

HOLLYWOOD PREMIERE MOTEL

5329 W. Hollywood Boulevard; 1716-1718 N. Serrano Avenue

CHC-2025-779-HCM

ENV-2025-780-CE

FINDINGS

- The Hollywood Premiere Motel “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city, or community” as an excellent example of a 1960s motel that accommodated automobile tourism in Hollywood.
- The Hollywood Premiere Motel “embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction” as a highly intact and rare example of a 1960s motel in Hollywood.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Hollywood Premiere Motel meets two of the Historic-Cultural Monument criteria for designation.

The subject property “exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city, or community” as an excellent example of a 1960s motel that accommodated automobile tourism in Hollywood. Motels were a significant property type in the area of commerce that accompanied the development of car-centric infrastructure across the country. By the 1950s, the major industry in Hollywood shifted from the motion picture industry to tourism and the opening of the Hollywood Freeway (U.S. Route 101) in 1954 made central Hollywood more accessible. Hollywood Boulevard has historically served as the community’s preeminent shopping and entertainment commercial district and had the added attraction of the Hollywood Walk of Fame (HCM #194), introduced in 1958 to honor important entertainment industry figures, improve and beautify Hollywood streets, and engage tourists. Official groundbreaking of the Walk of Fame commenced in 1960, the same year the subject property was constructed.

With car ownership being widespread at the time, the subject property offered an auto-oriented place for tourists to stay during road trips to the area, with easy connections to the freeway system, as well as proximity to attractions such as the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Numerous motels were constructed in the mid-20th century on Hollywood Boulevard, but the subject property is one of only a few extant, intact examples.

Additionally, the subject property, “embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction” as a highly intact and rare example of a 1960s motel in Hollywood. Created in 1952, Holiday Inn was the first chain to influence the design of motels. Along with other similar chains, Holiday Inn developed a model of a multi-story, back-to-back block of rooms that evolved into having a common interior double-loaded corridor. Earlier, post-World War II motel models took on a single-story linear form with parking directly in front of the row of rooms to enable guests access to their cars. With its two-story height, double-loaded corridor, and parking in front of the building, the subject property represents the evolution of motel designs to the chain model that dominated the market by the late 1960s. Characteristic of motels during the 1950s and early

1960s, the subject property exhibits a design and layout that reflect the influence of, and accommodation for, the automobile; provides a direct link between the room and the parked car; and it is located along an arterial road or highway. It also features a Googie-style neon sign to draw in passing motorists. While the applicant argues the subject property also “embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of constructions” as an excellent example of the Mid-Century Modern architectural style, staff are unable to make this finding. The Mid-Century Modern architectural style is a broad classification that describes Modern idioms and sub-styles popular after World War II, between 1945 and 1975. SurveyLA, Los Angeles’s citywide historic resources survey, established eligibility standards and character-defining feature considerations for evaluating resources for significance as an example of Mid-Century Modern-style architecture:

Eligibility Standards:

- Exhibits quality of design through distinctive features
- Is an excellent example of the Mid-Century Modern style
- Was constructed during the period of significance

Character-Defining/Associative Features:

- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period of significance
- Direct expression of the structural system, often wood or steel post and beam
- Simple geometric volumes
- Unornamented wall surfaces
- Flat roof, at times with wide overhanging eaves
- Floor-to-ceiling windows, often flush-mounted metal framed
- Horizontal massing
- If Expressionistic: sculptural forms intersecting with geometric volumes
- If Expressionistic: curved, sweeping wall surfaces
- If Expressionistic: dramatic roof forms, such as butterfly, A-frame, hyperbolic paraboloid, folded plate, or barrel vault

The subject property does not exhibit quality of design through distinctive features and is not an excellent example of the Mid-Century Modern architectural style. While the building does exhibit some characteristics of the style such as simple geometric volumes and unornamented wall surfaces, it does not have a flat roof with overhanging eaves or floor-to-ceiling windows, nor does it have a direct expression of its structural system – all defining features of Mid-Century Modern architecture. There are numerous exemplary commercial properties designed in the Mid-Century Modern architectural style that are already designated such as the Capitol Tower and Rooftop Sign (HCM #857), the Century Plaza Hotel (HCM #1060), and CBS Television City (HCM #1167). Additionally, there are several motels, motor hotels, or motor inns that were identified through SurveyLA and are exemplary and intact examples of the Mid-Century Modern architectural style, including the Beverly Laurel Motor Hotel (1964), the Wilshire Twilighter Motor Hotel (1958), and the Hollywood Downtowner Motel (1956, listed in the California Register of Historical Resources).

The subject property has experienced only minor alterations and retains a high level of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance as a 1960s motel.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (“CEQA”) FINDINGS

State of California CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 *“consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment.”*

State of California CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 *“consists of projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic buildings.”*

The designation of the Hollywood Premiere Motel as an Historic-Cultural Monument in accordance with Chapter 9, Article 1, of The City of Los Angeles Administrative Code (“LAAC”) will ensure that future construction activities involving the subject property are regulated in accordance with Section 22.171.14 of the LAAC. The purpose of the designation is to prevent significant impacts to an Historic-Cultural Monument through the application of the standards set forth in the LAAC. Without the regulation imposed by way of the pending designation, the historic significance and integrity of the subject property could be lost through incompatible alterations and new construction and the demolition of an irreplaceable historic site/open space. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation are expressly incorporated into the LAAC and provide standards concerning the historically appropriate construction activities which will ensure the continued preservation of the subject property.

The City of Los Angeles has determined based on the whole of the administrative record, that substantial evidence supports that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 and Class 31, and none of the exceptions to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 applies. The project was found to be exempt based on the following:

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 8 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals of maintaining, restoring, enhancing, and protecting the environment through the imposition of regulations designed to prevent the degradation of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 31 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals relating to the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of historic buildings and sites in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Categorical Exemption ENV-2025-780-CE was prepared on April 11, 2025.