth, *The Drive-In, the Supermarket, and the Transformation of Commercial Space in Los Angeles, 1914-1941* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000).

²⁷ “Fox Fullerton Theatre Complex National Register of Historic Places.” March 21, 2006.

²⁸ PCR Services Inc., “Historic Resources Technical Report, Historic Resources Assessment and Environmental Impact Analysis, Washington Square Shopping Center 4020-4060 W. Washington Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90016 (APN: 5060-008-004)” May 2009.

May 24, 2013

Page 4-6

Plan in 1949-1951, however, that set precedence for a large front parking area that was highly influenced by Sears Roebuck & Company, the main anchor store.²⁹

The 180,000 square foot Valley Plaza store combined facets of his work just completed for the company with those of his Pico designed outlet. His scheme possessed a clear front, but one more neutral in character, appearing somewhat like an immense billboard, large enough to catch the eye of the passing motorist but also service as a backdrop to the rows of automobiles that separated it from the street.³⁰ Valley Plaza was an experiment for Sears for it never before had the company function as the principle retailer in the development of a shopping center from its inception.³¹

By 1955, Mr. Clements opened Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers, with his son Robert Clements, and served as Senior Partner of the firm until his retirement in 1965.³² Following Stile's retirement, Robert Clements took over the Los Angeles firm. The firm continued to design a wide array of commercial property types during the 1960s, from department stores and neighborhood shopping chain stores to factories, distribution center and banks, as well as neighborhood shopping centers mainly throughout the Los Angeles metropolitan area. Representative projects include the Park La Brea Shopping Center, the Pershing Square garage, the Carnation Office Building/Restaurant, Mullen-Bluett Department Store, the Navy and Marine Corps Reserve Training Center in Elysian Park and several stores for Sears and Montgomery Ward and markets for Ralphs, Hughes, Safeway, and Vons.³³ Following Stile O. Clements retirement, the firm was renamed Robert O. Clements and Associates Architects-Engineers and remained active until Robert's death in 1987.

Although Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers have been well known in the Los Angeles area, their work in San Diego County is rare. The 1966 Chula Vista Sears and the 1927 Bank of Italy in Oceanside are the only known representative projects of the firm in San Diego County. These projects represent Stiles O. Clements early and later eras in architectural style for commercial buildings.³⁴ The Chula Vista Sears would be one of final projects completed by Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers before Stiles O. Clements' retirement in 1965. Construction documents for the building date to 1964 and a Notice of Completion was filed on February 21, 1966. The Grand Opening took place three days later on February 24, 1966.

²⁹ Stiles Clement was also the architect of record for the 1947 Sears Roebuck & Company Store in Compton. Richard Longstreth, *City Center to Regional Mall: Architecture, the Automobile, and Retailing in Los Angeles, 1920-1950* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1998) p. 261.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Stiles O. Clements died in 1966, one year after he retired.

³³ http://articles.latimes.com/1987-05-08/local/me-2536_1_robert-o-clements. Accessed: 01/30/13. In 1962, the Ralphs supermarket chain operated 44 supermarkets of which Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers designed and engineered. During this era, Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers also designed supermarkets for Food Giant, Market Basket, Von's, and Safeway. Many Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers supermarkets are no longer extant. Other markets designed by Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers are substantially altered. The firm's extant shopping centers are also often heavily modified and are not evocative of the original Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers design.

³⁴ The Oceanside Bank of Italy has been modified throughout the years and has lost much of its exterior architectural details and integrity.

CHULA VISTA SEARS

Expert Technical Analysis Report
Section 4 – Historical Context Overview

May 24, 2013

Page 4-7

Nielson Construction Company, General Contractor

The Nielson Construction Company, a local San Diego based company, served as the General Contractor for the Chula Vista Sears project. The company has been serving San Diego since 1945. Under the leadership of S. Falck Nielsen, Nielsen Construction worked alongside some of San Diego's great visionaries in building some of the city's iconic structures: UCSD Library, Sea World and its various expansions, the Civic Center, and the first residential high rise in downtown, the Meridian.

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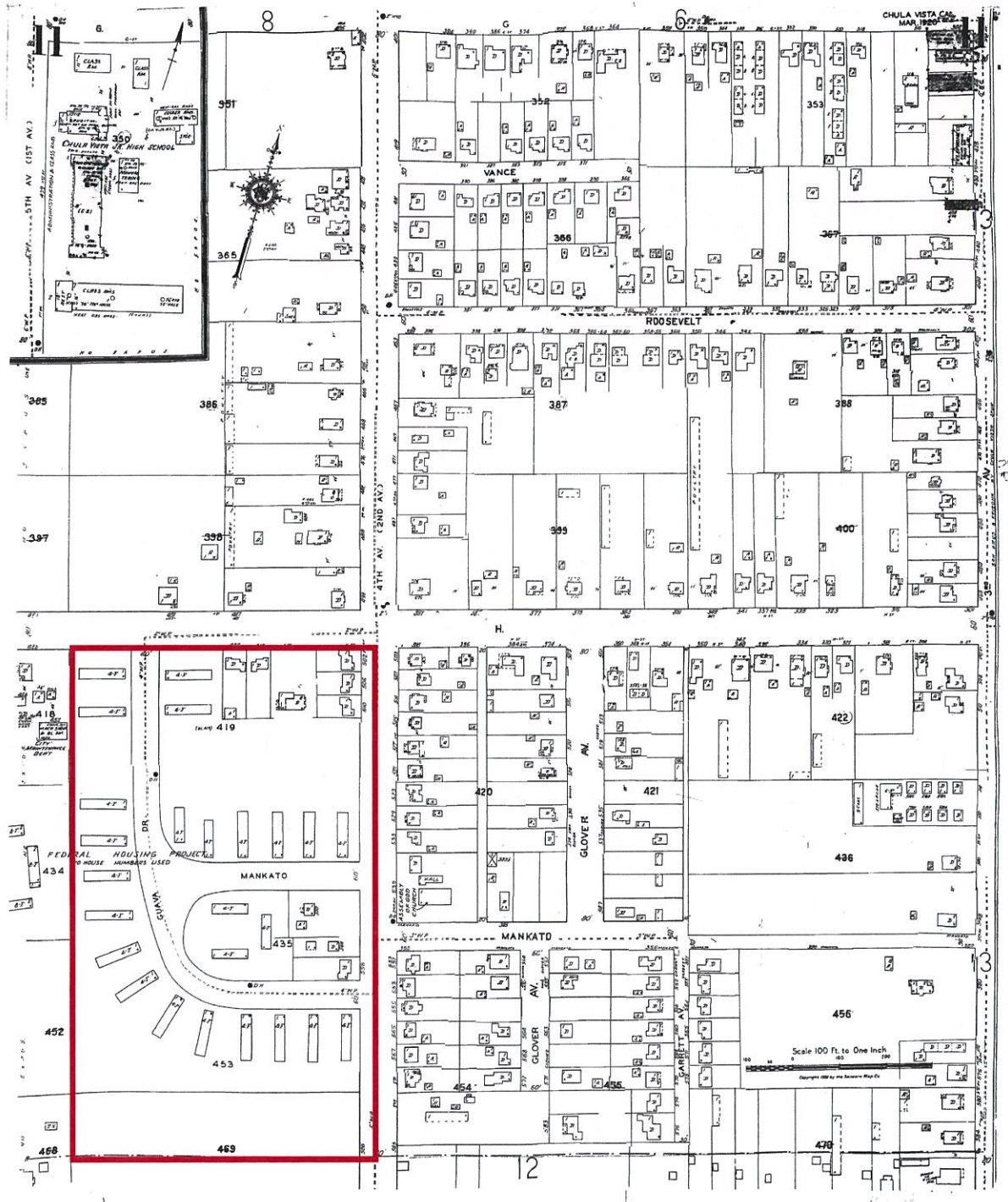


Figure 4-1: July 1956 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicting the area where the Chula Vista Sears would be located.

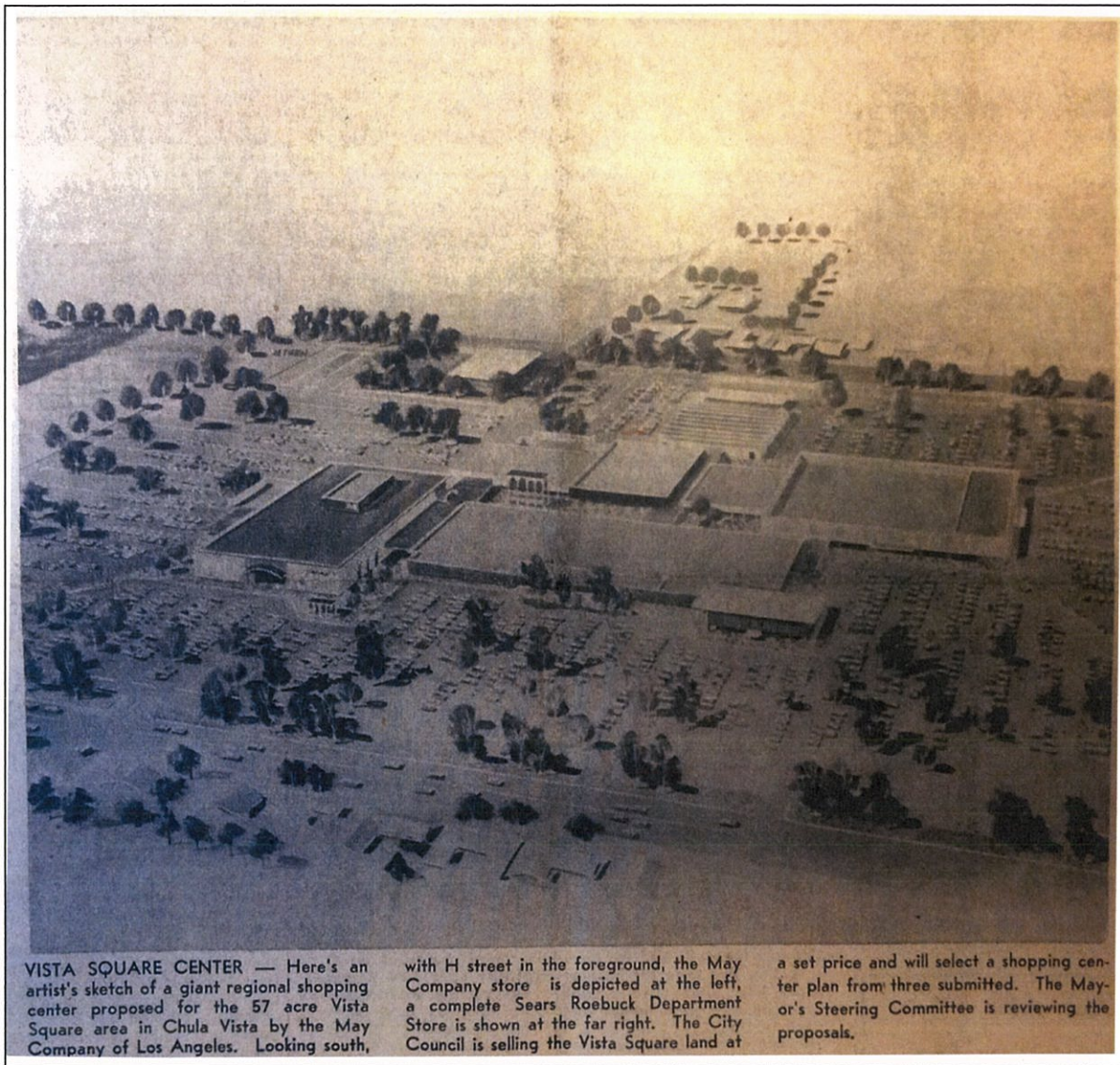


Figure 4-2: Artist's rendering of one of the proposed plans for the "Vista Square Shopping Center" now known as the Chula Vista Center. Sears Roebuck & Company department store is included in this plan. Source: *The Star-News* September 6, 1959.



Figure 4-3: Aerial of the Vista Square Housing looking east prior to demolition to make room for the “Vista Square Shopping Center”. Source: *Chula Vista Star-News* June 2, 1960.



Figure 4-4: Aerial photograph of the Chula Vista Center to the left without the Sears building, June 24, 1963.

Source: Chula Vista Public Library

<h3>Sears Roebuck Ready to Start Construction</h3> <p>Work on Chula Vista's \$2.7 million Sears Roebuck & Co. store is expected to get under way tomorrow.</p> <p>Permits for construction of the big job on 15 acres of former city land east of Fifth avenue between H and I streets were issued this week by E. J. Grady, chief building inspector. He said they totaled \$2,755,529.</p> <p>The Nielsen Construction Co. of San Diego will do the building. A spokesman for the firm said the contract calls for 315 calendar days.</p>	<p>"We should have it completed well before Thanksgiving," he said.</p> <p>From 100 to 150 men will be working at various times on the project, thus boosting the area's economy.</p> <p>Permits for construction of the main store totaled \$2,628,248 and \$127,281 for a service station. The main store will be 222,800 square feet and the automotive complex 15,000 square feet.</p> <p>Both buildings will have basements for storage, offices, employes' lounges and cafeterias. Freight deliveries will be made underground, similar to those at The Broadway, just across the street in the Chula Vista Shopping Center.</p>
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Figure 4-5: Preparations for construction. Source: *The Star-News* January 3, 1965.



Chula Vista Star-News
Serving the South Bay Every Thursday and Sunday
FORTY-SEVENTH YEAR — No. 2 Chula Vista, California, Thursday, January 7, 1965 3 Sections— 36 PAGES 10c Per Copy

Paving Way for New Sears

BIG BULLDOZERS this week are leveling 15-acre site for new Sears Roebuck store on Fifth avenue between H and I streets in Chula Vista. Construction of store gets under way this week with completion date set prior to Thanksgiving. Store and auto service complex will be directly across Fifth avenue from Chula Vista Shopping Center, seen in background in above photo.

—Star-News Photo
Building permit for facility pushed city's valuation for 1964 near \$20 million mark. (See story on page CV-3).

Figure 4-6: Preparations for construction. Source: *Chula Vista Star-News* January 7, 1965.

RECORDING REQUESTED BY

AND WHEN RECORDED MAIL TO

Name: Robert Clomerts & Assoc.
Address: 830 Wilshire Blvd.
City & State: Los Angeles, Calif. 90017

Feb 24 2 05 PM '66
SERIES 7 BOOK 1866
OFFICIAL RECORDS
SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIF.
A. E. GRAY, RECORDER
\$2.00

(SPACE ABOVE THIS LINE FOR RECORDER'S USE)

NOTICE OF COMPLETION

Notice pursuant to Section 1196.1, Code of Civil Procedure, must be filed within 10 days after completion.
See reverse side for complete requirements.

NOTICE is hereby given that:

- The undersigned is OWNER of the interest or estate stated below in the property hereinafter described.
- The FULL NAME of the undersigned is Gours, Roubuck & Co.
- The FULL ADDRESS of the undersigned is 2650 E. Olympic Blvd.,
Los Angeles, Calif. 90054
- The NATURE OF THE TITLE of the undersigned is: In fee.
- The FULL NAMES and FULL ADDRESSES of ALL PERSONS, if any, WHO HOLD TITLE with the undersigned as JOINT TENANTS or as TENANTS IN COMMON are:

NAME	ADDRESS
- A work of improvement on the property hereinafter described was COMPLETED on 2/21/66
- The NAME OF THE CONTRACTOR, if any, for such work of improvement was Nielman Construction Co. and Swinerton & Walberg Co.
 (If no contractor for work of improvement as a whole, insert "none".)
- The property on which said work of improvement was completed is in the city of Chula Vista, county of San Diego, State of California, and is described as follows: 544, 570 North Avenue, Chula Vista, Calif.
- The street address of said property is: _____
 (If no street address has been officially assigned, insert "none".)
 Signature of owner named in paragraph 8: _____
 Dated: _____
 STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
 County of _____
 The undersigned, being duly sworn, says: That _____ he is the owner of the aforesaid interest or estate in the property described in the foregoing notice; that _____ he has read the same, and knows the contents thereof, and that the facts stated therein are true.
 SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me
 on _____
 (Seal) _____
 Signature of owner named in paragraph 8: Gours, Roubuck & Co.
 G. A. Suberguier
 NAME (TYPED OR PRINTED)
 Notary Public in and for this County and State.
 Verification for corporate owner:
 STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 County of San Diego ss.
 being duly sworn, says:
 That he is the Contractor of _____
 the corporation that executed the foregoing notice as owner of the aforesaid interest or estate in the property therein described; that he makes this verification on behalf of said corporation; that he has read said notice and knows the contents thereof, and that the facts therein stated are true.
 SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me
 (Seal) _____
 February 21, 1966
 Matthew R. Scherger
 Notary Public in and for the State of California

NOTICE OF COMPLETION-WALLETT'S FORM (114-RNY-5-66)

Figure 4-7: Notice of Completion on February 21, 1966.



Figure 4-8: Sears grand opening headlines. Source: *Chula Vista Star-News* February 20, 1966.



Figure 4-9: Opening day headlines. Source: *Chula Vista Star-News* February 24, 1966.



Figure 4-10: Advertisements for the opening of the Chula Vista Sears showing renderings of the new department store. Source: *Chula Vista Star-News* February 20, 1966.



Figure 4-11: Looking southeast at the newly completed Chula Vista Sears. Source: *Chula Vista Star-News* February 20, 1966.



Figure 4-12: Detail of the Chula Vista Sears in the background during the Grand Opening promotions. Source: *The Star-News* February 20, 1966.



Figure 4-13: Detail of the Chula Vista Sears main entry doors during the Grand Opening promotions. Source: *The Star-News* February 20, 1966.

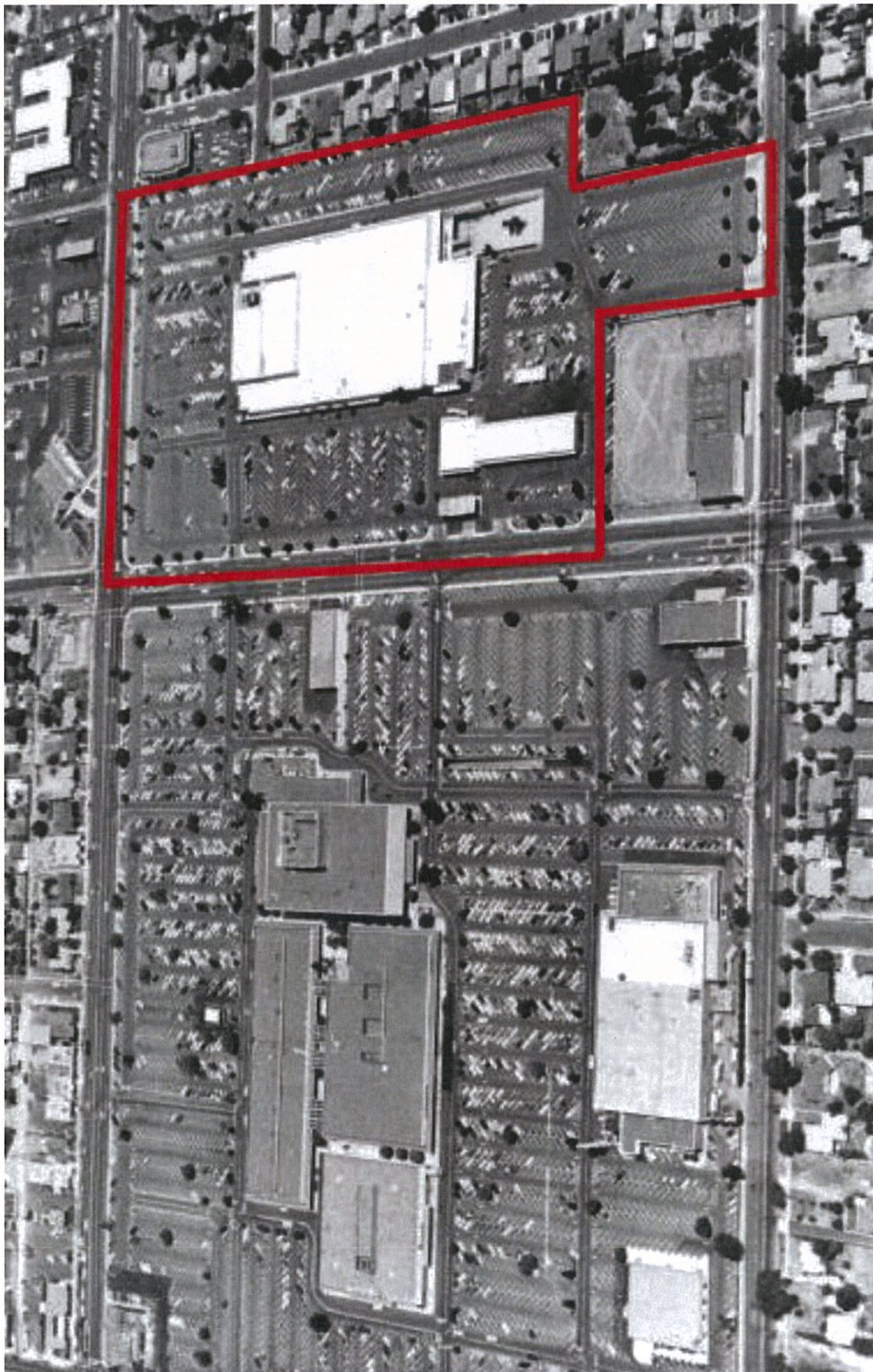


Figure 4-14: Aerial photograph of the Chula Vista Center to the left and Sears Roebuck & Company building on the right with Auto Center and Gas Pump Island, ca. 1966. The commercial center is divided by Fifth Avenue which was open to traffic until the late 1980s. Source: Chula Vista Public Library

COMMERCIAL-INDUSTRIAL BUILDING RECORD
ASSESSOR, SAN DIEGO COUNTY

NAME SEARS BROS (MIRAL STORE) ADDRESS 555 Grandview SHEET 3 OF 6 Parcel No. S12-000-017

CLASS & SHAPE	FRAME	TRUSSES	EXT. FINISH	ROOF		LIGHTING	FRONT	INTERIOR CONSTRUCTION																																																																																																																													
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Figure 4-16: Commercial Building Record (continued). Source: San Diego County Assessor.

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL MINOR STRUCTURES

SUBDIVISION: 66C 1540 SHEET 22 OF 25 SHEETS
 PARCEL: 572-230-010

TYPE OF STRUCTURE:	NO. OF STORIES:	YEAR BUILT:	AREA	CONDITION:	REPRODUCTION COST	DEPRECIATION	DEPRECIATED COST
BUILDING CLASSIFICATION:	LOT:			UNIT COST	%		\$
(STATISTICAL ONLY)							
SHT 1#	18.1	75	2,542,221				
SHT 2#			130,685				
SHT 4#			253,503				
SHT 6#			2,967,409				
SEARS GAINED 5,000 SQ. FT. OF SALES AREA IN BASEMENT EST AT \$20/1K PER FT. = 100,000 SEARS COMPLETE EXTENSIVE RENOVEL CHANGED EFFECTIVE YR TO ± 1980-1985 FROM EXISTING 1969/1970 AUG. EST AT \$2/1K x 153,033 N/A SALES IS \$300,000 ROUNDED. COST OF 244,031 K STARTED ON BUDG PLAN NOTES AGD 5/19/88 INCLUDES PERM HOUSE ON 3RD FL.). \$100,000 TILT \$200,000 RENOVEL IS \$400,000 PERM IT INDICATED TOTAL COST AT \$1,000,000 ACTUAL COST NOT PROVIDED.							
TOTAL					\$		\$
FEES					\$		\$
GRAND TOTAL					\$		\$

Figure 4-17: Commercial Building Record (continued). Source: San Diego County Assessor.

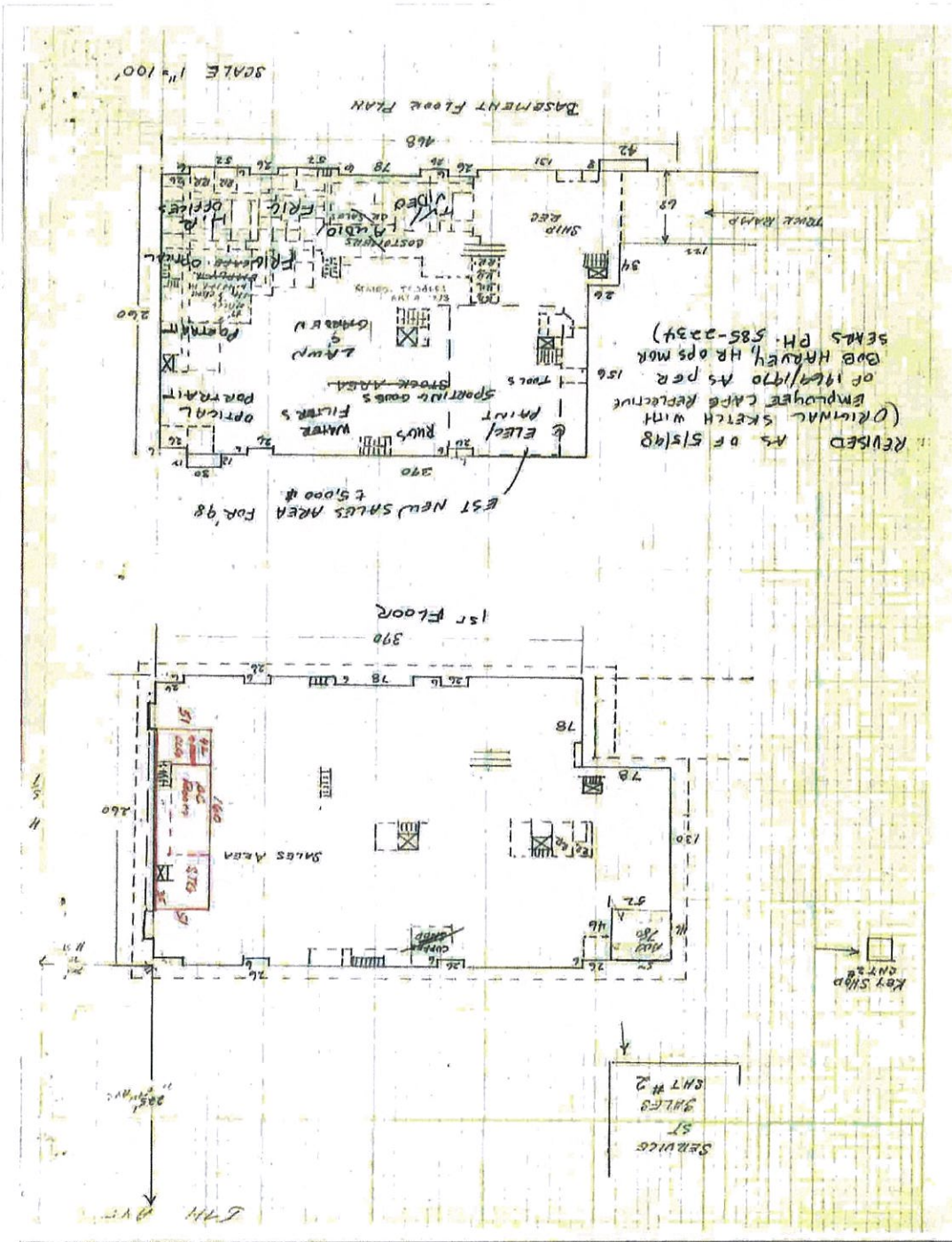


Figure 4-18: Commercial Building Record (continued). Source: San Diego County Assessor.

CHULA VISTA SEARS

May 24, 2013

Page 4-26

Expert Technical Analysis Report
Section 4 – Historical Context Overview

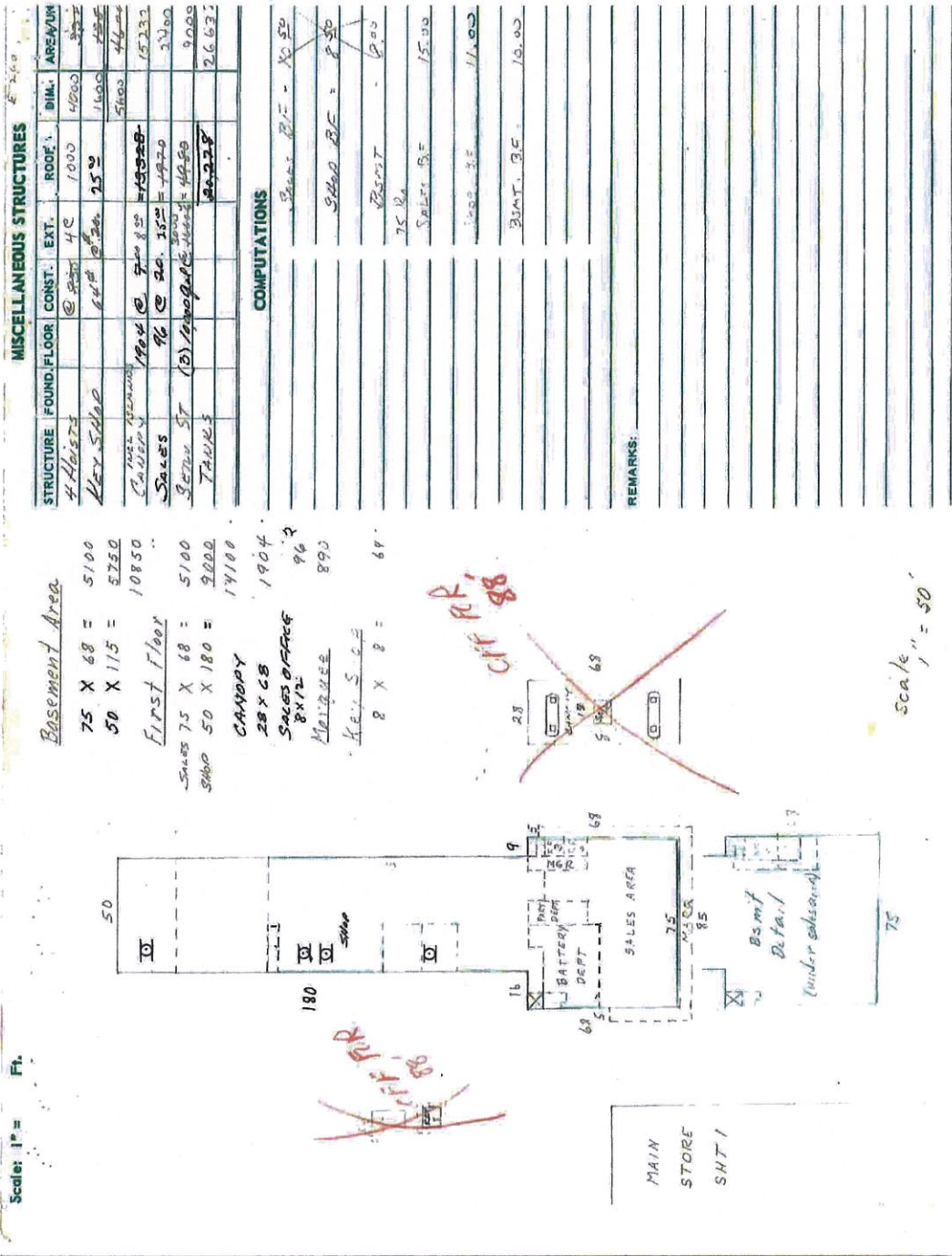


Figure 4-20: Commercial Building Record (continued). Source: San Diego County Assessor.

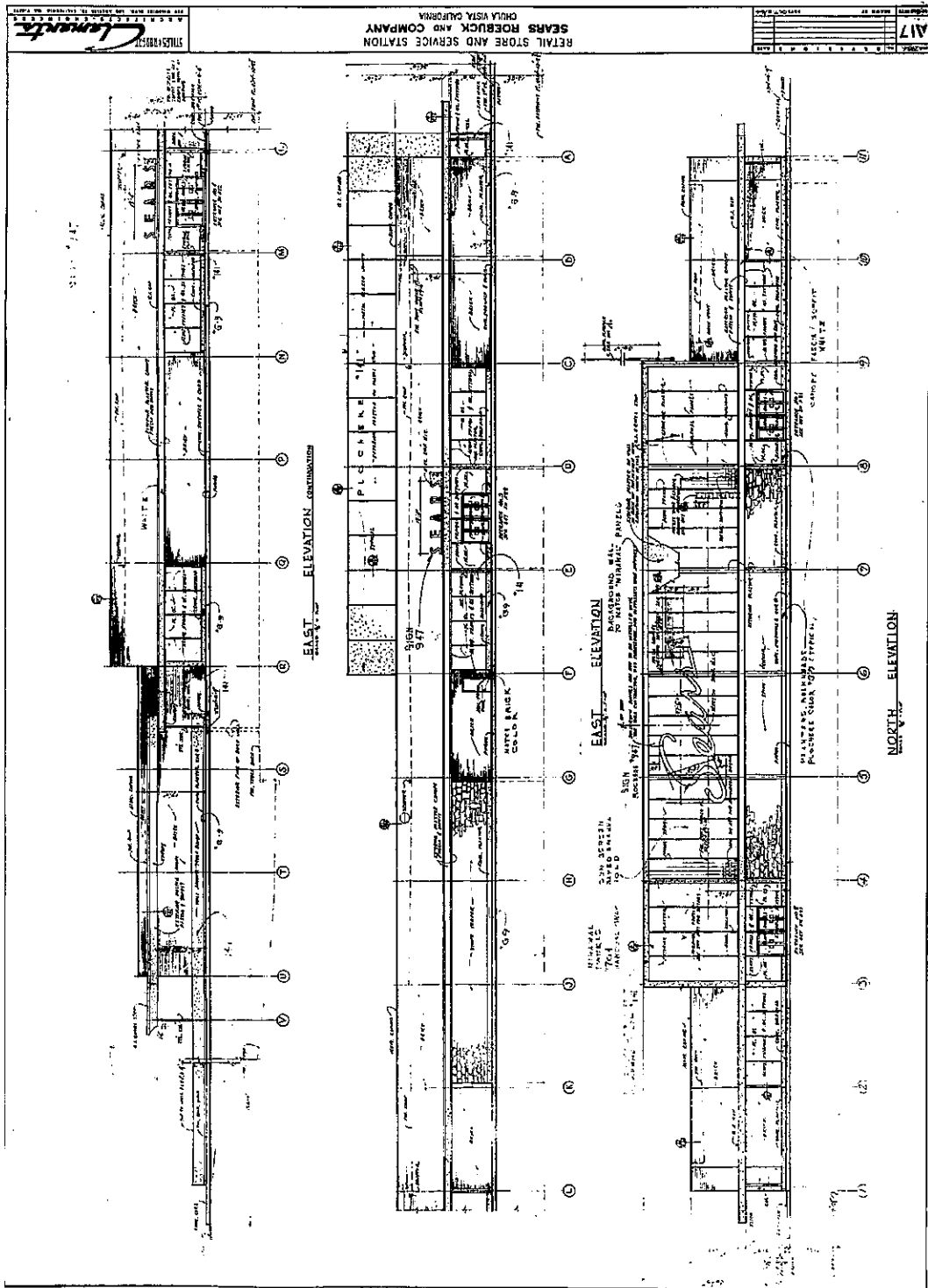


Figure 4-21: Original drawings showing the north and east elevations date October 5, 1964 by Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers.

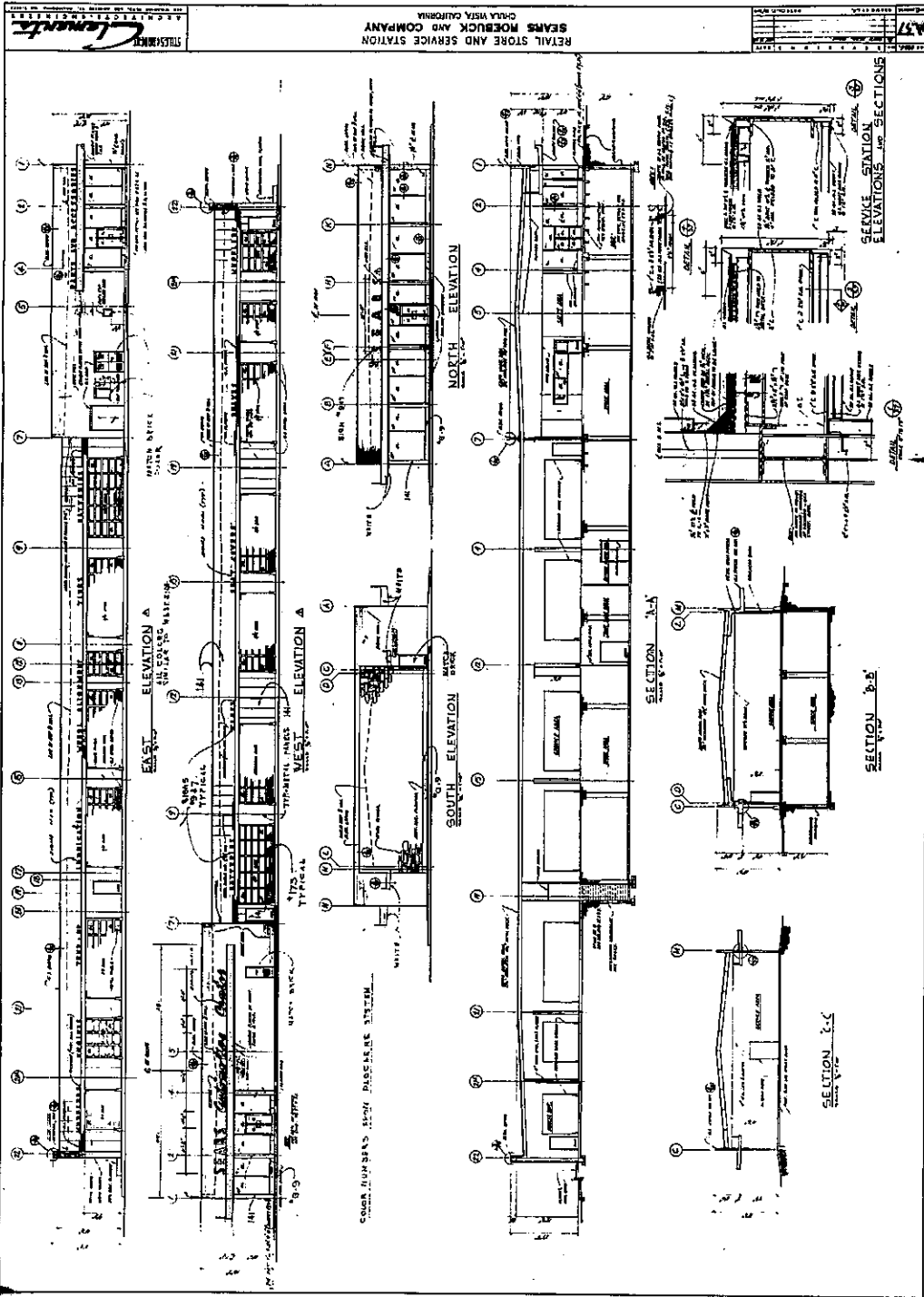


Figure 4-23: Original drawings showing the Auto Center's elevations date October 5, 1964 by Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers.

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V. EVALUATION OF THE RESOURCE

Federal, state, and local governments all have regulatory programs providing for the identification, and, in certain instances, protection, of historic resources. Part A of this section reviews relevant federal, state, and local regulatory provisions. Part B of this section applies those provisions to the Chula Vista Sears store.

A. Evaluation Criteria

Federal, state, and local historic preservation programs provide specific criteria for evaluating the potential historic significance of a resource. Although the criteria used by the different programs (as relevant here, the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, and the City of Chula Vista Register of Historic Places) vary in their specifics, they focus on many of the same general themes. In general, a resource need only meet one criterion in order to be considered historically significant.

Another area of similarity is the concept of integrity — generally defined as the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance. Federal, state, and local historic preservation programs all require that resources maintain integrity in order to be identified as eligible for listing as "historic." A separate "Integrity Statement" appears in Section 6 of this report, as required by § 4.3.1 of the City of Chula Vista Historic Preservation Program (2011). Because integrity is also an important aspect of the evaluation of historic significance, however, this section also contains some information about integrity.

1. National Designation: The National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (commonly referred to as the "National Register" or "NRHP") is a Congressionally-authorized inventory of "districts, sites, building, structures, and objects significant in American history..." (16 U.S.C. § 470a). To be eligible for listing in the National Register, a resource must meet three requirements.

First, the resource must either be at least 50 years old or meet one of seven "criteria considerations." The only criteria consideration potentially relevant to the Chula Vista Sears is Criteria Consideration G, which provides that a property may be eligible for listing in the National Register even if it is less than 50 years old if it is "[a] property...of exceptional importance." (36 C.F.R. § 60.4). The phrase "exceptional importance" may be applied to the extraordinary importance of an event or to an entire category of resources so fragile that survivors of any age are unusual. The phrase "exceptional importance" does not require that the property be of national significance. It is a measure of a property's importance within the appropriate historic context, whether the scale of that context is local, state, or national. A property that has achieved significance within the past fifty years can be evaluated only when sufficient historical perspective exists to determine that the property is exceptionally important. The necessary perspective can be provided by scholarly research and evaluation, and must consider both the

historic context and the specific property's role in that context.¹ The National Register does not include properties important solely for their contemporary impact and visibility, and it rarely is possible to evaluate historical impact, role, or relative value immediately after an event occurs or a building is constructed.²

Second, the resource must “possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.” (36 C.F.R. § 60.4).

Third, the resource must meet at least one of four “evaluation criteria” for determining the quality of “significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture”:

Criterion (a): associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

Criterion (b): associated with the lives of persons significant in our past

Criterion (c): embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represent the work of a master; possess high artistic values; *or* represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual foundation

Criterion (d): has yielded or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history

(36 C.F.R. § 60.4).

2. State Designation: The California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (“California Register” or “CRHR”) identifies historical and archeological resources significant to the state. The eligibility requirements for listing in the California Register are very similar to the eligibility requirements for listing in the National Register, though they have a somewhat stronger focus on California-specific issues.

More specifically, to qualify as an historical resource for purposes of the California Register, a resource must meet at least one of four criteria:

Criterion 1: Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage

¹ *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service 1990), p. 41-42.

² *National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1998 ed.), p. 1. “The passage of time is necessary in order to apply the adjective ‘historic’ and to ensure adequate perspective. To be a useful tool for public administration, the National Register cannot include properties of only transient value or interest. The passage of time allows our perceptions to be influenced by education, the judgment of previous decades, and the dispassion of distance. In nominating properties to the National Register, we should be settled in our belief that they will possess enduring value for their historical associations, appearance, or information potential.”

Criterion 2: Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history

Criterion 3: Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic value

Criterion 4: Has yielded or has the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

(Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 5024.1).

In order to be eligible for listing in the California Register, an historical resource must have integrity. (Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14, § 4851). Integrity is “evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association” and it “must [] be judged with reference to the particular criteria under which a resource is proposed for eligibility.”

3. Local Designation: City of Chula Vista Historic Preservation Ordinance

Eligibility For Listing In The Chula Vista Register

The City of Chula Vista Historic Preservation Ordinance establishes three sets of requirements for determining the eligibility of a resource for listing in the Chula Vista Register of Historic Places. (Chula Vista Municipal Code §21.04.100(1))

First, the resource must be at least 45 years old. (Chula Vista Municipal Code § 21.04.100(1)(A)).

Second, the resource must possess integrity. (Chula Vista Municipal Code § 21.03.084, § 21.04.100(1)(B)).

Third, the resource must meet at least one of five criteria for designation as an Historical Resource:

Criterion 1: It is associated with an event that is important to prehistory or history on a national, state, regional, or local level.

Criterion 2: It is associated with a person or persons that have made significant contributions to prehistory or history on a national, state or local level.

Criterion 3: It embodies those distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or important creative individual, and/or possesses high artistic value.

Criterion 4: It is an outstanding example of a publicly owned Historic Landscape, that represents the work of a master landscape architect, horticulturalist, or landscape designer, or a publicly owned Historical Landscape that has potential to provide important information to the further study of landscape architecture or history.

Criterion 5: It has yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or the history of Chula Vista, the state, region or nation.

(Chula Vista Municipal Code § 21.04.100(1)(B)).

Designation of an Exceptional Historical Resource

The City of Chula Vista has also created a separate category of resources known as “Exceptional Historical Resources” which are also eligible for listing in the (Chula Vista Municipal Code § 21.04.100(2), Chula Vista Municipal Code §21.03.052). An Exceptional Historical Resource may only be designated by a four-fifths vote of the City Council. (City of Chula Vista Municipal Code § 21.04.100(2)(C)). There has been no City Council action designating or considering the Chula Vista Sears as an Exceptional Historical Resource; therefore, the Chula Vista Sears cannot be an Exceptional Historical Resource. Nevertheless, in the interest of furthering collection and analysis of information about the history of Chula Vista, this report briefly addresses and applies the substantive criteria for identifying Exceptional Historical Resources.

An Exceptional Historical Resources must meet three requirements:

First, it must meet the criteria for designation as an Historical Resource (see above). (Chula Vista Municipal Code § 21.04.100(2)(B)(i)).

Second, it must be “the best representative sample of its kind or the last of its kind.” (Chula Vista Municipal Code § 21.04.100(2)(B)(ii)).

Third, it must represent “an exceptionally important component of the City’s history” such that “loss or impairment of the Resource would be detrimental to the City’s heritage.” (Chula Vista Municipal Code § 21.04.100(2)(B)(iii)).

The following section (Part B) applies the criteria for national, state, and local designation.

B. Resource Evaluation

Based on Heritage’s site visits, research and review of the sources cited in this report, and examination of drawings and photographs supplied by Sears, the Chula Vista Sears does not meet the eligibility requirements for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, or the Chula Vista Register of Historical Resources. Nor does the Chula Vista Sears meet the eligibility requirements as a contributor to an identified historic district. Detailed evaluations follow:

Federal Level Evaluation

At the federal level, the 1966 Chula Vista Sears does not meet the 50-year age minimum and was therefore evaluated under the *National Register Criterion Consideration G*. While the construction of the large department store attributes to the trend of commerce moving toward the growing suburbs, the Chula Vista Sears was not part of the original Broadway-Hale Company development that established the Chula Vista Center in the early 1960s and had always been physically separated from the shopping center by an active street (Fifth Avenue) up until the late 1980s. In addition, the Broadway department store, now Macy’s, also conveys typical Modern Commercial style architecture and was an original anchor tenant of the shopping center, so its significance is potentially greater than the Chula Vista Sears.

CHULA VISTA SEARS

Designed by renowned Los Angeles-based architectural firm, Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers, the Chula Vista Sears represents the firm's only known department store in the County of San Diego and in the City of Chula.³ It also represents one of the last design projects before the retirement of Stiles O. Clement in 1965. Stiles O. Clements had gained his significance based upon his earlier Deco, Colonial Revival, and Mayan Revival style of architecture such as the Mayan Theater in Los Angeles rather than the 1960 Mid-century Modern style of architecture. His best known work appears to have been completed while with the firm Morgan, Walls & Clements in the 1920s and 1930s rather than the later practice with his son.

While the firm Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers is recognized for their design of commercial department stores and shopping centers, the Chula Vista Sears is not notable or unique as a Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers design. The Chula Vista Sears department store was not found to be recognized at the time of its completion or in subsequent years as an important or notable work of the firm in architectural journals. The firm was primarily known during the 1960s for their innovations in earlier decades regarding large department store and shopping mall designs as a property type and, in particular, with their association with Sears Roebuck Company. Specifically, it was Stiles O. Clements' Valley Plaza Master Plan design in 1949-1951 that set precedence for a large front parking area that was highly influenced by Sears Roebuck & Company as the main anchor store.⁴ Also, Valley Plaza was a first for Sears to function as the primary anchor retailer in a shopping center from the design stage.⁵

Moreover, the Chula Vista Sears incorporates design elements used by Stiles O. Clements in earlier shopping centers of the 1940s and 1950s: large surface parking lots located in front; long and linear arrangement; and efficient and inconspicuous rear delivery ways. These features, which were considered innovative in the 1940s and 1950s, were commonplace and widely used by the 1960s when the Chula Vista Sears was built and therefore are not architecturally innovative or singularly distinctive of Mr. Clements or his firm.

Individual component elements of the Chula Vista Sears were also considered as an aspect of the property under *Criterion Consideration G*. Although the individual component elements of the Chula Vista Sears reflect popular trends in 1960s design in their overall form and materials, they represent distinctive examples of the work of Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers which generally include visibility from all elevations for passing motorists, prominent signage, and large ground level windows so that merchandise could be clearly viewed from outside the store. These were all intended to create a statement to the average consumer. However, most of these character defining features have been altered: parking along the west has been significantly reduced and Fifth Avenue has been closed to through traffic; all signage has been removed and replaced with contemporary signs; all doors have been replaced; all columns have added cladding that obscures the original slender posts; and the large display windows have been enclosed. In addition, the original stone

³ Although the firm designed an earlier Bank of Italy in Oceanside, California, that resource has been heavily altered throughout the years it no longer represents the original design intent of Stiles Clements. The Bank of Italy is a different architectural style than the Modern Commercial style of Chula Vista Sears.

⁴ Stiles Clement was also the architect of record for the 1947 Sears Roebuck & Company Store in Compton. Richard Longstreth, *City Center to Regional Mall: Architecture, the Automobile, and Retailing in Los Angeles, 1920-1950*. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1998), p. 261.

⁵ Ibid.

vener cladding is no longer visible and the original Garden Center closed and its area incorporated into the interior retail space.

In summary, the Chula Vista Sears has not retained enough of its character-defining features as a Modern Commercial style building and is no longer evocative of its 1960s origin. With regards to association, there is no indication that the Chula Vista Sears has served as a direct link between an important historic event or person. Therefore, the Chula Vista Sears has not achieved exceptional importance within the last fifty years as set forth by the threshold of significance for listing in the National Register under *Criterion Consideration G* as an individual resource.

State Level Evaluation

At the state level, the historical record does not indicate that the Chula Vista Sears is connected with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage associated with the Modern Commercial style department store, as the building is similar to other department stores, such as the adjacent Macy's building, which was built first in the similar style in Chula Vista, and other department stores throughout Southern California in the 1960s, as required under Criterion 1. Under Criterion 2, the Chula Vista Sears does not appear to be directly associated with the productive life of a person important in California history.

Under Criterion 3, the Chula Vista Sears is not singularly innovative or a distinctive design of Mr. Clements' or his firm, as noted above under the analysis of the Chula Vista Sears under *Criterion Consideration G*. The extant building has been altered and no longer exhibits the characteristics typical of Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers department stores or shopping centers, which generally included visibility from all elevations for passing motorists, prominent signage, and large ground level windows so that merchandise could be clearly viewed from the outside by consumers. Other individual component elements of the department store reflect common examples of popular architectural trends in 1960s design in their overall form and materials and are not distinctive examples of their type or style. Under Criterion 4, the Chula Vista Sears has not yielded, nor is it likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Local Level Evaluation

Similar to previous arguments, the Chula Vista Sears is not directly associated with an event important to prehistory or history on a national, state, regional, or local level neither is it identified with historic personages or events that have made significant contributions to prehistory or history on a national, state, or local level. Therefore, the building does not qualify under Criteria 1 and 2.

Under Criterion 3, the Chula Vista Sears has been heavily altered throughout the years and appear to not be the best representative of its kind.⁶ It is not the last of its kind since the older adjacent Macy's building is of similar architectural style and is directly linked to the development of the first major shopping center in Chula Vista. Designed by a firm recognized for their design of commercial properties, and in particular, large department stores, the Chula Vista Sears building has

⁶ Properties from this period, the 1940-1970 Chula Vista's City Maturation Period, including commercial buildings, must embody distinctive characteristics of a style found during this period as well as retain a significant degree of their building materials dating to the period of significance (1940-1970). Properties should also retain a high degree of integrity of design, materials, and craftsmanship. ASM Affiliates, "Revised Draft Chula Vista Historic Resources Survey, Chula Vista, California", (Prepared for the City of Chula Vista, September 2012), p. 56.

CHULA VISTA SEARS

Expert Technical Analysis Report

May 24, 2013

Section 5 – Evaluation of the Resource

Page 5-7

not acquired significance as an exceptionally important work of that firm or its principal architects Stiles and Robert Clements. It does not appear to be valued for a study of period, style, or method of construction.

Under Criterion 4, the site is not a publicly owned historic landscape, and therefore, does not qualify under this criterion. Lastly, the building does not yield or is it likely to yield information important in history or prehistory in order to qualify under Criterion 5.

In summary, the Chula Vista Sears does not appear to be potentially eligible as a historical resource under any of the applicable criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, or as a City of Chula Vista Historical Resource.

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VI. INTEGRITY STATEMENT

The concept and aspects of integrity are defined in National Register Bulletin 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation Section VIII. How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property Historical Resource* (Andrus 1997). The City of Chula Vista follows that definition, as clarified in Chula Vista Municipal Code Title 21, Section 21.03.084, which states, “The authenticity of a [r]esource’s historic identity [is] evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the [r]esource’s historic or prehistoric period. Within the concept of Integrity there are seven recognized aspects or qualities that in various combinations, define Integrity. The seven aspects of Integrity are Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association.”

National Register Bulletin 15 establishes how to evaluate the integrity of a property: “Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance.” The evaluation of integrity must be grounded in an understanding of a property’s physical features, and how they relate to the concept of integrity. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a property requires knowing why, where, and when a property is significant. To retain historic integrity, a property must possess several, and usually most, aspects of integrity:

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

The Chula Vista Sears remains in its original location and it retains its integrity of location.

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

According to the original plans by Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers, the exterior of the Chula Vista Sears has been heavily altered with the replacement of the original storefront doors including the “Sears” engraved push plates, display windows which have been enclosed on all facades, the original “Sears” signage which has been replaced with contemporary signage, the retrofitted column cladding that obscures the original slender columns, and the stone veneer cladding located at the north and east façades which are no longer visible. The original Garden Center has been renovated and its space combined with the interior retail space. The southeast facing corner has also been enclosed. Lastly, a total of three ornamental entry structures were added in the 1980s that changed the original look of these entries and triangular-shaped ornaments were added to the fascia of the covered walkways. These significant exterior changes result in a loss of design integrity. Refer to Figure 6.1.

Setting is the physical environment of a historic property, and refers to the character of the site and the relationship to surrounding features and open space. Setting often refers to the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and the functions it was intended to serve. These features can be either natural or manmade, including vegetation, paths, fences, and relationship between other features or open space.

The surrounding neighborhood has remained mostly the same since the construction of the Chula Vista Sears including commercial buildings to the north and west and residential to the south and east. The relationship between the Chula Vista Sears and the surrounding streets has changed, however, with the enclosure of Fifth Avenue in the late 1980s. The original street setting matched

the design intent of the architects to have the store visible from all elevations for passing motorists. The enclosure of 5th Avenue directly links Sears with the adjacent shopping center and is viewed mostly from a pedestrian level from the west. Therefore, the original setting integrity has been compromised.

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time, and in particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.

Even though much of the upper level walls look as they did in 1966, the majority of the original features at the ground level are no longer visible or have been removed or replaced with contemporary materials. This includes all original storefront doors with the “Sears” engraved push plates; the replacement of the original “Sears” signage; the columns which have been clad over; the display windows which have been enclosed; and the original stone veneer cladding located at the north and east facades which are no longer visible. Therefore, the building no longer retains its integrity for materials.

Workmanship is the physical evidence of crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period of history or prehistory, and can be applied to the property as a whole, or to individual components.

The workmanship that has gone into the construction of the Chula Vista Sears is mostly original, although sometimes modified or concealed. The building, therefore, retains its workmanship element for integrity purposes.

Feeling is a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, when taken together, convey the property’s historic character.

The Chula Vista Sears, in its current condition, partially imparts an aesthetic or historic sense of Modern Contemporary style commercial building constructed during the 1960s in terms of its general look and massing. However, renovations conducted in the late 1980s including closure of 5th Street to integrate the department with the remaining shopping center, the post-modern open-frame entry structures, contemporary signage, and missing stone veneer cladding, partially affect its feeling element for integrity purposes. Therefore, for the most part, the feeling integrity has been compromised.

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

The Chula Vista Sears continues to be linked to the 1960s Chula Vista trend in convenience and shopping, underscored by the continuing growth of suburbia. Research also revealed that the Chula Vista Sears is associated with the renowned and highly recognized Los Angeles based architectural and engineering firm Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers. The Chula Vista Sears is one of two buildings known to have been designed by the firm in San Diego County. The building, despite being heavily altered, retains its association element for integrity purposes.

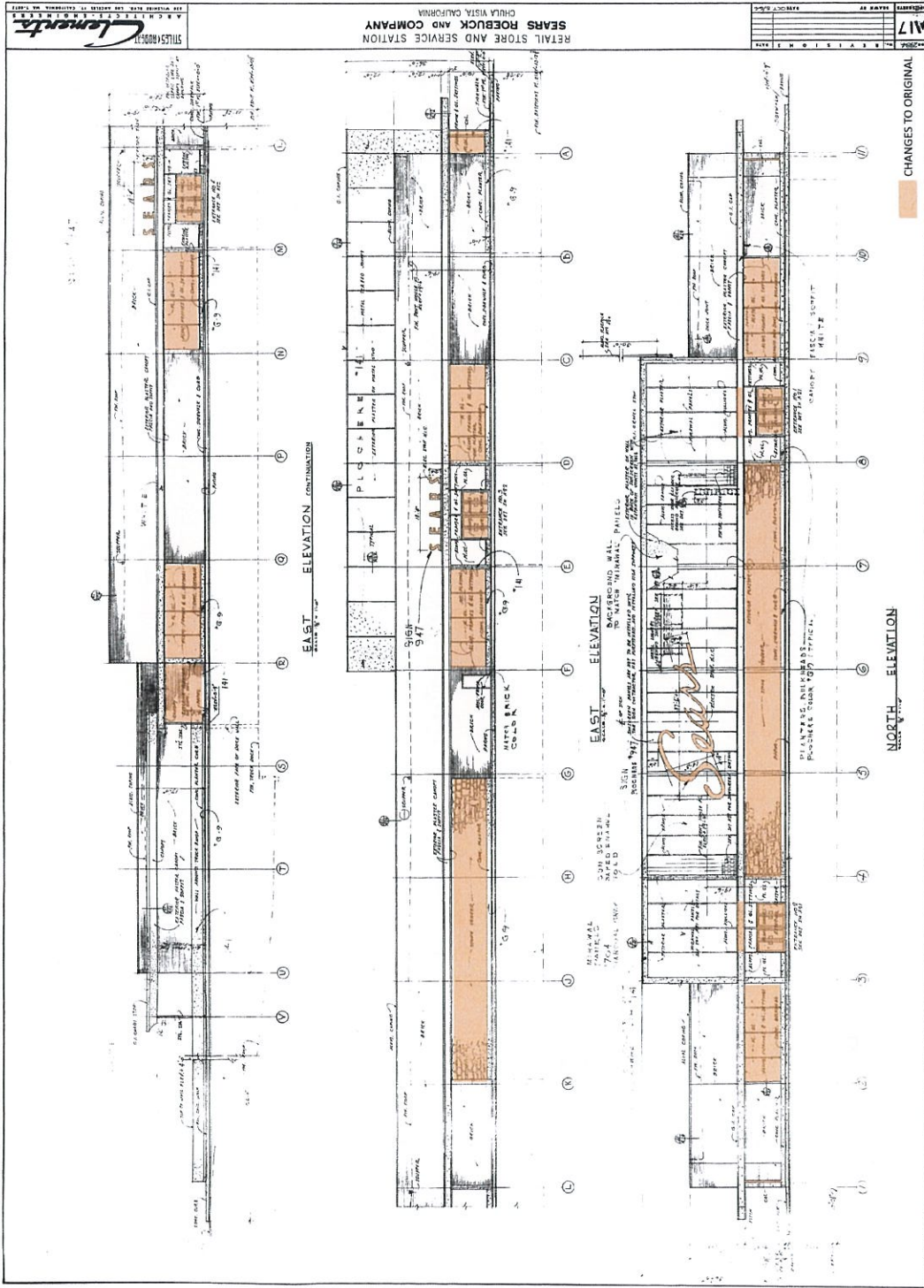


Figure 6-1: Original drawings showing the north and east elevations with changes colored. Original drawings dated October 5, 1964 by Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers.

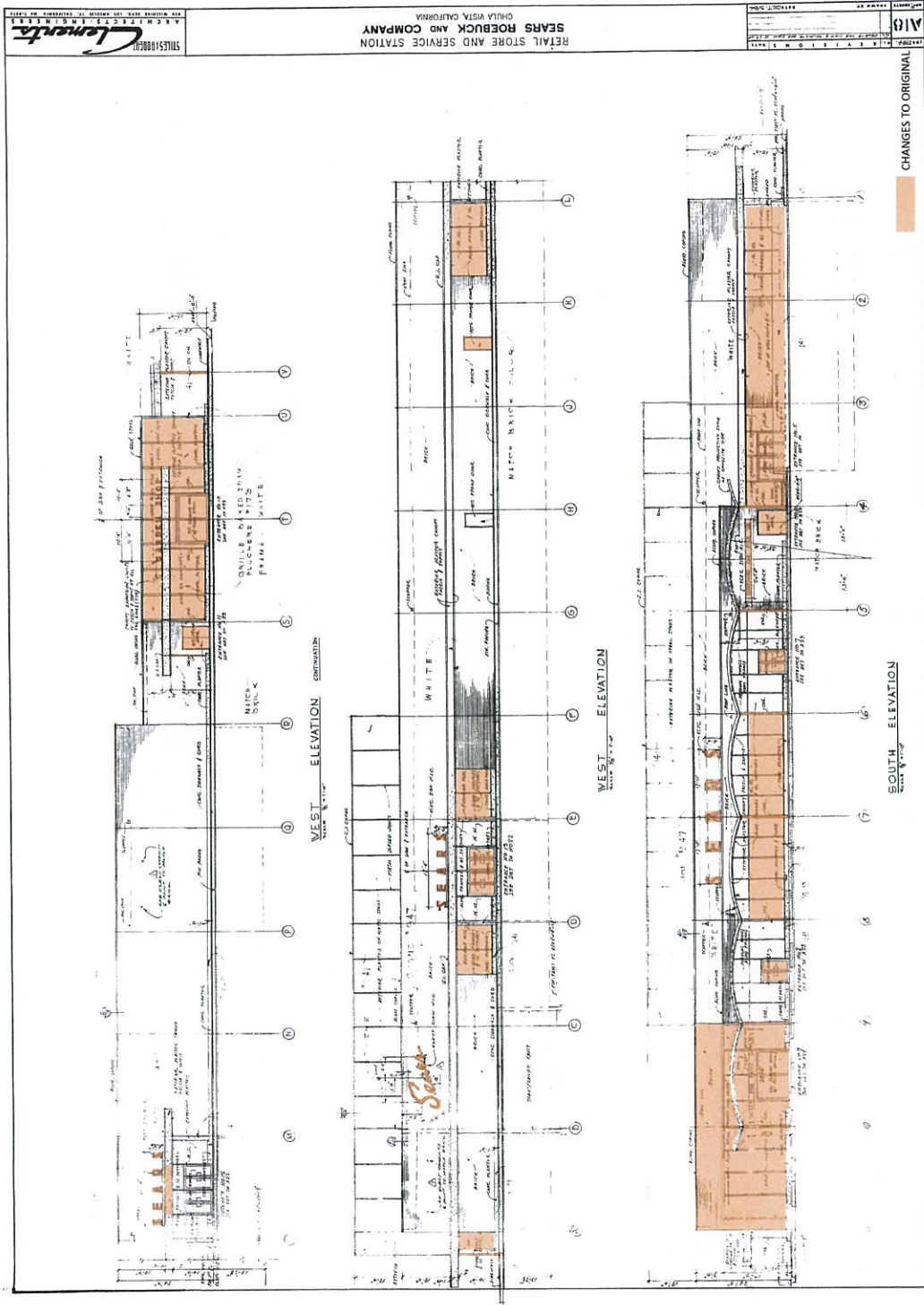


Figure 6-2: Original drawings showing the south and west elevations with changes colored. Original drawings date October 5, 1964 by Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers.

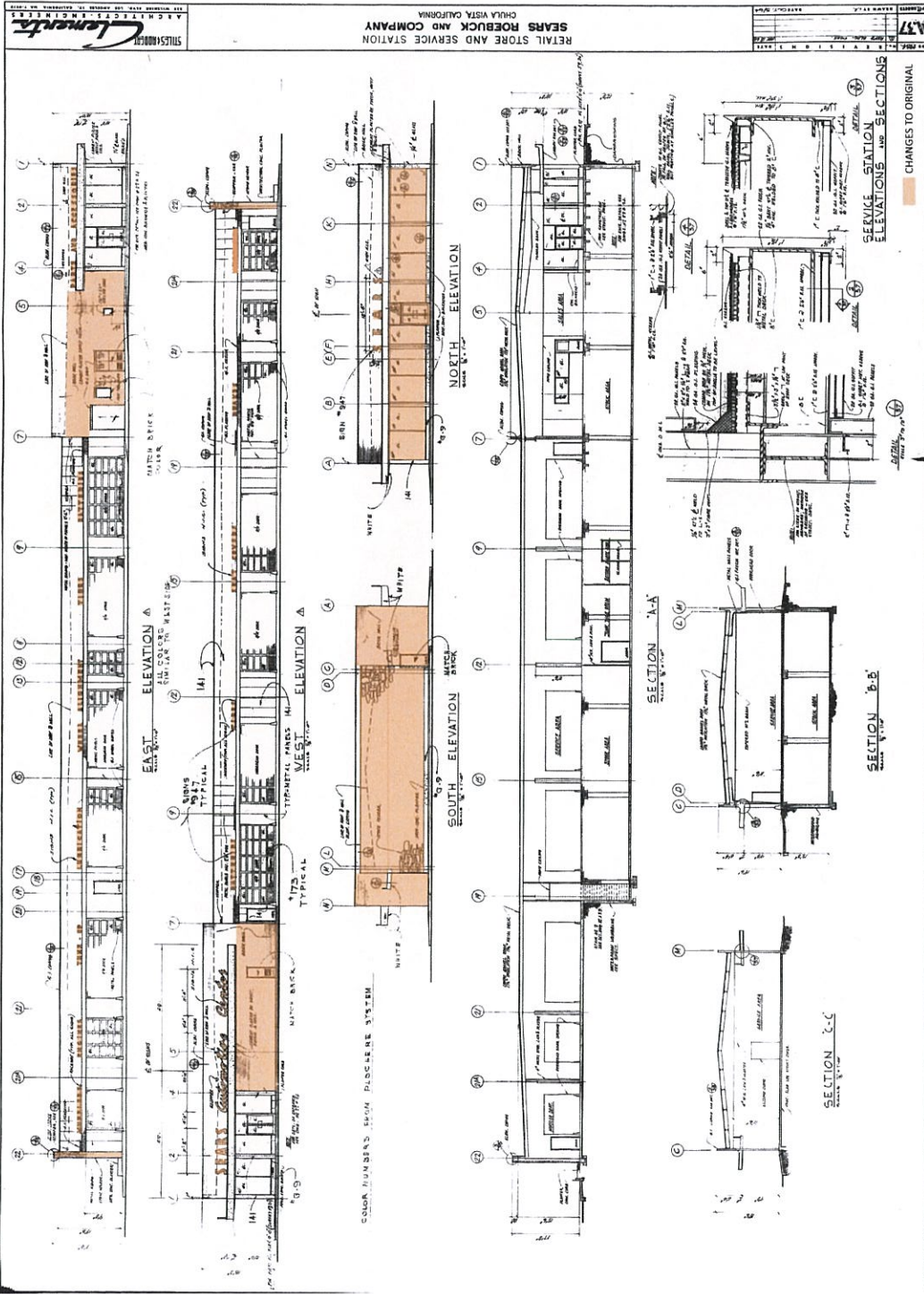


Figure 6-3: Original drawings of the Auto Center elevations with changes colored. Original drawings date October 5, 1964 by Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers.

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VII. CONCLUSION

The Chula Vista Sears located within the Chula Vista Center mall between H and I Street and Broadway and Fig Avenue in the City of Chula Vista has been evaluated for potential listing on the local, state, and national levels. Historical research and site evaluation reveal that the Chula Vista Sears does not appear eligible as a historical resource under any of the applicable criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, or as a City of Chula Vista Historical Resource. In addition, since the building was built in 1966 and is less than 50-years old, the *National Register Criterion Consideration G* for exceptionally importance resources was also utilized in the evaluation process. Due to the significant changes to the exterior of the building and site throughout the years, the resource's integrity has been compromised and, therefore cannot qualify under the *Criterion Consideration G* as an exceptionally important resource.

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VIII. DPR FORM

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PRIMARY RECORD

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 9

*Resource Name or #: Chula Vista Sears

P1. Other Identifier:

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Diego

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

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad National City 7.5 Minute Date: 1996 T ; R ; 1/4 of 1/4 of Sec ; M.D.

c. Address: 565 Broadway City: Chula Vista Zip: 91910 B.M.

d. UTM: Zone: ; mE/ mN

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

Parcel Number: 5720104400

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

Constructed in 1965 and completed in 1966 the Chula Vista Sears, designed by Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers, is located at the Chula Vista Center and faces H Street to the north, Fig Avenue to the east, I Street to the south, and portions of Fifth Avenue and Broadway to the west. The surrounding neighborhood encompasses commercial uses along H Street and Broadway and residential at I and Fig Street. The department store is surrounded by minimal landscaping and surface parking along the north, east, south, and portions of the northwest end. An original freestanding Sears Auto Center building is located at the southwest portion of the parking area.

The resource is a one- and two-story building with basement designed in the Modern Commercial architectural style. The building is approximately 250,000 square feet and the building has a flat roof covered with built-up roofing material. The brick and concrete block building rests on a reinforced concrete foundation. A covered walkway surrounds the building with retrofitted posts that have a reinforced casing.

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP06 1-3 Story Commercial Building

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

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)

Looking south at the primary façade. 12/6/12.
12054 - Chula Vista Sears\Images\IMG_5688.JPG

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:**

1966 Notice of Completion

Prehistoric Historic Both

***P7. Owner and Address:**

Sears Roebuck & Company
3333 Beverly Road
Hoffman Estates IL 60179

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

Heritage Architecture & Planning
625 Broadway, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101

***P9. Date Recorded:** 1/28/2013

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
Intensive

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

Chula Vista Sears Expert Technical Analysis Report

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

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Chula Vista Sears

B1. Historic Name: Sears Roebuck & Company

B2. Common Name: Sears

B3. Original Use: Commercial

B4. Present Use: Commercial

*B5. Architectural Style: Modern Commercial

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

October 5, 1964 - Date on Construction Documents
February 21, 1966 - Notice of Completion filed
1979 - Garden Center renovated and integrated with store
1980s - Exterior renovations

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date:

Original Location:

*B8. Related Features:

1966 Auto Center building and Gas Pump Island

B9a. Architect: Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers

b. Builder: Nielson Construction Company

*B10. Significance: Theme: Commerce and Mid-Century Modern

Area: Chula Vista

Period of Significance: 1966

Property Type: Commercial

Applicable Criteria: (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographical scope. Also address integrity.)

The Chula Vista Sears located within the Chula Vista Center mall between H and I Street and Broadway and Fig Avenue in the City of Chula Vista has been evaluated for potential listing on the local, state, and national levels. Historical research and site evaluation reveal that the Chula Vista Sears does not appear eligible as a historical resource under any of the applicable criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, or as a City of Chula Vista Historical Resource. In addition, since the building was built in 1966 and is less than 50-years old, the National Register Criterion Consideration G for exceptionally importance resources, was also utilized in the evaluation process. Due to the significant changes to the exterior of the building and site throughout the years, the resource's integrity has been compromised and, therefore cannot qualify under the Criterion Consideration G as an exceptionally important resource.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes)

*B12. References:

National Register Bulletin 15 How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation; National Register Bulletin Guidelines for Evaluating and Nomination Properties that Have Achieved Significance within the Past Fifty Years; City of Chula Vista Title 21 Historic Preservation; Revised Draft Historic Resources Survey, Chula Vista, California

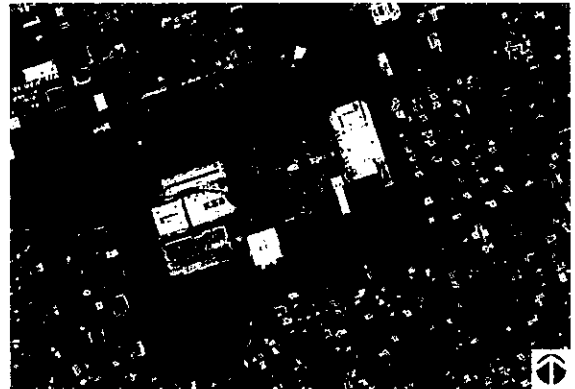
B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator:

Heritage Architecture & Planning

*Date of Evaluation: 2/8/2013

(This space reserved for official comments.):



State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial

Page 3 of 9

*NRHP Status Code 6Z

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Chula Vista Sears

* Recorded by: Heritage Architecture & Planning
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San Diego, CA 92101

*Date: 1/28/2013

Continuation Update

P3a. Description (Cont.)

The primary façade faces north toward H Street. Its central bay includes a metal screen wall element at the upper "penthouse" level flanked by large charcoal gray Mirawall panels with aluminum mullions and affixed contemporary "Sears" signage. The original signage was centrally located on the "penthouse" screen wall. Beneath both large panels are glass metal storefronts with multiple entrance doors. The original entrance doors included a scored anodized aluminum push plate detail with "Sears" etched at the center. These doors are no longer extant and have been replaced with contemporary doors. The original display windows adjacent to the entrances have been enclosed and the original stone veneer at the central bay is no longer visible. Tall open-frame gabled canopies were added to the entrances in the 1980s. The original canopy has been notched in these areas to make room for the contemporary entrance structures. Low planters are located at the base of the central bay and along the northeast and northwest corners.

Up until the 1980s, the west portion of the parcel included surface parking and access to Fifth Avenue, which was open to traffic. Mall renovations conducted in the late 1980s officially closed Fifth Avenue to traffic in 1988, physically linked the department store with the remaining Chula Vista Center, and added stores and a courtyard between Sears and Macy's. Contemporary motifs were embellished upon the exterior existing mall structures. This included the two open-frame gabled canopies at the entrances of the Sears' north façade and one at the southwest façade facing the shopping center. Specific renovations during this period to the Chula Vista Sears included all storefront entrances and signage and display windows enclosed along at the west façade. The now-connected Chula Vista Center was officially dedicated October 27, 1988.

The south façade contains an original barrel-roof canopy that covers the entrances. Entrance doors have been changed and the central display windows have been boarded-over. The original signage above has been replaced with a contemporary sign. The original Garden Center section, located at the southwest corner of the building, was renovated in 1979 and its space incorporated with the remaining retail area. The original truck ramp with a large central planter and loading dock for deliveries located at the southeast corner is extant. The walkway above the loading dock had been enclosed in 2003 and the original entrance reduced.

The east façade faces a surface parking. The two original store entrances have been renovated and the store display windows enclosed. The stone veneer cladding located between the entrances is no longer extant. A contemporary "Sears" sign replaced the original above the entrances.

A separate 1966 Auto Center is located at the southwest portion of the lot. At the time it was originally constructed it boasted the ability to service up to 24 automobiles simultaneously. Similar changes occurred to the Auto Center building throughout the years including the removal of the brick and stone veneer cladding, enclosure of the window displays, and the replacement of the original signage with contemporary signs. The original Gas Pump Island located to the west of the Auto Center was demolished in 1988 as part of the shopping center renovation.

B6. Construction History (Cont.)

1988 - Closure of Fifth Avenue
1988 - Gas Pump Island demolition
1989 - Tenant Improvements to enlarge basement retail for storage area (approximately 18,000 SF)
1993 - Tenant Improvements (Hub Offices)
1997 - Exterior sign renovation
2003 - Enclose existing canopy over loading dock

B10. Significance (Cont.)

The Chula Vista Sears does not appear to be eligible for either individual listing or as a contributor to an identified historic district under any applicable criteria. Detailed evaluations are below.

Federal Level Evaluation

At the federal level, the 1966 Chula Vista Sears does not meet the 50-year age minimum and was therefore evaluated under the National Register Criterion Consideration G. While the construction of the large department store attributes to the trend of commerce moving toward the growing suburbs, the Chula Vista Sears was not part of the original Broadway-Hale Company development that established the Chula Vista Center in the early 1960s and had always been physically separated from the shopping center by an active street (Fifth Avenue) up until the late 1980s. In addition, the Broadway department store, now Macy's, also conveys typical Modern Commercial style architecture and was an original anchor tenant of the shopping center, so its significance is potentially greater than the Chula Vista Sears.

State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial

Page 4 of 9

*NRHP Status Code. 6Z

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Chula Vista Sears

* Recorded by: Heritage Architecture & Planning
625 Broadway, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101

*Date: 1/28/2013

Continuation Update

Designed by renowned Los Angeles-based architectural firm, Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers, the Chula Vista Sears represents the firm's only known department store in the County of San Diego and in the City of Chula. It also represents one of the last design projects before the retirement of Stiles O. Clement in 1965. Stiles O. Clements had gained his significance based upon his earlier Deco, Colonial Revival, and Mayan Revival style of architecture such as the Mayan Theater in Los Angeles rather than the 1960 Mid-century Modern style of architecture. His best known work appears to have been completed while with the firm Morgan, Walls & Clements in the 1920s and 1930s rather than the later practice with his son.

While the firm Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers is recognized for their design of commercial department stores and shopping centers, the Chula Vista Sears is not notable or unique as a Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers design. The Chula Vista Sears department store was not found to be recognized at the time of its completion or in subsequent years as an important or notable work of the firm in architectural journals. The firm was primarily known during the 1960s for their innovations in earlier decades regarding large department store and shopping mall designs as a property type and, in particular, with their association with Sears Roebuck Company. Specifically, it was Stiles O. Clements' Valley Plaza Master Plan design in 1949-1951 that set precedence for a large front parking area that was highly influenced by Sears Roebuck & Company as the main anchor store. Also, Valley Plaza was a first for Sears to function as the primary anchor retailer in a shopping center from the design stage.

Moreover, the Chula Vista Sears incorporates design elements used by Stiles O. Clements in earlier shopping centers of the 1940s and 1950s: large surface parking lots located in front; long and linear arrangement; and efficient and inconspicuous rear delivery ways. These features, which were considered innovative in the 1940s and 1950s, were commonplace and widely used by the 1960s when the Chula Vista Sears was built and therefore are not architecturally innovative or singularly distinctive of Mr. Clements or his firm.

Individual component elements of the Chula Vista Sears were also considered as an aspect of the property under Criterion Consideration G. Although the individual component elements of the Chula Vista Sears reflect popular trends in 1960s design in their overall form and materials, they represent distinctive examples of the work of Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers which generally include visibility from all elevations for passing motorists, prominent signage, and large ground level windows so that merchandise could be clearly viewed from outside the store. These were all intended to create a statement to the average consumer. However, most of these character defining features have been altered: parking along the west has been significantly reduced and Fifth Avenue has been closed to through traffic; all signage has been removed and replaced with contemporary signs; all doors have been replaced; all columns have added cladding that obscures the original slender posts; and the large display windows have been enclosed. In addition, the original stone veneer cladding is no longer visible and the original Garden Center closed and its area incorporated into the interior retail space.

In summary, the Chula Vista Sears has not retained enough of its character-defining features as a Modern Commercial style building and is no longer evocative of its 1960s origin. With regards to association, there is no indication that the Chula Vista Sears has served as a direct link between an important historic event or person. Therefore, the Chula Vista Sears has not achieved exceptional importance within the last fifty years as set forth by the threshold of significance for listing in the National Register under Criterion Consideration G as an individual resource.

State Level Evaluation

At the state level, the historical record does not indicate that the Chula Vista Sears is connected with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage associated with the Modern Commercial style department store, as the building is similar to other department stores, such as the adjacent Macy's building, which was built first in the similar style in Chula Vista, and other department stores throughout Southern California in the 1960s, as required under Criterion 1. Under Criterion 2, the Chula Vista Sears does not appear to be directly associated with the productive life of a person important in California history.

Under Criterion 3, the Chula Vista Sears is not singularly innovative or a distinctive design of Mr. Clements' or his firm, as noted above under the analysis of the Chula Vista Sears under Criterion Consideration G. The extant building has been altered and no longer exhibits the characteristics typical of Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers department stores or shopping centers, which generally included visibility from all elevations for passing motorists, prominent signage, and large ground level windows so that merchandise could be clearly viewed from the outside by consumers. Other individual component elements of the department store reflect common examples of popular architectural trends in 1960s design in their overall form and materials and are not distinctive examples of their type or style. Under Criterion 4, the Chula Vista Sears has not yielded, nor is it likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Local Level Evaluation

Similar to previous arguments, the Chula Vista Sears is not directly associated with an event important to prehistory or history on a national, state, regional, or local level neither is it identified with historic personages or events that have made significant contributions to prehistory or history on a national, state, or local level. Therefore, the building does not qualify under Criteria 1 and 2.

State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial

Page 5 of 9

*NRHP Status Code 6Z

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Chula Vista Sears

* Recorded by: Heritage Architecture & Planning
625 Broadway, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101

*Date: 1/28/2013

Continuation Update

Under Criterion 3, the Chula Vista Sears has been heavily altered throughout the years and appear to not be the best representative of its kind. It is not the last of its kind since the older adjacent Macy's building is of similar architectural style and is directly linked to the development of the first major shopping center in Chula Vista. Designed by a firm recognized for their design of commercial properties, and in particular, large department stores, the Chula Vista Sears building has not acquired significance as an exceptionally important work of that firm or its principal architects Stiles and Robert Clements. It does not appear to be valued for a study of period, style, or method of construction.

Under Criterion 4, the site is not a publicly owned historic landscape, and therefore, does not qualify under this criterion. Lastly, the building does not yield or is it likely to yield information important in history or prehistory in order to qualify under Criterion 5.

In summary, the Chula Vista Sears does not appear to be potentially eligible as a historical resource under any of the applicable criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, or as a City of Chula Vista Historical Resource.

INTEGRITY ANALYSIS

The concept and aspects of integrity are defined in National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation Section VIII. How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property Historical Resource (Andrus 1997). The City of Chula Vista follows that definition, as clarified in Chula Vista Municipal Code Title 21, Section 21.03.084, which states; "The authenticity of a [r]esource's historic identity [is] evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the [r]esource's historic or prehistoric period. Within the concept of Integrity there are seven recognized aspects or qualities that in various combinations, define Integrity. The seven aspects of Integrity are Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association."

National Register Bulletin 15 establishes how to evaluate the integrity of a property: "Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance." The evaluation of integrity must be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features, and how they relate to the concept of integrity. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a property requires knowing why, where, and when a property is significant. To retain historic integrity, a property must possess several, and usually most, aspects of integrity:

"Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred."
The Chula Vista Sears remains in its original location and it retains its integrity of location.

"Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property."
According to the original plans by Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers, the exterior of the Chula Vista Sears has been heavily altered with the replacement of the original storefront doors including the "Sears" engraved push plates, display windows which have been enclosed on all facades, the original "Sears" signage which has been replaced with contemporary signage, the retrofitted column cladding that obscures the original slender columns, and the stone veneer cladding located at the north and east façades which are no longer visible. The original Garden Center has been renovated and its space combined with the interior retail space. The southeast facing corner has also been enclosed. Lastly, a total of three ornamental entry structures were added in the 1980s that changed the original look of these entries and triangular-shaped ornaments were added to the fascia of the covered walkways. These significant exterior changes result in a loss of design integrity.

"Setting is the physical environment of a historic property, and refers to the character of the site and the relationship to surrounding features and open space. Setting often refers to the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and the functions it was intended to serve. These features can be either natural or manmade, including vegetation, paths, fences, and relationship between other features or open space." The surrounding neighborhood has remained mostly the same since the construction of the Chula Vista Sears including commercial buildings to the north and west and residential to the south and east. The relationship between the Chula Vista Sears and the surrounding streets has changed, however, with the enclosure of Fifth Avenue in the late 1980s. The original street setting matched the design intent of the architects to have the store visible from all elevations for passing motorists. The enclosure of 5th Avenue directly links Sears with the adjacent shopping center and is viewed mostly from a pedestrian level from the west. Therefore, the original setting integrity has been compromised.

"Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time, and in particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property."
Even though much of the upper level walls look as they did in 1966, the majority of the original features at the ground level are no longer visible or have been removed or replaced with contemporary materials. This includes all original storefront doors with the "Sears" engraved push plates; the replacement of the original "Sears" signage; the columns which have been cladded over; the display windows which have been enclosed; and the original stone veneer cladding located at the north and east facades which are no longer visible. Therefore, the building no longer retains its integrity for materials.

State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial

Page 6 of 9

*NRHP Status Code 6Z

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Chula Vista Sears

* Recorded by: Heritage Architecture & Planning
625 Broadway, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101

*Date: 1/28/2013

Continuation Update

"Workmanship is the physical evidence of crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period of history or prehistory, and can be applied to the property as a whole, or to individual components."

The workmanship that has gone into the construction of the Chula Vista Sears is mostly original, although sometimes modified or concealed. The building, therefore, retains its workmanship element for integrity purposes.

"Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, when taken together, convey the property's historic character."

The Chula Vista Sears, in its current condition, partially imparts an aesthetic or historic sense of Modern Contemporary style commercial building constructed during the 1960s in terms of its general look and massing. However, renovations conducted in the late 1980s including closure of 5th Street to integrate the department with the remaining shopping center, the post-modern open-frame entry structures, contemporary signage, and missing stone veneer cladding, partially affect its feeling element for integrity purposes. Therefore, for the most part, the feeling integrity has been compromised.

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

The Chula Vista Sears continues to be linked to the 1960s Chula Vista trend in convenience and shopping, underscored by the continuing growth of suburbia. Research also revealed that the Chula Vista Sears is associated with the renowned and highly recognized Los Angeles based architectural and engineering firm Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers. The Chula Vista Sears is one of two buildings known to have been designed by the firm in San Diego County. The building, despite being heavily altered, retains its association element for integrity purposes.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Originally part of the Rancho de la Nacion, the city of Chula Vista is rich in history. First inhabited by the Diegueno Indians, the area that is now Chula Vista fell into the hands of the Spanish in the mid-1700s. These conquered lands were deeded to the Catholic Church, and later the King of Spain awarded land grants to various individuals. The Mexican government eventually came into possession of large parcels of land in the area and in 1845, the last Mexican Governor of California granted John Forster the Rancho de la Nacion. Part of the 42 square mile parcel included all of Chula Vista, National City, and Bonita. In 1868, the Kimball family purchased the Rancho for \$30,000. Frank Kimball commissioned famed town planner Colonel W. G. Dickinson to design the town site that is now Chula Vista.

Dickinson set out to make Chula Vista a community of fine residences where permanent settlement that would improve the land's value was encouraged. To this end, the 5,000 acre tract was first cleared of brush and subdivided into gridiron pattern. Streets were laid out one-quarter mile apart and hundreds of trees were planted.

Homes and citrus groves soon dotted the landscape, making Chula Vista the center of the nation's citrus industry. To meet the growing agricultural demand, the construction of Sweetwater Dam was begun in 1886 and a railroad line running from San Diego through Chula Vista to San Ysidro was completed two years later. By 1896, nearly 1,400 acres of lemon and orange trees had been planted and two packing plants were in operation. The City's legacy as Lemon Capital of the World was born.

By the turn of the century, private citizens alone could no longer provide basic services for the growing community. In 1911, Chula Vista incorporated with a population of 550 people, electing a five-member Board of Trustees and City Marshall. Although the city remained mostly agricultural, commercial and civic services began developing around Third Avenue, mostly consisting of popular revival styles.

The War also brought new industry to the City. During World War I, Hercules Powder Plant established a munitions plant. After the war, San Diego Oil Products Corporation took over Hercules' buildings, turning them into the largest cottonseed warehouse in the United States. Following WWI, veterans returned to Chula Vista with its newly paved roads and other city improvements. A steady flow of revival style residential buildings were constructed throughout the area reflecting the trends found throughout the state.

With the advent of World War II, lemon production declined and manufacturing increased. Chula Vista began its transition during this era from agriculture-based economy to industrial economy. In 1941, Rohr Aircraft Corporation, a manufacturer of defense and aerospace products, moved its plant from San Diego to Chula Vista becoming the world's largest manufacturer of aircraft power packages by 1945.

The post war boom garnered a demand for housing. Hundreds of California ranch houses were constructed in the new subdivision carved out of 500 acres of former citrus groves. These small rectangular houses with low pitched hip or gable roofs had no attics and no front porches. The exteriors were sheathed with stucco, board and batten, shingles, clapboard, or a combination of two or more of these. In addition to newer neighborhoods, areas once occupied by Navy housing were purchased by the City to help relieve some of the housing demand. Areas such as Vista Square Housing, which housed approximately 600 families, was purchased from the Navy in 1944 for \$108,000. By 1950, the population of Chula Vista had risen to 16,505. In order to meet the population growth, public facilities became urgent. Soon, development of a civic center complete with City Hall, courthouse, fire station, library, and police wings was erected along F Street and Fourth Avenue in central Chula Vista.

State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial

Page 7 of 9

*NRHP Status Code 6Z

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Chula Vista Sears

* Recorded by: Heritage Architecture & Planning
625 Broadway, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101

*Date: 1/28/2013

Continuation Update

Changing trends in convenience and shopping, underscored by the continuing growth of suburbia, kept retailers and developers busy into the 1960s. Commercial amenities outside the main street area were in demand in order to accommodate the surrounding suburbs growing needs. The commercial development of this era reflected both modern values in architecture and the growing presence of automobiles.

"The shopping center's rise in the decade following the war was shaped by several related factors. Large new areas around population centers were being occupied by middle-class and prosperous working-class residential developments. These tracts were generally far removed from existing retail outlets....By 1950 the shopping center was transforming [retail stores] from a lone-wolf operation into an anchor unit of considerably larger enterprise....Not only were major stores several times the size of their precursors, but there was often a more extensive supporting cast."

This new type of retailing destination represented a radical break from traditional, unplanned retail growth. Rather than individually owned buildings facing the street and built to the full extent of the lot, these shopping centers were separated from the streets by large parking lots and often featured internal entrances and courtyards. Massive in scale, shopping centers were anchored by one or several department stores and numerous smaller retail shops. Unlike strip malls, shopping centers incorporated pedestrian courtyards and walkways, creating a unique shopping environment sheltered from traffic and parking lots. The grouping of stores in areas where parking could be made available and access from major highways was a growing trend in San Diego County. By the mid-1960s, the county would have four major regional shopping centers backed up by major department stores. The Chula Vista Center would be South Bay's anchor shopping center.

The Chula Vista Center was constructed in 1962 on a 35-acre site on Broadway between H and I Streets where the former Vista Square Housing development was located. It was developed to meet the growing need for Chula Vista's suburban area and south bay to have a large, one-stop commercial area with abundant parking. The new shopping center featured an open mall 40 feet wide by 640 feet long. The center, designed by Charles Luckman Associates, included a fountain that duplicated one at the Alhambra, a palace in Granada, Spain. The Sav-On Drug Store was the first store than opened followed by Marston Department Store a year later and J.C. Penny the subsequent year. Sears opened its doors at the east end of the Chula Vista Center across Fifth Avenue in 1966. Renowned Los Angeles architectural firm Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers designed the store in 1964-1965. The Chula Vista Sears not only catered to the ubiquitous motoring public with a generous surrounding parking lot and Auto Center, its size and contemporary look were designed to meet all of the needs of the modern consumer.

Site:

The original site for the "Vista Square Center" included a total of 57 acres of the former Vista Square Housing development which was a naval surplus development purchased by the City to help with the increased demand for housing during the 1950s. During its boom, approximately 600 families occupied the site. With the development of newer private apartment complexes in surrounding areas, the Vista Square began to decline in occupancy. In the late 1950s, the City began extensive planning efforts to redevelop the land into a large scale commercial shopping mall. Development proposals were submitted and reviewed in 1958 and included issues such as the permanent closure of Fifth Avenue to through traffic.

Three firms, Broadway-Hale Company, the May Company, and Gladstone & Company submitted detailed proposals to the City. Two of the submittals included Sears Roebuck & Company as one of the anchor tenants. An early artist's sketch noted the "Vista Square Center" as a "giant regional shopping center" and depicted a May Company store and a Sears Roebuck Department Store on site. Only the Broadway-Hale Company proposal included a desire to "take possession of the land on the east side of Fifth Avenue" as part of their development.

By 1960, the Broadway-Hale Company secured the site at the cost of \$1,174,700 and set on development of the shopping center. The agreement included the option of an additional 14.4 acres to the east of Fifth Avenue. With impending development, Vista Square Housing vacated its remaining 180 families with most of the houses given away at no cost to the City. Many of the houses were also relocated to Mexico with the remaining being razed that same year so that construction could begin. At the time of its completion in 1962, the Chula Vista Center stood on 35 acres of the former Vista Square Housing development. It would be boasted as the largest commercial development of its time.

Following the opening of the Chula Vista Center, the Broadway-Hale Company sold the 14.4 acre parcel east of Fifth Avenue to the Sears Roebuck and Company in 1963. Construction of the \$3.7 million dollar complex was started January 4, 1965 and completed a year later. Included in the development plans was a 24-car automotive center located adjacent to the store on Fifth Avenue. Opening day celebrations commenced on February 24, 1966 with thousands attending.

State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial

Page 8 of 9

*NRHP Status Code 6Z

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Chula Vista Sears

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625 Broadway, Suite 800
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Continuation Update

Sears Roebuck & Company:

Catalogue sales made Sears Roebuck & Company one of the leading retailers in the United States. Founded in Chicago in the early 1890s, it initially catered to rural America, shipping thick catalogues and mail-order merchandise to outlying areas where large stores seldom existed and consumer choice was limited. Sales increased fourfold during the 1910s and large mail-order distribution centers were developed by Sears in Dallas (1913-25), Seattle (1915), and Philadelphia (1920).

Sears entered the retail field in 1925. These urban department stores would dominate Sears' retail until the 1950s. At first, many stores were part of existing mail-order facilities. This strategy substantially reduced initial start-up costs and appealed to suburban customers who often lived in the vicinity. Robert E. Wood, who became Sears' vice president for factories and stores in 1924 and president in 1928, oversaw the company's rapid expansion into retail sales. His program was an enormous success and by 1929 it ranked third in the country in net sales, behind such established national chains as J.C. Penny and F.W. Woolworth. Sears would open three distinct types of retail locations: free-standing department stores, referred to as "A" stores, smaller "B" stores that addressed a specific market, and "C" stores which emphasized appliances or automotive products.

It was during Wood's tenure in 1928 that San Diego would gain its first Sears in the county located at 12th and Broadway in San Diego with 25 employees. Then in November 1935, Sears moved to 6th and C Streets in San Diego and expanded to larger quarters where they had 85 employees to serve local residents. The company, in general, thrived throughout the Depression, growing to 400 stores in 1933, and more than 600 stores in 1941.

From the 1950s, Sears would expand into suburban markets as reflective in their move to a larger store in the Hillcrest area of San Diego in 1952, which employed nearly 800. By the 1960s and 1970s, Sears would expand into suburban malls much like the Chula Vista Sears. The Chula Vista store would boast its larger square footage and over 1,100 parking spaces adjacent to the store, plus an Automotive Service Center that could service 24 cars simultaneously.

By the mid-1960s, Sears Roebuck was a superpower. As huge shopping centers began to cover the landscape, entire developments were predicated on the presence of a Sears store, and fundamental alterations in surrounding marketing areas occurred because of corporate advertising that made Sears part of everyday life.

Builders:

Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers, 1955-1965

Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers designed the Chula Vista Sears. Stiles Oliver Clements (1883-1966) was born in Centerville, MD. He received a Bachelor of Architecture at the Drexel Institute of Technology, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a Master of Architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris, France. After graduation he worked for various New York firms until he moved to Los Angeles in 1911 at the age of 28.

In 1923, Mr. Clements became a partner at Morgan, Wall & Clements Associates. During the 1920s and 1930s, Morgan, Wall & Clements Associates, designed numerous commercial buildings, mainly in Los Angeles, specializing in food stores, public markets, and drive-in markets. Mr. Clements was credited for being responsible for much of the development of modern commercial architecture in Los Angeles having designed 69 buildings along the portion of Wilshire Boulevard known as the Miracle Mile. With each era "[Clements] proved ever adroit at perceiving shifts in taste, manifesting them in ways that made it seem as though he had precipitated the change".

The firm was also known for its design of supermarkets, an emerging property type in early 20th century, and in particular for Ralphs supermarket prototypes, having designed an early Ralphs supermarket branch outlet in 1926. In 1937, Clements acquired the firm and renamed it Stiles O. Clements. The firm Stiles O. Clements continued the close association with Ralphs supermarkets that was established during the Morgan, Wall & Clements, Associates era.

Stiles O. Clements designed several shopping centers during the 1940s and 1950s: Windsor Hills Shopping Center, Los Angeles (1948) and Barnsdall Square Shopping Center, Los Angeles (ca. 1952-1956). These shopping centers had large surface parking lots located in front of the stores, a new strategy that many retailers and developers had embraced by the mid-1950s. Deliveries were made via efficient and inconspicuous rear delivery ways. It was Stiles O. Clements' Valley Plaza Master Plan in 1949-1951, however, that set precedence for a large front parking area that was highly influenced by Sears Roebuck & Company, the main anchor store.

State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial

Page 9 of 9

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Chula Vista Sears

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625 Broadway, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101

*Date: 1/28/2013

Continuation Update

The 180,000 square foot Valley Plaza store combined facets of his work just completed for the company with those of his Pico designed outlet. His scheme possessed a clear front, but one more neutral in character, appearing somewhat like an immense billboard, large enough to catch the eye of the passing motorist but also service as a backdrop to the rows of automobiles that separated it from the street. Valley Plaza was an experiment for Sears for it never before had the company function as the principle retailer in the development of a shopping center from its inception.

By 1955, Mr. Clements opened Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers, with his son Robert Clements, and served as Senior Partner of the firm until his retirement in 1965. Following Stile's retirement, Robert Clements took over the Los Angeles firm. The firm continued to design a wide array of commercial property types during the 1960s, from department stores and neighborhood shopping chain stores to factories, distribution center and banks, as well as neighborhood shopping centers mainly throughout the Los Angeles metropolitan area. Representative projects include the Park La Brea Shopping Center, the Pershing Square garage, the Carnation Office Building/Restaurant, Mullen-Bluett Department Store, the Navy and Marine Corps Reserve Training Center in Elysian Park and several stores for Sears and Montgomery Ward and markets for Ralphs, Hughes, Safeway, and Vons. Following Stile O. Clements retirement, the firm was renamed Robert O. Clements and Associates Architects-Engineers and remained active until Robert's death in 1987.

Although Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers have been well known in the Los Angeles area, their work in San Diego County is rare. The 1966 Chula Vista Sears and the 1927 Bank of Italy in Oceanside are the only known representative projects of the firm in San Diego County. These projects represent Stiles O. Clements early and later eras in architectural style for commercial buildings. The Chula Vista Sears would be one of final projects completed by Stiles & Robert Clements Architects-Engineers before Stiles O. Clements' retirement in 1965. Construction documents for the building date to 1964 and a Notice of Completion was filed on February 21, 1966. The Grand Opening took place three days later on February 24, 1966.

Nielson Construction Company, General Contractor

The Nielson Construction Company, a local San Diego based company, served as the General Contractor for the Chula Vista Sears project. The company has been serving San Diego since 1945. Under the leadership of S. Falck Nielsen, Nielsen Construction worked alongside some of San Diego's great visionaries in building some of the city's iconic structures: UCSD Library, Sea World and its various expansions, the Civic Center, and the first residential high rise in downtown, the Meridian.



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CHULA VISTA SEARS

Expert Technical Analysis Report
Section 9 - Bibliography

May 24, 2013

Page 9-3

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