

## MEMORANDUM

DATE	April 29, 2021	PROJECT NUMBER	21089
TO	City of Alameda Historical Advisory Board	PROJECT	620 Central Avenue/1245 McKay Avenue, Alameda
OF	City of Alameda, 2263 Santa Clara Avenue Alameda, CA 94501	FROM	Stacy Kozakavich, Cultural Resources Planner, Page & Turnbull
CC	Lada Kocherovsky, Page & Turnbull	VIA	Email

REGARDING 620 Central Avenue/1245 McKay Avenue, Alameda (APN 74-1305-26-2)

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### Introduction

This Memorandum of Opinion has been prepared by Page & Turnbull at the request of the City of Alameda regarding Buildings 1, 2, 8, 9, 10 and 13 of the former Alameda Federal Center at 620 Central Avenue / 1245 McKay Avenue (APN 74-1305-26-2). The subject buildings are located within an L-shaped, 3.67-acre parcel on the west side of McKay Avenue, near Robert W. Crown Memorial State Beach. Buildings 1 and 2 were completed in 1942 as part of the Maritime Service Officers School, Alameda, which trained officers and seamen in the wartime operation of the merchant fleet.<sup>1</sup> Building 8 and Building 10, two small garages or sheds to the north of Building 1, may have been built as accessory buildings to the Maritime Service Officers School, though their date of construction could not be substantiated. Accessory Buildings 9 and 13 were later additions to the property, and were not associated with the historically significant activities of the Maritime Service Officers School. The Alameda Federal Center property, of which these buildings are a part and which consists of two parcels, the subject parcel (74-1305-26-2) and the adjacent parcel to the south (74-1305-26-1) is listed on the Alameda Historical Buildings Study List (Study List) under the address 620 Central Avenue.<sup>2</sup> The City of Alameda has requested preparation of this Memorandum of Opinion in advance of a Historical Advisory Board hearing which will consider a proposed project at the site (**Figure 1**).

This memorandum provides a brief description of the subject buildings and their historic context, discussion of major alterations that have occurred at the subject buildings and across the Alameda Federal Center in recent decades, a summary of previous historical evaluations and designations of the

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<sup>1</sup> When originally constructed, Building 2 consisted of a central mess hall, Building 2D, with six barracks wings, Buildings 2A, 2B, 2C, 2E, 2F, and 2G. Three of the barracks wings, 2E, 2F, and 2G were demolished in 2007. Unless otherwise noted, the term "Building 2" as used in this report will refer to the current configuration, including Buildings 2A through 2D.

<sup>2</sup> This memorandum does not provide an opinion regarding the significance, integrity, or historic preservation status of buildings associated with the operation of the Maritime Service Officers School which are located outside of APN 74-1305-26-2.

subject buildings, and Page & Turnbull's opinion regarding the eligibility of the buildings and complex for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), on the Alameda Historic Monuments List, or on the Study List at any level.

## Methodology

Page & Turnbull conducted a site visit to the subject property on March 19, 2021, and subsequently reviewed previous documentation of historic significance evaluations and major alterations. Key sources reviewed include:

- Architectural & Historical Resources of the City of Alameda, March 1994
- Historic Building Preservation Plan: Alameda Federal Center, 620 Central Avenue, Alameda, California (GSA Project No. ZCA81272), Page & Turnbull, February 23, 1996.
- Determination of Eligibility: National Register of Historic Places, Alameda Federal Center, Alameda, California, Supporting Materials (GSA Project No. ZCA81272). Page & Turnbull, February 1996.
- Letter from U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) (Arthur Layne) to California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) (Clarence Caesar), Re: Historic Evaluation for a federally owned property located at 620 Central Avenue, Alameda, CA, March 12, 2003.
- Letter from OHP (Dr. Knox Mellon) to GSA (Arthur Layne), Re: Historic Evaluation of a Federally Owned Property at 620 Central Avenue in the City of Alameda, Alameda County, March 20, 2003.

All photographs in this report were taken by Page & Turnbull on March 19, 2021, unless otherwise noted.

## Brief Site Development History

The Maritime Officers School, Alameda was built on a 32-acre site beginning in 1942. It consisted of a complex of over 20 buildings, connected by landscape and circulation features that were integral to its function as a campus. At the time of operation, the school consisted of the following:

The campus contained three distinct sections demarcated by the north-south axis of McKay Avenue and the east-west axis of the parade grounds. McKay Avenue, the school's access road, ran south from Central Avenue to a terminus on the site's southern shore. West of this road were the school's barracks, mess halls, and academic facilities. The asphalt-paved parade grounds, occupying the site of the larger of Neptune Beach's swimming pools, extended east from McKay Avenue near its juncture with Central Avenue. North of the parade grounds was a row of three large buildings: the administration building, fronting on McKay; a combination auditorium and gymnasium; and an indoor swimming pool or training basin (adjoined by a small pump house). South of the parade grounds and east of McKay Avenue was an extensive landscaped area bordered by a curving beach on the south, the former Neptune Beach picnic grounds. This area, with its trees, was retained for open space and athletic fields. Fronting on the east side of McKay Avenue south of the parade grounds were three buildings: a

firehouse, a ship's service store (snack bar, retail goods, barber and tailor), and an infirmary.<sup>3</sup>

The institution closed as a military training site in 1953, and was deactivated in 1954. In November of 1953, the Engineering Department of the City of Alameda prepared a sketch of the Maritime Service Officers School complex, showing the locations and spatial relationships of the original buildings and grounds, which spanned both sides of McKay Avenue from the shoreline to Central Avenue (**Figure 2**).

The 32-acre site was declared surplus property in 1957, and was subdivided and sold beginning in 1960. In January 1961, the 7.4-acre parcel to the east of McKay Avenue was sold to a developer, and the Administration Building, the auditorium/gymnasium, the indoor swimming pool, and a small pumphouse were demolished. In August of 1961, a large tideland parcel that had been part of the school's training area was transferred to the California Division of Beaches and Parks. Two buildings which were part of the Maritime Service Officers School remain in this area, which is now East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) property: the Infirmary (Red Cross Hall) and the Seamanship Building (Glory of the Seas Hall) (**Figure 3**). Today, the former infirmary building serves as the Crab Cove Visitor's Center, remodeled in 1973 and again in 1979 for that purpose. The Seamanship Building is used by the EBRPD as offices and for storage.

By 1961, the portion containing the subject parcel, which included Building 1 and the original Building 2, with its six barracks wings, was only 7.6 acres. This area was subsequently referred to as the Alameda Federal Center. Between 1959 and 1965, the buildings within this parcel were leased by the U.S. Office of Civil Defense and Mobilization for operation as the Western Instructor Training Center. From 1965, different buildings were leased by a variety of federal agencies, including the Department of Defense, Environmental Protection Agency, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Department of Agriculture. Notably, Building 2A (one barracks wing of Building 2) was bombed by activists in 1975 while occupied by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Multiple interior alterations were completed in these buildings between the late 1960s and 1980s. In addition, most remaining original windows were replaced with aluminum sash in 1986.<sup>4</sup>

When evaluated for eligibility for listing in the National Register by Page & Turnbull in 1996, buildings attributed to the operation the Maritime Service Officers School and which remained within the Alameda Federal Center property included Building 1 (Engineering Building), Building 2 (Mess Hall and Barracks, including all six original barracks wings), Building 3 (Academic Building), Building 4 (Equipment Building), and Buildings 5 through 7 (Barracks) (**Figure 4**). Building 12 (the original sewage treatment building) was briefly described in Page & Turnbull's HBPP, but is located outside of the Alameda Federal Center, across McKay Avenue to the east. In addition, four smaller utility buildings, including Building 8 (Storage and Grounds), Building 9 (Trash), Building 10 (Storage), and Building 13 (Elevator Equipment) were

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<sup>3</sup> Page & Turnbull, Historic Building Preservation Plan: Alameda Federal Center, 620 Central Avenue, Alameda, California (GSA Project No. ZCA81272) (San Francisco: Prepared for the General Services Administration, Region 9, 1996), History, Page 2.

<sup>4</sup> Page & Turnbull, HBPP.

noted as being within the property but were not attributed a historic use as part of the Maritime Service Officers School.<sup>5</sup> These four buildings were not individually described in the 1996 evaluation or preservation documentation. Building 8 may correspond to a building labeled as the “1-Story Paint Cooker” and Building 10 to what appears to be a garage on the 1953 City of Alameda map of the property, made after the Maritime Service Officers School was decommissioned. Buildings 9 and 13 are not depicted on the 1953 map, and are not discernable on early aerial photographs.

The two extant original buildings outside the Alameda Federal Center property, the Seamanship Building and Infirmary, were not included in the 1996 evaluation of the Alameda Federal Center. By this time, eleven original buildings and structures had been demolished across the original Maritime Service Officers School property: the Gatehouse, the Administration Building, the Auditorium/Gymnasium, the Training Basin, the Pumphouse, the Firehouse, the Ship’s Service Store, the Night Vision Classroom, the Anti-Aircraft Training Building, the Mast Assembly building, and the Pier.<sup>6</sup>

In 2006-2007, six buildings on the Alameda Federal Center property were demolished: Building 4 (the Equipment Building) and Buildings 2E, 2F, 2G, 5 and 6 (Barracks). In 2015, the 7.6-acre Alameda Federal Center parcel was subdivided, separating the remaining buildings into two lots: the subject 3.7-acre subject parcel, and a 3.9-acre parcel to the south. Building 3 (Academic Building) was demolished in 2017-2018.

## Brief Building Description and Alteration History

### Building 1

Building 1 served as the engineering building during its use by the Maritime Service Officers School (**Figure 5 through Figure 9**). The building was used as laboratory space beginning in the late 1960s, and was the Department of Agriculture’s Western Laboratory from the early 1980s until 2017. In 1996, the building was described as follows:

Building 1 is a one-and-a-half story wood frame building, with concrete perimeter foundation walls; flat, built-up roof; cement-asbestos shingle siding; flat wood trimwork; and a combination of wood and aluminum windows. Its length is oriented east-west with a front entrance on McKay Avenue. Alongside this entrance is an original brick chimney. Building 1 has a full length dock at the north elevation. A similar dock original to its south elevation was infilled in the recent past to house new interior space. A two-story appendage at the west end houses mechanical equipment.<sup>7</sup>

Alterations to the building which had been made prior to 1996 were described as follows:

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<sup>5</sup> Page & Turnbull, NPS Form 10-900, *Supporting Materials for a Determination of Eligibility: Alameda Federal Center* (San Francisco: Prepared for the General Services Administration, 1996), Section 7, Page 4.

<sup>6</sup> Page & Turnbull, HBPP, List of Buildings.

<sup>7</sup> Page & Turnbull, HBPP, Building 1, Page 7.

Originally an elongated I-shaped building plan with an appendage at the west end. The south facing recessed bay, originally a dock similar to that on the north side, was infilled during the late-1980s with new laboratory support space. Other primary changes include the conversion of the original full height, clerestoried shop space to the current one-and-a-half story configuration, with subdivided laboratory space on the First Floor and a mechanical loft housing laboratory, ventilation and distillation equipment in the attic. Another original shop space at the building[']s west end was converted to a loading and receiving area for the labs. The boiler room for the original facility, attached to the west end of Building 1, has since been demolished, and the current two-story appendage at this end currently houses mechanical equipment.<sup>8</sup>

Page & Turnbull reviewed drawings provided by the Alameda Point Collaborative which depict additional detail regarding the changes to Building 1 during its use by the USDA as part of the Alameda Federal Center. Drawings prepared by Bay Architects Associates in 1983 detail the interior subdivision and renovation of the first floor interior to provide laboratory space. In addition, these drawings note the replacement of overhead utility doors on the south façade with double doors. Many original doors and windows throughout the building were replaced with partially glazed wood panel doors and double-hung wood sash windows. New shingles were installed on the exterior. Drawings prepared in 1984 by Bay Architects for the USDA Food Inspection Service show the enclosure of the original loading dock area at the south façade to create new interior work areas.

Building 1 does not appear to have been significantly modified since Page & Turnbull's 1996 evaluation.

## Building 2

Building 2 of the Alameda Federal Center served as a combined mess hall and barracks complex during its use by the Maritime Service Officers School (**Figure 10 through Figure 13**). The six wings, referred to in previous documentation as "Buildings 2A, 2B, 2C, 2E, 2F, and 2G," were barracks wings spaced in two groups of three on the north and south sides of Building 2D. In 1996, the barracks wings were described as follows:

Buildings 2A, 2B, 2C, 2E, 2F, 2G, 5, 6, 7 are each two-story wood frame structures, with concrete perimeter foundation walls; flat, built-up roofs; cement-asbestos shingle siding; flat wood trimwork; and aluminum windows. Attached covered walkways are wood post-and-beam construction, again with flat, built-up roofs. Second Floor exterior exit stairs, either added or replacing original wood stairs during the 1980s, are of lightweight steel and concrete, with steel guardrails. Landing and entry structures, including short flights

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<sup>8</sup> Page & Turnbull, HBPP, Building 1, Page 3-4.

of stairs up to the First Floor, are wood frame with wood finish materials. Originally wood panel doors, all exterior doors are now aluminum and glass.<sup>9</sup>

The central portion of Building 2, "Building 2D," was the mess hall with an upstairs meeting hall. In 1996, it was described as follows:

Building 2D is a two-story wood frame structure, with concrete perimeter foundation walls; a flat, built-up roof; cement-asbestos shingle siding; flat wood trimwork; and aluminum windows. Attached covered walkways are wood post-and-beam construction, again with flat, built-up roofs. Second Floor exterior exit stairs, either added or replacing original wood stairs during the 1980s, are of lightweight steel and concrete, with steel guardrails. Originally wood panel doors, all exterior doors are now aluminum and glass.<sup>10</sup>

Following closure of the training center, the building complex was used primarily as office space.

Page & Turnbull reviewed drawings provided by the Alameda Point Collaborative which depict additional detail regarding the changes to Building 2 during its use as part of the Alameda Federal Center. Plans prepared by Walz and MacLeod Architects in 1968 detail "modernizations" to buildings 2D, 2C, and portions of 2E and 2F. Though most of these alterations were interior, new aluminum entrance doors were installed at this time.

Significant alterations have been made to Building 2 since it was evaluated by Page & Turnbull in 1996. Most notably, the three southern barracks wings, Buildings 2E, 2F, and 2G, were demolished in 2007 according to plans prepared by URS. The south façade of Building 2D was renovated as necessary to accommodate removal of these wings and addition of seismic bracing at its ground floor. Buildings 5 and 6 of the Alameda Federal Center complex, also barracks buildings which were originally part of the Maritime Service Officers School, were demolished in 2007. At the time of the 1996 evaluation, the second-floor meeting hall of Building 2D had been minimally altered. Today, this second-floor space has been renovated to provide a meeting room on its east side and chemical storage and work areas on the west side.

### Accessory Buildings

The four small accessory buildings (Buildings 8, 9, 10, and 13) within the subject parcel to the north of Buildings 1 and 2 are relatively poorly documented.

Building 8 is a rectangular wood-frame building with a gable roof and clerestory vent at the east façade (**Figure 14**). Clad in wide horizontal lap siding, the building has sliding utility doors at the north façade and southern portion of the east façade. As noted previously, the building may be

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<sup>9</sup> Page & Turnbull, HBPP, Federal Center Building 2A, Page 7. The text is replicated for each of Buildings 2B, 2C, 2E, 2F, and 2G, on Page 7 of their respective sections of the HBPP.

<sup>10</sup> Page & Turnbull, HBPP, Federal Center Building 2D, Page 7.

the same structure labeled on the 1953 City of Alameda site drawing as a “1-story paint cooker.” The 1996 HBPP lists its use at that time as “Storage and Grounds,” and does not list a historic use.<sup>11</sup>

Building 9 is a one-story rectangular shed with a gable roof and wide opening at the east façade (**Figure 15**). It is clad in plywood sheets, with narrow battens at the seams. The building is not depicted on the 1953 City of Alameda site drawing, and is not visible in the 1965 aerial photograph. It is depicted on the site plan for the 1996 HBPP with a wide T-shape, suggesting that the footprint has been altered since that time. The 1996 HBPP lists its use at that time as “Trash,” and does not list a historic use.<sup>12</sup>

Building 10 is a one-story rectangular flat-roofed shed consisting of two boxy volumes, with a slightly narrower volume at the east end (**Figure 16**). Clad in wide horizontal lap siding, the building has a roll-up utility door at its east façade. Building 10 appears to be depicted on the 1953 City of Alameda site drawing as a garage with a smaller footprint than currently, possibly corresponding to its eastern volume. This footprint is also visible in the 1965 aerial photograph. The 1996 HBPP, which shows its current footprint, lists its use at that time as “Storage,” and does not list a historic use.<sup>13</sup>

Building 13 is a small, one-story rectangular, flat-roofed structure with concrete masonry unit walls and a flat roof (**Figure 17**). One unglazed metal door is located at the east façade. The building is not depicted on the 1953 City of Alameda site drawing, and is not visible in the 1965 aerial photograph. The 1996 HBPP lists its use at that time as “Elevator Equipment,” and does not list a historic use.<sup>14</sup>

## Current Historic Status and Opinion of Eligibility

The following section examines the national, state, and local historical ratings currently assigned to the subject property, and provides Page & Turnbull’s opinions regarding eligibility for listing at the national, state and local levels.

### National Register of Historic Places

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

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<sup>11</sup> Page & Turnbull, HBPP, List of Buildings, Page 1.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

Buildings associated with the Maritime Service Officers School, located within the 7.6-acre Alameda Federal Center, were evaluated by Page & Turnbull in 1996 for their historical significance and eligibility for listing in the National Register. The Alameda Federal Center was owned at the time by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). Evaluators found that the complex of buildings possessed significance under Criterion A (Events) for the period 1943-1945 for its association with training during World War II, and might be significant for the period 1950-1953 for association with training during the Korean War. The complex was also found significant under Criterion C (architecture) for its "design as a rare example of an early modern campus design, as a large example of a Bay Region style complex, and as an exemplification of World War II planning and design."<sup>15</sup> However, due to alterations to the complex, including building demolitions and exterior modifications to remaining buildings, the complex was found to lack sufficient integrity for eligibility for listing in the National Register as a district. In addition, evaluators noted that remaining individual buildings did not retain sufficient integrity for listing as individual resources.

With respect to its significance and integrity under National Register Criterion A, the 1996 Historic Building Preservation Plan prepared by Page & Turnbull states that:

Individually, the buildings of greatest potential significance are those especially designed for maritime training. The academic building, which was the center of training for deck officers, and the engineering building, which was the center of training for officers in the engineering department, like the other buildings on the G.S.A. property, have been painted and most windows have been replaced. In addition, the specialized interior of the engineering building has been remodeled and subdivided. These buildings have also lost integrity.<sup>16</sup>

With respect to the site's integrity under Criterion C, the 1996 Historic Building Preservation Plan states:

The essential physical features are the plan of streets and open space, including the parade ground; all the buildings, which were designed as a harmonious whole with asbestos-cement siding, brown walls and white trim; the mast assembly and the pier. Nearly half of the major buildings including the two largest have been demolished; the character of the open space has changed some, has been developed; and every building on G.S.A. property has been painted and has had windows replaced.

As a district under criterion C, there is a loss of integrity of design, materials, feeling, and association through demolitions and new development, and through a new color scheme and replacement of original windows with aluminum sash. As individual buildings, because the complex was designed as a whole without strong focal buildings, none of

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<sup>15</sup> Page & Turnbull, HBPP, Statement of Significance, Page 1. This text is also included in the Significance section on Page 2 of the section for each individual building.

<sup>16</sup> Page & Turnbull, HBPP, Statement of Significance, Page 1. This text is also included in the Significance section on Page 2 of the section for each individual building.



those on G.S.A. property stand out. All have lost integrity through painting and window replacement.<sup>17</sup>

In 2003, correspondence between the GSA and Dr. Knox Mellon, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) at the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), concurred that the complex was not eligible for listing in the National Register. Mellon stated:

A review of the submitted documentation leads me to concur with GSA's determination that the Alameda Federal Center is not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP under any of the criteria established b 36 CFR 60.4. Although the property has associations with World War II-era training of officers associated with the U.S. Maritime Service, it has lost considerable integrity of design, materials, setting, feeling, and association with its historic period of significance (1942-1957). Those structures that remain do not convey the special nature of this property's historic maritime training mission during and after World War II.

Therefore, no buildings within the subject parcel are listed in, nor eligible for listing in, the National Register as individual resources or district contributors. To identify any later possible evaluations submitted to an Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), Page & Turnbull consulted the OHP Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD) for Alameda County, most recently updated March 3, 2020. According to the BERD listing, following the 2003 correspondence between the SHPO and GSA, Buildings 1 through 7 and Building 12 of the Alameda Federal Center were assigned a California Historic Resource Status Code of 6Y, indicating that the property has been determined ineligible for listing in the National Register by consensus through the Section 106 process, but has not been evaluated for California Register eligibility or designation at the local level.<sup>18</sup> No updated evaluations have been submitted to a CHRIS Information Center. It is Page & Turnbull's opinion that the Alameda Federal Center property remains ineligible for listing in the National Register as a district or group of buildings. Due to additional building demolitions since the 2003 finding by the OHP, the integrity of the property has been further diminished. In addition, none of the remaining buildings within the subject parcel appear to be eligible for listing in the National Register as individual properties. Building 1 and Building 2 have both been significantly altered since their association with the Maritime Service Officers School, and cannot convey their association with its 1942-1957 period of significance. Building 8 and Building 10 were not contributors to the significance of the training facility, and Building 9 and 13 appear to have been built after the facility was decommissioned.

### California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register, established in 1998, is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed in the California Register

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<sup>17</sup> Page & Turnbull, HBPP, Statement of Significance, Page 1-2. This text is also included in the Significance section on Page 3 of the section for each individual building.

<sup>18</sup> Office of Historic Preservation, California Historical Resource Status Codes, March 1, 2020. Accessed at <https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1069/files/Resource-Status-Codes.pdf>, March 16, 2021.

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

The subject buildings do not appear to have been previously evaluated for eligibility, and are not currently listed as individual resources or district contributors in the California Register.

When the Alameda Federal Center was evaluated according to the criteria for the National Register, in 1996, the California Register had not yet been established. However, the criteria for evaluation for inclusion in the California Register are nearly identical to those used for evaluation for listing in the National Register. The complex originally constructed as the Maritime Service Officers School was found significant under National Register Criterion A (Events) and C (Architecture). Based on the similarity of the criteria, the complex would also be considered significant under California Register Criterion 1 (Events) and 3 (Architecture).

In order to qualify for listing in any local, state, or national historic register, a property or landscape must possess significance under at least one evaluative criterion, and retain integrity. Integrity is defined by the California OHP as “the authenticity of an historical resource’s physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource’s period of significance,” or more simply defined as “the ability of a property to convey its significance.”<sup>19</sup>

There are established integrity standards outlined by the *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Seven variables, or aspects, that define integrity are used to evaluate a resource’s integrity—location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A property must maintain most or all of these aspects in order to retain overall integrity. If a property does not retain integrity, it can no longer convey its significance and is therefore not eligible for listing in local, state, or national registers.

As discussed above, the buildings evaluated by Page & Turnbull in 1996 as part of the former Maritime Service Officers School were found to lack sufficient integrity, as a district and as individual resources, to be eligible for listing in the National Register. While the same aspects of integrity are considered when evaluating eligibility for the National Register and California Register, guidance provided by the California OHP regarding differences in integrity thresholds between the two registers states it is possible that “historical resources may not retain sufficient integrity to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register, but they may still be eligible for listing in the California Register.”<sup>20</sup> The guidance states that properties which have lost their historic character or appearance may still have sufficient integrity for the

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<sup>19</sup> California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistance Series No. 7: How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of Historical Resources* (Sacramento: California Office of State Publishing, September 4, 2001) 11.

<sup>20</sup> California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistance Series No. 6: California Register and National Register: A Comparison* (for purposes of determining eligibility for the California Register) (Sacramento, CA), 2.

California Register if they maintain the potential to yield “significant scientific or historical information or specific data.”<sup>21</sup>

The thorough historic context and significance discussions presented in the 1996 *Historic Building Preservation Plan and Determination of Eligibility: National Register of Historic Places* documentation for the Maritime Service Officers School buildings within the Alameda Federal Center demonstrate that the buildings associated with this institution were found significant for their historical associations with World War II- and Korean War-era training programs, and for their embodiment of the characteristics of a modern campus complex designed in a Bay Region style. The significance of these buildings was not in their potential to yield scientific or historic information to future researchers.

Further, demolition of three barracks wings of Building 2, Buildings 2E, 2F, and 2G within the subject parcel, and Buildings 3, 4, 5 and 6 in the neighboring parcel<sup>22</sup>, have led to an additional loss of integrity of the complex since its 1996 evaluation. The remaining buildings are unable to convey their significant associations with either their historic use as the Maritime Service Officers School, or as an architectural example of a modern campus.

It is Page & Turnbull’s opinion that the heavily modified Building 1 and Building 2 do not retain sufficient integrity of setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association for eligibility for listing in the California Register, as either individual resources or contributors to a district. Building 8 and Building 10 were not contributors to the significance of the training facility, and Building 9 and 13 appear to have been built after the facility was decommissioned.

### City of Alameda Historic Monuments

The City of Alameda local register, titled the “Historic Monuments List,” requires City Council action for designation. Listed sites are considered to be historical resources for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). According to Alameda Municipal Code Section 13-21.2, a Historical Monument is defined as:

any site, including significant trees or other plant life located thereon, building, structure, portion of a structure, or group of structures of particular historic significance to the City, such as historic structures or sites in which the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the Nation, State or community is reflected or exemplified, or which are identified with historic personages or with important events in the main currents of national, State or local history, or which embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period, type or method of construction, or a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>22</sup> Subdivided in 2015, both parcels were included in the 1996 evaluation of the Alameda Federal Center.

<sup>23</sup> City of Alameda, Alameda Municipal Code, Chapter XIII, Article VII – Historical Preservation, Section 13-21.2. Electronic resource at [https://library.municode.com/ca/alameda/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=CHXIIIBUHO\\_ARTVIIHIPR](https://library.municode.com/ca/alameda/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CHXIIIBUHO_ARTVIIHIPR), accessed March 26, 2021.

There are currently 30 historical monuments in Alameda. The subject property does not appear on the City's Historic Monuments List.

Guidance produced by the City of Alameda does not clearly state criteria for significance or thresholds for integrity necessary for designation of properties as Historical Monuments. However, in the absence of explicit local guidance, the integrity standards for inclusion in the National Register and California Register provide appropriate guidance for establishing a property's ability to convey its significance.<sup>24</sup> The subject buildings associated with the Maritime Service Officers School, including Building 1 (Engineering Building) and Building 2 (Mess Hall and Barracks, including all six original barracks wings) and the associated accessory buildings within the Alameda Federal Center property (including Buildings 8 and 10) were found ineligible for listing in the National Register due to lack of integrity, with SHPO concurrence in 2003.<sup>25</sup> It is Page & Turnbull's opinion that these buildings are also ineligible for listing in the California Register due to loss of integrity. Further, it is Page & Turnbull's opinion that the buildings at the subject site which were associated of the period of operation of the Maritime Service Officers School, Buildings 1, 2, 8, and 10, lack sufficient integrity of setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to be eligible for designation as City of Alameda Historical Monuments.

#### City of Alameda Historical Buildings Study List

Based on the findings of a preliminary citywide survey of historic resources in Alameda initiated in 1978, the Study List includes over 4,000 properties which were found to be, or which may be, significant to the city based on their architectural significance, historical significance, environmental significance, and/or design integrity, defined as follows:

Architectural Significance has to do with the style of a historic resource, the reputation and ability of the architect, the quality of the design, its uniqueness and its execution, and the materials and methods of construction.

Historical Significance comes from an association with the lives of persons or important events which have made a significant contribution to the community, state or nation; or from an association with broad patterns of cultural, social, political, economic, or industrial history; or the urban development of Alameda.

Environmental Significance has to do with the continuity or character of a street or neighborhood with a historical resource's setting on the block, its landscaping, and its visual prominence as a landmark or symbol of the city, neighborhood, or street.

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<sup>24</sup> City of Alameda, *Architectural and Historical Resources of the City of Alameda*, 11.

<sup>25</sup> Though their dates of construction are not documented, Building 8 and 10 may date to the period of use of the Maritime Service Officers School. Neither Building 8 nor Building 10 is discussed as a contributor to the significance of the Alameda Federal Center property in Page & Turnbull's 1996 evaluation. Building 9 and 13 were constructed after the institution was decommissioned.

Design Integrity has to do with alterations which have been made over time to the original materials and design features of the resource.<sup>26</sup>

The Study List is not a "Local register of historical resources" as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k).<sup>27</sup> As described by the City of Alameda Historic Preservation Element, the Study List "should not be considered a final product, but rather a valuable tool in the ongoing process of identification, evaluation and preservation of Alameda's architectural and historic resources."<sup>28</sup> Properties listed on the Study List are eligible to use the California State Historical Building Code, and proposed demolitions or major alterations may be subject to review by the Alameda Historical Advisory Board.

Properties listed on the Study List are assigned to one of five categories, based on their level and type of significance.<sup>29</sup> The eligibility of the subject buildings for inclusion in the Study List is discussed following each category description below.

**Study List Category "N":** A historic resource of the highest quality, eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, usually because of its architectural significance. These are of the highest priority for inclusion on the list of Alameda Historical Monuments.

*Discussion:* As discussed above, buildings within the subject parcel which were documented to have been, or which were potentially associated with the operation of the Maritime Service Officers School (including Buildings 1, 2, 8, and 10) and the larger complex to which they belonged were found ineligible for listing in the National Register in 1996, with a 2003 concurrence from the SHPO.<sup>30</sup> While they possess historical significance due to their association with the Maritime Service Officers School, the integrity of the individual buildings and of the setting of the complex as a whole has been diminished over time by demolition of several buildings features, and alteration of those remaining. The remaining buildings within the Alameda Federal Center property lack architectural significance and design integrity. Due to the loss of several buildings and original landscape and circulation features of the Maritime Service Officers' School, the complex does not possess environmental significance. As such, Buildings within the subject property, formerly of the Maritime Service Officers School, are not eligible for inclusion on the Study List under category "N."

**Study List Category "S":** A historic resource distinguished by its architectural, historical, or environmental significance, eligible for inclusion in the State Historic

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<sup>26</sup> City of Alameda, *Architectural and Historical Resources of the City of Alameda*, 10.

<sup>27</sup> "Local register of historical resources" means a list of properties officially designated or recognized as historically significant by a local government pursuant to a local ordinance or resolution.

<sup>28</sup> City of Alameda, Historic Preservation Element (City of Alameda Planning Department: Adopted by City Council May 6, 1980), 51.

<sup>29</sup> City of Alameda, "Historic Preservation." Electronic resource at <https://www.alamedaca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building-and-Transportation/Planning-Division/Historic-Preservation#HBSL>, accessed March 26, 2021.

<sup>30</sup> Buildings 9 and 13 do not appear to have been associated with operation of the Maritime Service Officers School.

Resources Inventory, and of secondary priority for inclusion on the list of Alameda Historical Monuments. Many of these are also eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Others would be eligible if design integrity were restored.

*Discussion:* The Alameda Federal Center is currently listed on the Study List under the "S" category for its historical association with the Maritime Service Officers School. At the time of its initial survey, the property consisted of those buildings remaining from the Maritime Service Officers School which were within the Alameda Federal Center property: Building 1, 2 (including all six barracks wings), 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. In the decades since it was assigned to Category "S" of the Study List, three barracks wings of Building 2, and Buildings 3, 4, 5, and 6 were demolished. As documented in the 1996 Historic Building Preservation Plan, the integrity of the Alameda Federal Center complex overall, and the subject buildings individually, have been significantly diminished through demolition and alteration. As individual resources, these buildings lack architectural significance and design integrity. Due to the loss of several buildings and original landscape and circulation features of the Maritime Service Officers' School, the individual buildings and current complex do not possess environmental significance. Buildings 1, 2, 8, and 10, associated with the operation of the Maritime Service Officers School, are not eligible for listing in the National Register or California Register as district contributors or individual resources due to their loss of integrity. Buildings 9 and 13 do not appear to have been associated with the operation of the Maritime Service Officers School. They are no longer eligible for continued inclusion on the Study List under category "S."

**Study List Category "B":** A resource which, due to its scale, massing, materials, style, and other features, is similar to a nearby "N" or "S" resource and serves as Background support for it. These resources are eligible for inclusion in a group or district nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

*Discussion:* Category "B" of the Study List relies on the presence of neighboring or nearby category "N" or "S" resources which a property supports as background, providing an appropriate setting for a National Register-eligible district. The Seamanship Building, located within EBRPD property to the south of the subject parcel, is listed as an individual resource on the Alameda Study List under the "S" category. As discussed above, the former Maritime Service Officers School buildings within the Alameda Federal Center have previously been found ineligible for listing in the National Register as a historic district. Page & Turnbull agrees with this finding. The buildings within the Alameda Federal Center which were closest in proximity to the Seamanship Building, including Building 3 (classrooms) and Building 4 (garage), were demolished since that finding of ineligibility was made. The remaining buildings within the subject parcel which were documented to have been, or which were potentially associated with the operation of the Maritime Service Officers School (including Buildings 1, 2, 8, and 10) are too spatially distant to provide meaningful background for the Seamanship Building, whose primary significant spatial

relationship is with the bay shoreline.<sup>31</sup> As such, the subject buildings are not eligible for inclusion on the Study List under category “B.”

**Study List Category “E”:** A resource which, by itself, might be insignificant, but which, together with its neighbors, forms an Environment which is distinguished by its continuity, its setting, its urban design features, and its integrity. This resource derives its significance from its association with neighboring resources.

*Discussion:* Category “E” of the Study List is applicable to buildings which, although lacking individual significance, contribute to a cohesive environment with an identifiable historic character. The majority of the buildings which were originally associated with the Maritime Service Officers School, both inside and outside of the Alameda Federal Center, have been demolished. Considered as a group, the remaining Maritime Service Officers School buildings, which include those within the Alameda Federal Center as well as neighboring parcels, do not appear to form a cohesive environment. The Infirmary (currently the Crab Cove Visitor Center) and the Seamanship Building (EBRPD offices) are not visibly connected with the subject buildings. Landscape features, circulation routes, and other associated buildings that once connected the complex have been demolished, and the area lacks the overall continuity which would be expected of a group of buildings and structures designated as category “E” of the Study List. As such, the buildings within the subject parcel which were documented to have been, or which were potentially associated with the operation of the Maritime Service Officers School (including Buildings 1, 2, 8, and 10) and the larger complex to which they belonged, do not appear to be eligible for inclusion on the Study List under category “E.”<sup>32</sup>

**Study List Category “H”:** A resource which may have Historical importance because of its apparent age or location, or may have architectural importance because of its similarity to other buildings done by important architects and/or builders. Historic research should precede further evaluation of this resource

*Discussion:* Category “H” of the Study List is applicable to buildings which have been identified as potentially significant based on their historical associations, architectural style, design integrity, or environmental contribution, but which require additional research and evaluation prior to inclusion at one of the other levels. It is essentially a placeholder category, useful for protecting resources pending further research. The buildings of the Alameda Federal Center were thoroughly evaluated for eligibility for listing in the National Register by Page & Turnbull in 1996. While possessing significance,

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<sup>31</sup> Buildings 9 and 13 are not documented to have been associated with the operation of the Maritime Service Officers’ School, as they appear to have been built after the school was decommissioned. They are not contributors to the historic significance of the Alameda Federal Center.

<sup>32</sup> Buildings 9 and 13 are not documented to have been associated with the operation of the Maritime Service Officers’ School, as they appear to have been built after the school was decommissioned. They are not contributors to the historic significance of the Alameda Federal Center.

the buildings were found ineligible as a district and as individual resources based on their lack of integrity. As they have been previously documented and evaluated, the subject buildings are not eligible for inclusion on the Study List under Category "H."

In summary, while buildings within the subject property which were associated with the operation of the Maritime Service Officers School, including Buildings 1, 2, 8, and 10, possess historical significance as a grouping, as defined by the City of Alameda, they do not retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for inclusion in the Study List under Categories "S" or "N."<sup>33</sup> Further, the buildings do not possess architectural significance or design integrity. Due to the gradual removal of numerous buildings and features originally associated with the Maritime Service Officers School from the subject property and neighboring parcels, the remaining buildings lack the visual and spatial connection to other nearby resources to constitute a significant grouping. They lack environmental significance in their own right, and do not provide historical background for significant buildings such as the Seamanship Building. They would not, combined with other nearby resources, comprise a cohesive historic district or character area. The subject buildings are therefore not eligible for the Study List under Categories "B" or "E." As components of the previously documented and evaluated Alameda Federal Center, Study List Category "H" is not applicable to the buildings associated with operation of the Maritime Service Officers School. Overall, the subject buildings are not eligible for inclusion in the Study List at any level.

## Conclusion

Building 1 and Building 2, located at 620 Central Avenue / 1245 McKay Avenue were originally constructed in 1942-1943 as part of the Maritime Service Officers School, Alameda. They were later part of a group of buildings referred to as the Alameda Federal Center, leased by various federal agencies beginning in the late 1960s. Both have been significantly altered in the nearly seven decades since the closure of the school in 1953. Four additional buildings within the parcel which are adjacent to the north of Building 1 and 2, Buildings 8, 9, 10 and 13, are not directly associated with the operation of the Maritime Service Officer's School, and do not possess significance in their own right. Page & Turnbull reviewed existing documentation regarding buildings within the subject property to provide its opinion of their eligibility for historic resource designation at the national, state, and local levels. Based on the lack of integrity of the original Maritime Service Officers School campus as a whole, and the lack of individual integrity of each of these buildings, they are not eligible for listing on the National Register, California Register, on the Alameda Historic Monuments List, or on the Study List at any level.

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<sup>33</sup> Buildings 9 and 13 are not documented to have been associated with the operation of the Maritime Service Officers' School, as they appear to have been built after the school was decommissioned. They are not contributors to the historic significance of the Alameda Federal Center.



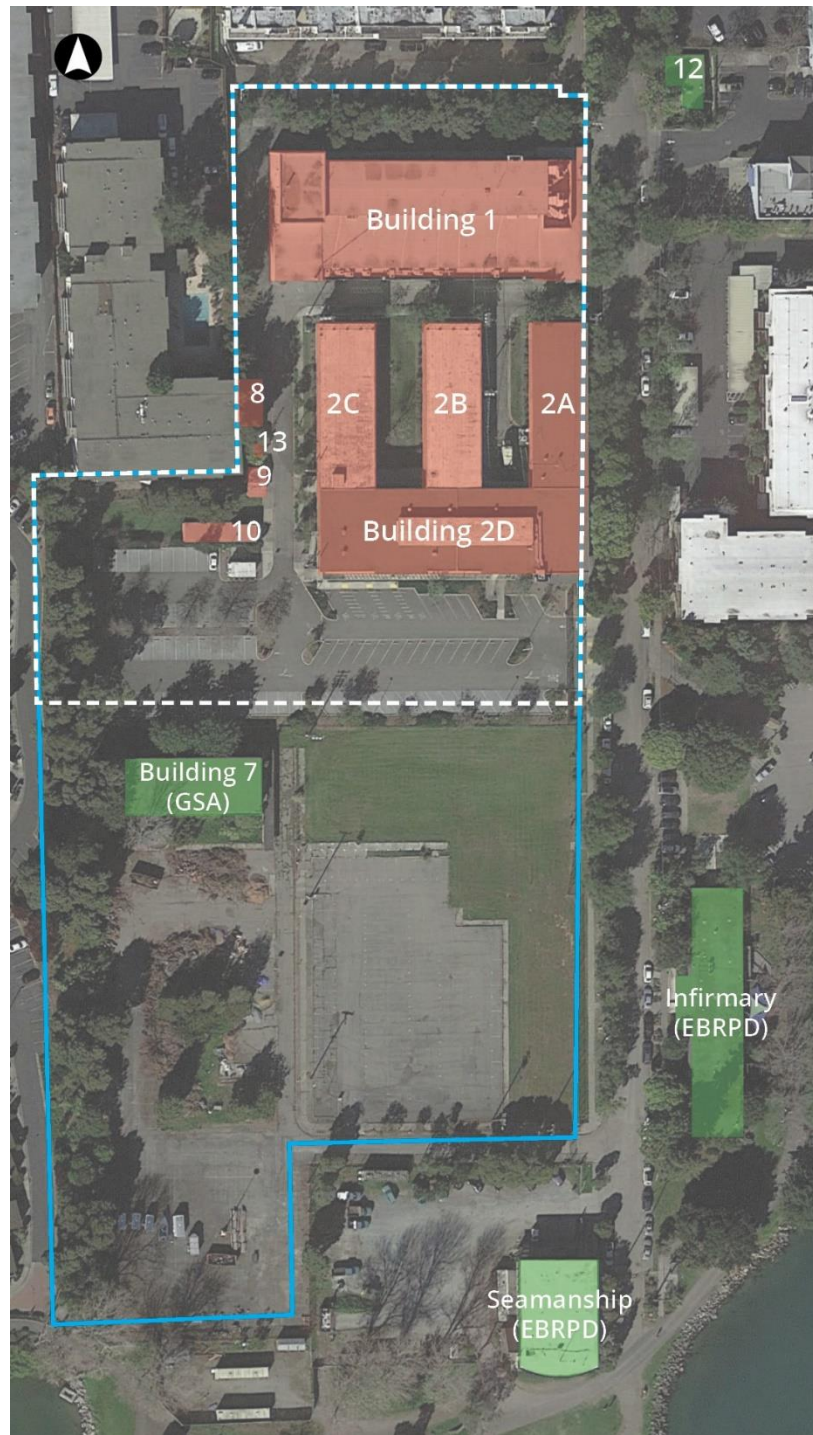


Figure 1. Remaining buildings of the Maritime Service Officers School. Subject buildings shaded red. Original buildings outside the current subject parcel are shaded green. The current subject parcel boundary is the dashed white line. The Alameda Federal Center boundary is the solid blue line. Source: Google Earth, 2020, edited by Page & Turnbull.



Figure 2. Sketch of 1953 Buildings of the Maritime Service Officers School. Locations of subject buildings are shaded red. Extant buildings outside of the subject parcel are shaded green. Source: "Sketch of U.S.M.S. Officers School," City of Alameda, edited by Page & Turnbull.

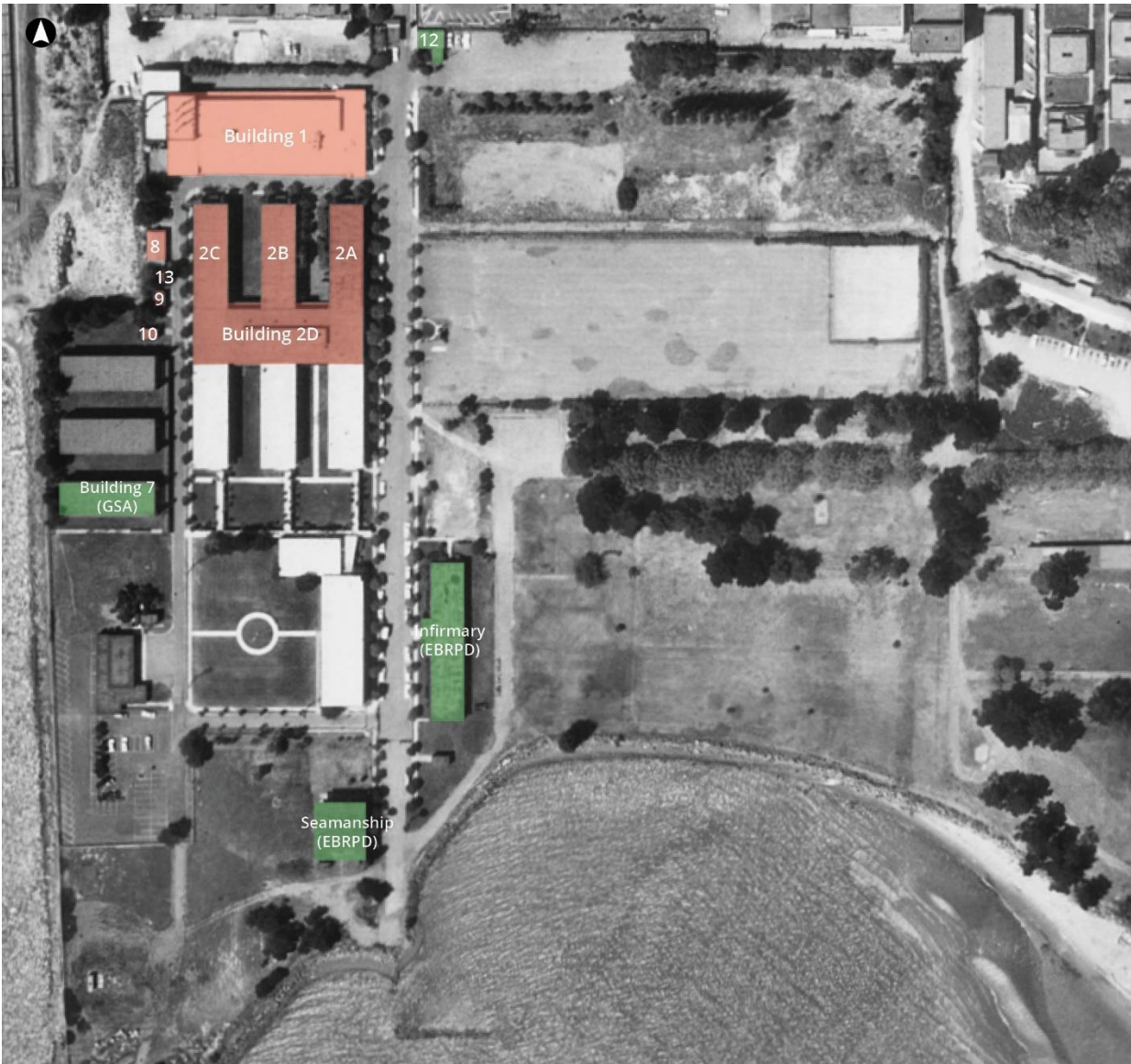


Figure 3. Site of the Maritime Service Officers School in 1965, with locations of subject buildings shaded red. Extant buildings outside of the subject parcel are shaded green. Source: Cartwright Aerial Surveys, Flight CAS-65-130, Frame 15-130, collection of University of California, Santa Barbary Library. Edited by Page & Turnbull.



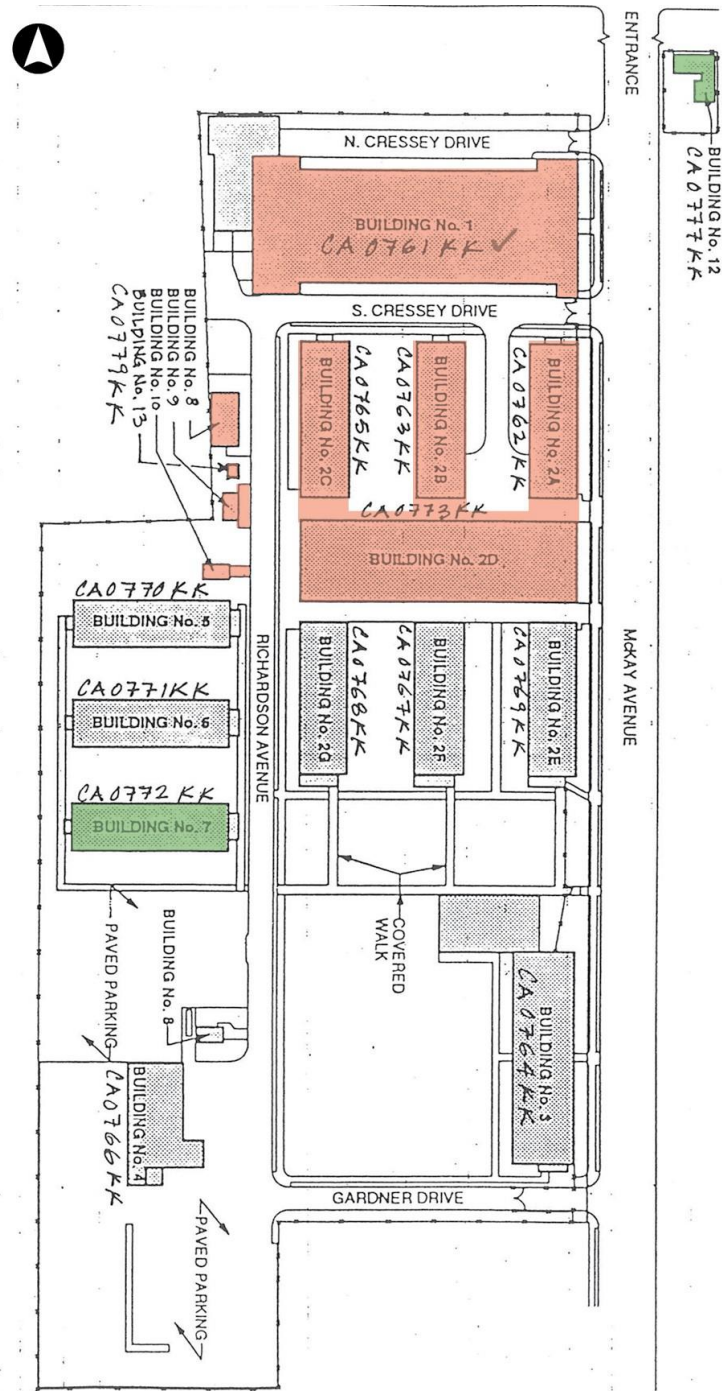


Figure 4. All buildings shown were evaluated in 1996 as part of the Alameda Federal Center. Subject buildings shaded red. Extant original building outside of subject parcel shaded green. Three barracks wings of Building 2 (Buildings 2E, 2F, and 2G), as well as Buildings 3, 4, 5, and 6 have been demolished. Source: Page & Turnbull HBPP, edited by Page & Turnbull.



Figure 5. Building 1, south façade, view northeast.



Figure 6. Building 1, main entrance at southeast corner, view northeast.





Figure 7. Building 1, east façade, view southwest.



Figure 8. Building 1, north façade, view southwest.



Figure 9. Building 1, west façade, view southeast.



Figure 10. Building 2, south façade of mess hall Building 2D. Three barracks wings, Buildings 2E, 2F, and 2G were removed from this side in 2007. View northeast.





Figure 11. Building 2, east and north façades of barracks wing, Building 2A. View southwest.



Figure 12. Building 2, north and east façades of barracks wing, Building 2C. View southwest.





Figure 13. Building 2, west façades of mess hall, Building 2D (at right) and barracks wing, Building 2C (at left). Building 1 is in the far left background.



Figure 14. Building 8, east and north façades, view southwest. Photograph by Doug Biggs, April 21, 2021.



Figure 15. Building 9, south and east façades, view northwest. Photograph by Doug Biggs, April 21, 2021.



Figure 16. Building 10, north and east façades, view southwest. Photograph by Doug Biggs, April 21, 2021.



Figure 17. Building 13, south and east façades, view northwest. Photograph by Doug Biggs, April 21, 2021.