

35 State Street

Designation Status: Designated a Structure of Merit on October 16, 2019

Assessor Parcel Number: 033-102-004

Historic Name: Hotel Californian

Constructed: 1925

Property Description: Constructed in 1925, the Californian Hotel is a four-story rectangular stucco building. Only the front elevation is original, as the rehabilitation project completed in 2017 included reconstruction of the rear portion of the building with the side elevation to match the original. The flat roof has a parapet on the front elevation between the towers covered with terra-cotta tiles. The three towers are capped with shallow pitched hipped roofs also clad in terra-cotta tile. The main elevation, on State Street, is Spanish Colonial Revival in style, with a graceful arcade on the ground floor. Two projecting square towers anchor the corners, decorated with brick detailing and French doors opening onto balconies with arched balustrades. The architectural treatment differs for each floor on this elevation. On the second floor, two French doors open onto a wrap-around balcony with wrought iron railings at the northeast corner. On the third floor, three arched French doors open onto a balcony with wrought iron railings. On the fourth floor the paired windows are recessed behind piers. Two sets of string courses extend along the State and Mason Street elevations, visually separating the arched first floor from the floors above. The monotony of the upper floor window treatment of the Mason Street elevation is enlivened somewhat by the ground floor arched openings, a small wrought iron balcony on the third floor, and projecting square towers at the corners.



Californian prior to Rehabilitation in 1997. Photo courtesy Historic Structures/Sites Report 1997.



Californian after rehabilitation in 2017.

Architect: Original building: F. Sward, an Architect from Los Angeles

Reconstruction: F.H. Webster of Hollywood assisted by the Architectural Advisory Committee established after the earthquake.

Architectural Style: Spanish Colonial Revival

Property Type: Hotel

Original Use: Hotel



Significance: The City of Santa Barbara establishes historic significance as provided by the Municipal Code, Section 22.22.040. The building meets the following criteria to qualify as a Structure of Merit.

Hotel after the 1925 Earthquake

Criterion A. Its character, interest or value as a significant part of the heritage of the City, the State or the Nation:

Constructed in 1925, only weeks after opening, the 1925 earthquake severely damaged the building. The building was critical to the redesign of the State Street corridor in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. In Santa Barbara, examples of Spanish Colonial Revival can be found throughout the City as one of its most defining styles of architecture as the city consciously chose to redefine itself as a romantic Mediterranean style town.



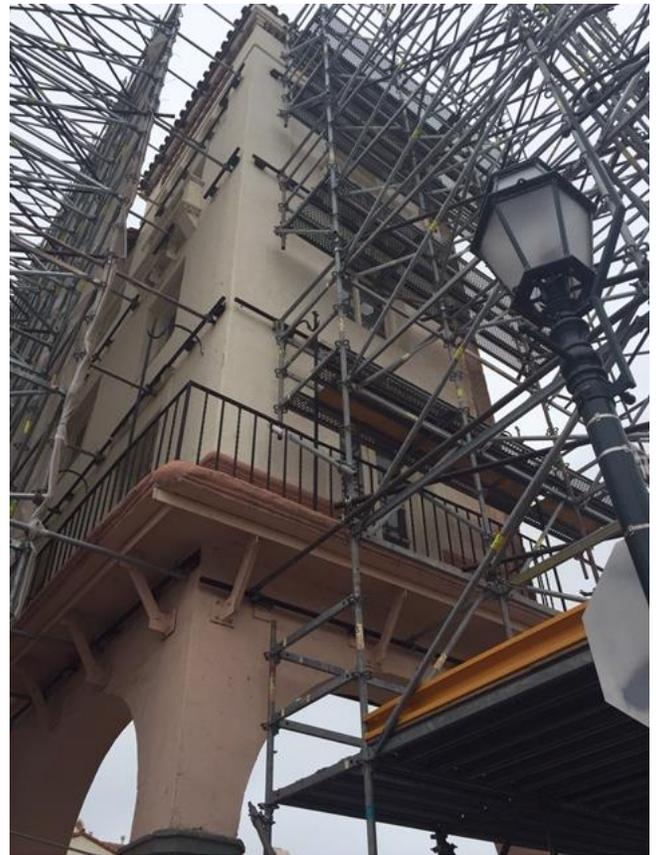
C. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the City, the State or the Nation;

Photograph after reconstruction after the earthquake.

The building is associated with the Architectural Advisory Committee which significantly contributed to the culture and development of the City. As early as 1909 Santa Barbara looked for a visual image with which to link its Spanish past to future development. A Civic League of citizens hired planner Charles Mulford Robinson to determine the City's assets and to offer plans for development and he pointed to the Spanish and Mexican heritage as a focal point for a unifying architectural style. In 1919, the City hired Bertram Goodhue, the noted architect who designed the Panama-Pacific exposition buildings in San Diego in the Spanish Churrigueresque style, to design a commercial streetscape in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. In addition other noted architects such as George Washington Smith and Charles Osborne Craig drew sketches of Spanish Colonial Revival/Mediterranean streetscapes. As a result, commissions for many civic and commercial buildings in the Spanish Colonial Revival style materialized with arcades, paseos and patios, characteristic of the style. The Community Arts Association hired the noted

planner Charles Cheney to prepare building and zoning ordinances and to develop a plan for architectural guidelines for the City. As a result, when the 1925 earthquake demolished the facades of many buildings along State Street, the framework was in place to reconstruct the City in the Spanish Colonial Revival and Mediterranean aesthetic.

Immediately after the earthquake, the Santa Barbara City Council established the Committee of Public Safety and Reconstruction, which in turn authorized the creation of the Architectural Advisory Committee. The Committee was a group of local architect and representatives of civic, professional, and business interests, who worked to repair and reconstruct State Street after the earthquake in the Spanish Colonial Revival/Mediterranean aesthetic. The architects reconstructing the Hotel Californian Hotel worked closely with the Architectural Advisory Committee to recreate the building in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. They viewed the use of the arcade on the first floor as an important unifying element to the streetscape and planned for all of lower State Street buildings to have an arcade.



Photographs of the scaffolding holding the original front elevation and arcade during rehabilitation.

Criterion D. Its exemplification of a particular architectural style or way of life important to the City, the State, or the Nation:

The building exemplifies the Spanish Colonial Revival style which emphasizes the interplay of cubic volumes, patios, pergolas, and arcades; each interpreted and redefined by local architects or regions in their own oeuvre of the form, massing, and decorative treatments. Santa Barbara has examples of the Spanish Colonial Revival style throughout the city from the distinct commercial buildings on State Street, to large homes and estates on the Riviera, to multi-family housing and hotels in the West Beach neighborhood along the waterfront. This building is an example of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style, which became an important part of Santa Barbara's heritage in the 1920s when the City deliberately transformed its architecture and look from an ordinary western style town into a romantic Spanish Colonial Revival/Mediterranean style city. This transformation was the result of the planning vision of a number of Santa Barbara citizens in the early 1920s with the founding of the Santa Barbara Community Arts Association, which urged that the town identify its individual character and then use planning principles to develop it. As an original building designed in the style important to the identity of Santa Barbara, the building qualifies under criterion D.

The four-story, Spanish Colonial Revival building employs the following character-defining elements of the Spanish Colonial Revival style:

- Terra-cotta roof tiles on the parapets and corner towers
- Decorative grills and ornament in the towers



Wood windows carefully constructed to match the original windows (which were too deteriorated to restore) in the front façade in size, configuration, profile and material.

- Various balconies and arches to integrate the large four story building into a pedestrian-friendly streetscape
- Paired, wood, double hung, one-over-one, wood windows Wood French doors leading to iron balconies
- Large, arched, wood storefront windows with divided light transoms
- An arched, graceful, pedestrian arcade



Criterion G. Its embodiment of elements demonstrating

outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials and craftsmanship:

The building embodies the following elements that demonstrate outstanding in attention to design, detail and materials:

- Terra-cotta roof tiles on the parapets and corner towers
- Decorative grills ornament in the towers
- Various balconies and arches to integrate the large four story building into a pedestrian-friendly streetscape
- Paired, wood, double hung, one-over-one, wood windows Wood French doors leading to iron balconies
- Large, arched, wood storefront windows with divided light transoms
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I. Its unique location or singular physical characteristic representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood;

The four-story building has been a dominant feature with its arcade, richly articulated front façade and towers that all provided a commanding presence on lower-State Street, a major gateway from the beach front into the City, since 1925.

Integrity: The only original portion of the building is the State Street façade. The rehabilitation of the State Street façade followed the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation with careful oversight of the Historic Landmarks Commission and Urban Historian to ensure that the building would be able to retain sufficient historic integrity to convey its 1925 appearance and be eligible for designation as a Structure of Merit. Because all the windows had to be replaced on the front façade, the integrity of materials has been reduced, however the new windows match the original in material, profile and configuration so they have the same appearance as in 1925. Because the entire rear of the building is new, the integrity of design of the entire building is also reduced, however the design of the State Street façade has high integrity. The building retains historic integrity of location, feeling, and association. The setting on State Street has been substantially altered with new development, so that the Setting is not the same as in 1925. Because of the alterations, the building does not rise to the

level of City Landmark designation, however, there is sufficient integrity remaining that the building conveys a sense of time and place of 1925 that it can qualify for Structure of Merit designation.