

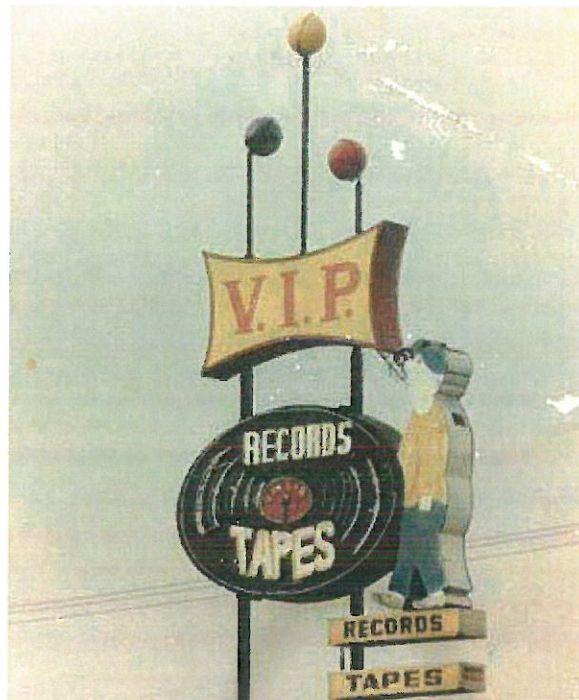
VIP RECORDS LONG BEACH, LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Local Landmark Evaluation Report

Prepared for the
City of Long Beach

April 2016 (Revised October 2017)

Prepared by:
ESA
2600 Capitol Ave., Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95816



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USGS Quadrangle: Long Beach, CA

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Environmental Science Associates (ESA) Cultural Resources Group has prepared this local landmark evaluation report for the City of Long Beach. The subject property is located at 1008 E. Pacific Coast Highway in Long Beach, California on the southeast corner of E. Pacific Coast Highway and Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard. The property consists of the VIP Records Sign (Sign) as well as a one-story shopping center building upon which the Sign is mounted. The effort to evaluate this resource consisted of archival research and an historic architectural resources survey.

ESA staff requested a records search at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System at California State University, Fullerton on February 8, 2016. The records search indicated that no cultural resources had been previously identified at the subject property.

ESA architectural historian, Amber Grady, M.A., conducted a site visit to record and evaluate the Sign and building on February 16, 2016. One architectural resource was recorded: VIP Records. VIP Records, including the Sign and shopping center, has been evaluated by ESA's Secretary of the Interior-qualified architectural historian, Amber Grady. While the building lacks sufficient integrity to qualify the Sign is recommended eligible for listing in the City of Long Beach as a Local Landmark.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The City of Long Beach (City) has requested that Environmental Science Associates (ESA) prepare this landmark evaluation report for the City in support of the Landmark nomination of the VIP Records Sign (Sign). The Sign is located at 1008 E. Pacific Coast Highway in the City of Long Beach, within an unsectioned portion as shown on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Long Beach, California 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle (**Figure 1**).

In accordance with the City of Long Beach Ordinance (ORD-15-0038), this cultural resources study was conducted in order to:

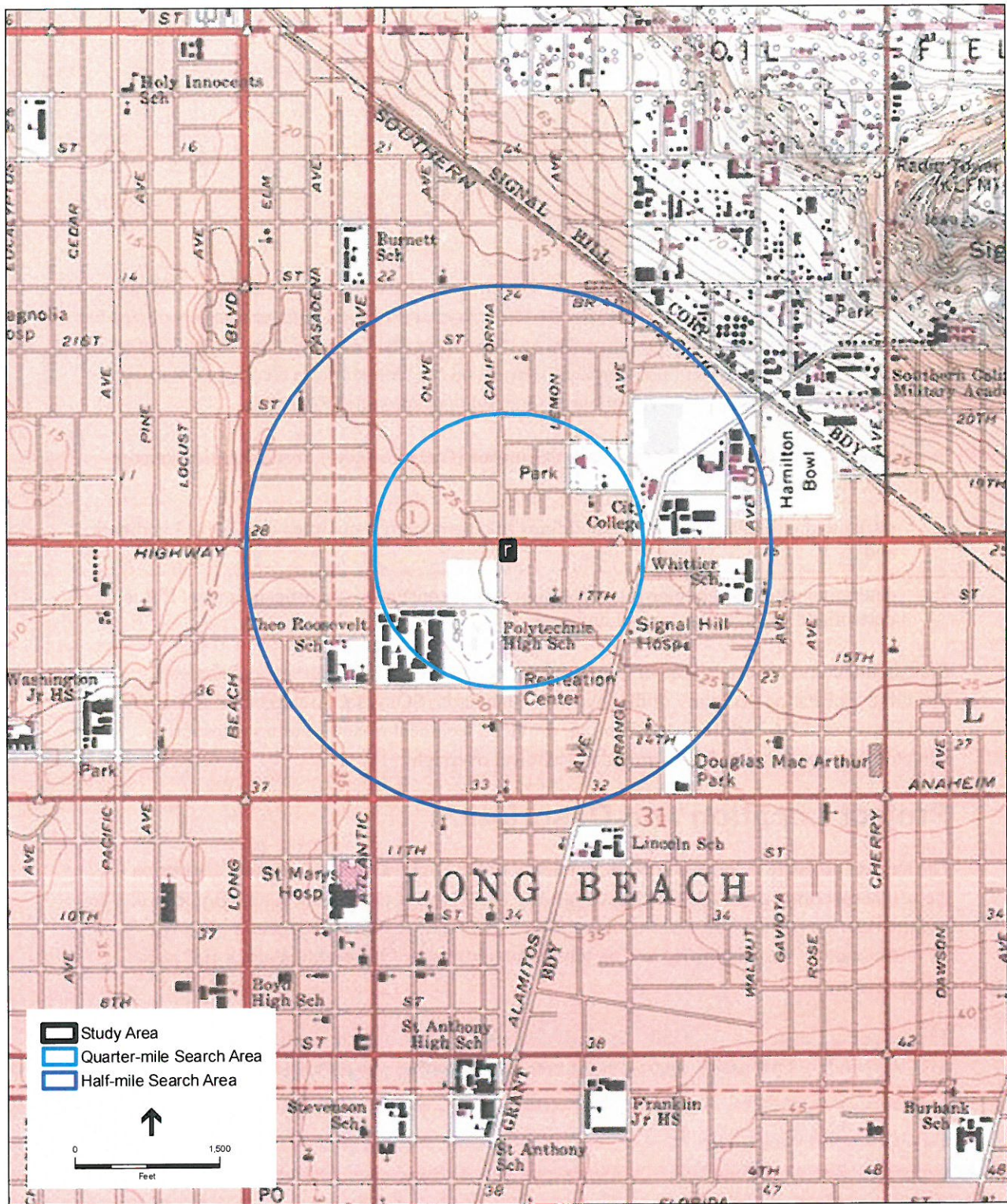
- evaluate the Sign and associated buildings to determine if it qualifies as a Local Landmark; and
- determine whether the removal of the Sign would constitute a significant impact if it is determined eligible as a Local Landmark.

ESA architectural historian, Amber Grady, M.A., conducted the field survey and analysis. Ms. Grady meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards (SOIS) for Architectural History. Brad Brewster, ESA architectural historian, provided technical review. Cultural Resources Director, Monica Strauss, M.A., provided technical oversight.

Project Location and Description

The subject property is located at 1008 E. Pacific Coast Highway in Long Beach, California on the southeast corner of E. Pacific Coast Highway and Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard. The property consists of the VIP Records Sign as well as a one-story shopping center upon which the Sign is mounted. The Sign is located on top of the north end of the building along E. Pacific Coast Highway.

The shopping center was originally developed in 1962 and is situated in a heavily urban context with surrounding land uses primarily being commercial and single-family residential.



SOURCE: USGS 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle (Long Beach, 1987); ESA, 2016

1008 Pacific Coast Highway, Long Beach . 150712.02

Figure 1
Cultural Records Search Map

CHAPTER 2

Regulatory Framework

City of Long Beach Cultural Heritage Commission Ordinance

The City's Cultural Heritage Commission Ordinance (Title 2, Chapter 2.63, of the Long Beach Municipal Code) includes an established landmark designation process and provides criteria for a cultural resource's evaluation of significance. Unlike State and Federal regulations the City does not have guidelines for the age of a resource as a requirement for inclusion as a City Landmark. A cultural resource qualifies for designation as a Landmark if it retains integrity and manifests one (1) or more of the following criteria:

- A. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the City's history; or
- B. It is associated with the lives of persons significant in the City's past; or
- C. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or it represents the work of a master or it possesses high artistic values; or
- D. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

CHAPTER 3

Background

This section presents an overview of the historic background of the subject property and vicinity.

Historic Background

The City of Long Beach has developed a Historic Context Statement (Context Statement) that covers a broad timeframe from the period of Native American habitation through 1965. A brief history of the City of Long Beach is provided below as it relates to the subject property followed by a more detailed history of the property itself.

City of Long Beach

The following history has been taken from the City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement.¹

Settlement within the Long Beach area began as early as 1875, when Jotham Bixby began selling lots along the Los Angeles River in the area that is now west Long Beach, near Willow Street and Santa Fe Avenue. The Cerritos Colony consisted of farms and homes, as well as the area's first school house, Cerritos School.²

The second attempt at settlement began in 1881, when William Erwin Willmore entered into an agreement with J. Bixby & Co. to develop the American Colony, a 4,000-acre piece of Rancho Los Cerritos with a 350-acre town site that was named Willmore City. Willmore had first visited California in 1870, after emigrating from London to the United States. Upon his arrival in Southern California, he worked as a promoter of Southern California real estate with Jotham Bixby and served as the Southern California manager of the California Emigrant Union, which encouraged settlement and facilitated large real estate deals.

The new colony was to feature a main boulevard, known as American Avenue (now Long Beach Boulevard), which would link to Los Angeles; resort quarters along the town's waterfront; and a downtown business district. The remaining acreage of the American Colony was to be divided into 40-acre lots and sold as small family farms.³ The original town site was bounded by present-day Tenth Street on the north, Alamitos Avenue on the east, the Pacific Ocean on the south, and Magnolia Avenue on the west. At the time of its inception, the only building in the proposed colony was

¹ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., 10 July 2009, *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 34.

² Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 22.

³ Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 22.

an old shepherd's shack used by the Bixby ranch personnel, which was located near the present-day intersection of First Street and Pine Avenue.⁴

African Americans

The following has been excerpted from the City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement.⁵

California joined the Union as a non-slavery state. However, the state legislature wrote restrictions into its state laws prohibiting African American citizens from testifying against a Caucasian in court, receiving a public education, owning public land, or voting.⁶ Racially restrictive measures against African Americans limited access to local resources such as housing, employment, public education, and accommodations. Housing restrictions caused overcrowding in African American neighborhoods and depressed economic growth. Consequently, banks refused to grant loans to residents living in these areas, leading to slum conditions.⁷

The African American community initially came to the West Coast at the turn of the 20th century, taking refuge from the racism and violence of the South. In Long Beach, many settled in the vicinity of Anaheim Street and California (now Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard), an area designated as a ghetto near Poly Tech High School.^{8,9} John R. Barner, an African American who came to Long Beach from Oklahoma in 1905, is credited for this settlement. Barner did not appear to be African American and was able to purchase an abundance of commercial and residential properties along the edges of the City of Long Beach. Due to deed restrictions in various parts of the City of Long Beach, Barner purchased property in nonrestricted areas beyond the City of Long Beach limits, allowing him to "corner the real estate market for minorities."¹⁰ A commercial complex located at the intersection of Anaheim Street and Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard became Long Beach's first African American-owned businesses. By 1910, the U.S. Census recorded the presence of 100 African Americans in Long Beach.¹¹

On June 25, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order that "outlawed racial discrimination in hiring and the workplace for all government agencies and all private companies holding federal defense contracts."¹² As a result, a surge of African Americans from Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas migrated to Long Beach to work in the defense industry, causing the number of

⁴ Johnson Heumann Research Associates. 1988. *Expanded Downtown Long Beach Historic Survey, Final Report*. Long Beach, CA: City of Long Beach, Office of Neighborhood and Historic Preservation, p. 11.

⁵ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., 10 July 2009, *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 175.

⁶ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. 17 November 2004. "A History of Black Americans in California: A.M.E. Church." Washington, DC. Available: http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views2.htm.

⁷ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. 17 November 2004. "A History of Black Americans in California: Business." Washington, DC. Available at: http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views2.htm.

⁸ Mullio, Cara, and Jennifer Volland. 2004. *Long Beach Architecture: The Unexpected Metropolis*. Santa Monica, CA: Hennessey and Ingalls, p. 36.

⁹ Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 90.

¹⁰ Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 32.

¹¹ Wibecan, Ken. n.d. "Help's needed to fill the gaps in early black history of L.B." *Press-Telegram*.

¹² Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 90.

African Americans living in Long Beach to jump from 2,000 in 1940 to 15,000 in 1945...¹³

Although the Supreme Court ruling in 1948 had prohibited the United States from enforcing restrictive real estate covenants, it did not abolish the voluntary practice of deed restrictions, which continued until the 1960s. As a result, the majority of African Americans lived in the Cabrillo Housing III, which was part of military housing in west Long Beach. They were subsequently evicted to make room for the construction of new subdivisions. Many resettled in Willowbrook, Watts, and Compton.¹⁴ Those who stayed in Long Beach purchased land and built homes in west Long Beach on former government housing sites and farms. These small-scale developers were happy to sell their “spec” homes to non-Whites, using their profits to finance larger developments elsewhere.¹⁵ The African American population would tumble to 9,500 by the early 1950s and would not grow to the number it once was until the 1970s.¹⁶ Most African Americans in Long Beach in the postwar era were employed at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard.

Shopping Centers

The evolution of centers of commerce has been closely linked with the evolution of personal transportation. From the downtown commercial centers to streetcar strips to the modern shopping mall the location and scale of these facilities has changed to meet the needs of customers. The following has been excerpted from *The History of the American Shopping Center* by David Gwynn (Gwynn, 2008).

Even in ancient times, cities were built around a central area that was more or less planned for commerce. Until the early years of the twentieth century, the keyword was “central”; in a society where transportation was dependent upon horses, transit, or feet, the downtown area acted as a hub for most activity within the city. Developments over the past century, however, have brought dramatic changes in the way people shop and live.

The earliest suburbs had been dependent upon the transit network, and around the beginning of the twentieth century, “streetcar strips”, or low-rise commercial developments adjacent to the streetcar routes became the site of choice for convenience shopping (groceries, sundries, etc.) among housewives in the area. These stores were often haphazardly constructed, with little if any central planning. There was, of course, no parking, because there were no cars. The downtown shopping area still reigned supreme for most purchases; its large department stores saw no need to locate branches adjacent to grocers and butchers in outlying areas. Confident of the continuing primacy of the center city, they shunned these new commercial areas for decades.

As the automobile grew in popularity, developers like J.C. Nichols of Kansas City, feeling less restricted by the constraints of the transit network, began taking

¹³ Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 90.

¹⁴ Mullio, Cara, and Jennifer Volland. 2004. *Long Beach Architecture: The Unexpected Metropolis*. Santa Monica, CA: Hennessey and Ingalls, p. 35.

¹⁵ Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 99.

¹⁶ Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 99.

advantage of the increased mobility of the population. Nichols' concept for the Country Club District was for a planned community with its own small-scale convenience retail centers interspersed throughout, but also for a major shopping district of its own, one that might even come to compete with the downtown area. In 1923, Country Club Plaza opened for business as what is now regarded as America's first large centrally planned and managed shopping center. That its patrons would arrive by automobile was assumed; parking was an integral part of the plan. While the residential areas provided one-time profits, the retail center was a source of ongoing income; many developers took note and began building new residential areas primarily to support retail centers.

In the 1930s shopping centers often included a small grocer, a butcher, and a drug store and were very similar to the "streetcar" strips except for the building(s) were set back from the street and included automobile parking in the front. (Gwynn, 2008). These small, automobile-centric, shopping centers continued to be very popular for many decades and are now generally considered local, or neighborhood, shopping centers with businesses targeting the surrounding neighborhoods.

VIP Records and Hip Hop Music

VIP Records is in a strip mall-style shopping center on the southeast corner of Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard and E. Pacific Coast Highway. The shopping center is comprised of three adjacent/connected buildings that form an L-shape. The buildings are one-story with an exterior walkway that is covered by an angled, cantilevered awning that stretches the full length of the two facades that face the parking lot and Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard and E. Pacific Coast Highway. A surface parking lot is located between the buildings and the streets. The shopping center was constructed in 1962 and VIP Records opened at this location in January 1979.¹⁷

VIP Records was a regional chain of stores in Southern California originally owned and operated by Cletus Anderson.¹⁸ Kelvin Anderson, Cletus's younger brother, bought the Long Beach store from him on January 15, 1979.¹⁹ Cletus Anderson was well known in the area as the owner of VIP Records and played a role in recording Ice T's first album.²⁰ At this time the store specialized in R&B, Gospel, Jazz, and Blues music. In the 1980's, as Rap music was beginning to take hold on the West Coast, future artists such as Snoop Dogg, Warren G, and Nate Dogg were growing up in this Long Beach neighborhood at the time. Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg, and Warren G purchased music from VIP Records, food from the fish market (also in the same shopping center), and got their hair cut at the local barber shop.²¹ VIP Records is currently still owned and operated by Kelvin Anderson, a well-known African American businessman in the community, whose business has provided a safe haven for neighborhood youth for decades.

¹⁷ Los Angeles County Assessor's Records, <http://maps.assessor.lacounty.gov/>, accessed March 2, 2016.

¹⁸ LA Weekly, *WORLD FAMOUS V.I.P. RECORDS TO CLOSE*, January 5, 2012.

¹⁹ Kelvin Anderson, email via City of Long Beach, October 12, 2017.

²⁰ Kelvin Anderson, email via City of Long Beach, October 12, 2017.

²¹ Kelvin Anderson, email via City of Long Beach, October 12, 2017.

VIP Records was expanding in the 1980s and 90s as gang violence escalated in the neighborhood throughout this time. In reaction to the escalating violence Mr. Anderson built a recording studio in the back of his store and a small stage area out front in the sales area.²² Mr. Anderson purchased the sound recording equipment, an SP1200 drum machine and sampler combo, with the assistance of producer Sir Jinx.²³ Aspiring artists and neighborhood teenagers/young adults just trying to escape the violence on the streets would gather at his store to hang out, learn to use the recording equipment, and even record/perform new songs. Mr. Anderson became an advocate for these new artists and their art form before the larger record companies became involved. Rap and Hip Hop were emerging as new urban music forms in Southern California and VIP Records was one of the few places to carry these self-published artists, some of which produced their demos at VIP Records. Many artists and groups have been associated with VIP Records including Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg, Warren G, 213, The Dogg Pound, LL Cool J, Domino, The Twinz, Dove Shack, and Tha Eastsidaz. Snoop Dogg recorded his first demo here and at least two music videos have been filmed at VIP Records, both featuring the iconic Sign; “Who Am I (What’s My Name?)” (1993) by Snoop Dogg and “G’d Up” by Tha Eastsidaz (1999/2000).^{24-25,26} The Sign has also appeared in “Welcome To Atlanta Remix 2002” (2010) by Jermaine Dupri featuring Snoop Dogg, “I’m From Long Beach” (Official Video) (2016) by Snoop Dogg, the Warren G Documentary “G Funk” (2017), and HBO’s “The Defiant Ones” (2017).²⁷

The iconic VIP Records Sign was modified from the original Whistler Liquors sign, a business that formerly occupied the shopping center, when the record store moved in. The Sign has undergone some minor modifications over the years, but retains its Googie Style. Googie is an architectural style that was very popular in the middle of the 20th century and was greatly influenced by car culture, jets, the Space Age, and the Atomic Age. The Sign is comprised of five parts; “V.I.P.” on the top banner-shaped portion, the large oval in the middle with the male figure attached to the north side, and two smaller rectangular parts that say “Records” and “Tapes CDs” all topped by three (3) globe lights. The Sign has been painted differently over the years since becoming the Sign for VIP Records and some of the lighting is missing, but it is otherwise unaltered. The large oval sign, painted to appear as a record, once said “Long Beach” in large letters and now it says “World Famous” around the outer edge and “Long Beach” in smaller letters in the middle. The bottom-most portion once said “Tapes” where now it says “Tapes CDs”.

²² Kelvin Anderson, email via City of Long Beach, October 12, 2017.

²³ Kelvin Anderson, email via City of Long Beach, October 12, 2017.

²⁴ Press-Telegram, *Owner of World Famous V.I.P. Records in Long Beach wants to close doors for good*, December 28, 2015.

²⁵ LA Weekly, *WORLD FAMOUS V.I.P. RECORDS TO CLOSE*, January 5, 2012.

²⁶ Hiphopdx.com, *VIP Records Owner Kelvin Anderson Recalls Recording Snoop Dogg’s Demo*, November 22, 2013.

²⁷ Kelvin Anderson, email via City of Long Beach, October 12, 2017.

CHAPTER 4

Evaluation

Historic Resources Evaluation

The Sign and the associated buildings are the physical representations of the significant events and associations that happened at VIP Records. The Sign would not have existed without the business it was an advertisement for and their history is linked. The following evaluates these physical elements (the Sign and associated buildings) for inclusion as a City of Long Beach Landmark. The criteria for designation are set forth in the City ordinance as described above. The period of significance is 1979-2000, the period from which the store opened to when the last music video was filmed there.

Criterion A: Criterion A applies to resources associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the City's history. The Context Statement provides Themes and Associated Property Types by which many of the City's potentially eligible resources can be evaluated. Unfortunately, the Context Statement ends in 1965 and the VIP Records at this location did not come about until 1979; however, if the timeframe were extended out further it would appear that it would fit under the *Theme: African Americans* under the Ethnographic portion of the Context Statement. VIP Records fits into the continuing ethnographic story of the African American population in Long Beach through the end of the 20th century. It is located in a neighborhood that is primarily African American, both historically and currently. It is across the street from Long Beach Poly Technic High School (i.e., Poly Tech High School) and a few blocks north of the intersection of Anaheim Street and Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard, the site of the commercial complex noted as Long Beach's first African American-owned businesses. "Most residences inhabited by the African American community were located near Poly High School."²⁸ Religious institutions, community centers, and social clubs such as the Christ Second Baptist Church, the New Hope Baptist, Grant Chapel AME, and the Congo Club, all significant places to the African American population in Long Beach, are located nearby as well. "Property types associated with the African American community may include residences, businesses and places of employment, institutions, and other gathering places, such as churches that were owned, used, or built by African Americans."²⁹ VIP Records is owned and operated by Kelvin Anderson, a well-known African American businessman in the community, whose business has provided a safe haven for neighborhood youth for decades. Aspiring artists and neighborhood teenagers/young adults just trying to escape the violence on the streets would gather at his store to hang out, learn to use the recording equipment, and even record/perform new songs. Mr. Anderson became an advocate for these new artists and their art form before the larger record companies became

²⁸ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, 2009, p. 177.

²⁹ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, 2009, p. 177.

involved. Rap and Hip Hop were emerging in Southern California and VIP Records was one of the few places to carry these self-published artists, some of which produced their demos at VIP Records. Many artists and groups have been associated with VIP Records including Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg, Warren G, 213, The Dogg Pound, Domino, The Twinz, Dove Shack, Ice T, Sir Jinx, DJ Quick, Eazy E, Jermaine Dupri, Dr. Dre, Big Tray Dee, and Tha Eastsidaz.

Therefore, VIP Records Sign and associated buildings is recommended eligible under Criterion A (association with events) for its association with both the African American community, especially the youth population, and the music industry in Southern California, specifically the early development of the Hip Hop and Rap genres on the West Coast, the group 213 (Two-One-Three), and artists Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg and Warren G.

Criterion B: Criterion B applies to properties associated with the lives of persons significant in the City's past. Individuals involved in the design or construction of the building are discussed under Criterion C, if known. The Context Statement provides Themes and Associated Property Types by which many of the City's potentially eligible resources can be evaluated. Unfortunately, the Context Statement ends in 1965 and the VIP Records at this location did not come about until 1979; however, if the timeframe were extended out further it would appear that it would fit under the *Theme: African Americans* under the Ethnographic portion of the Context Statement. VIP Records fits into the continuing ethnographic story of the African American population in Long Beach through the end of the 20th century. It is located in a neighborhood that is primarily African American, both historically and currently. It is across the street from Long Beach Poly Technic High School (i.e., Poly Tech High School) and a few blocks north of the intersection of Anaheim Street and Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard, the site of the commercial complex noted as Long Beach's first African American-owned businesses. "Most residences inhabited by the African American community were located near Poly High School."³⁰ Religious institutions, community centers, and social clubs such as the Christ Second Baptist Church, the New Hope Baptist, Grant Chapel AME, and the Congo Club, all significant places to the African American population in Long Beach, are located nearby as well. "Property types associated with the African American community may include residences, businesses and places of employment, institutions, and other gathering places, such as churches that were owned, used, or built by African Americans."³¹ VIP Records is owned and operated by Kelvin Anderson, a well-known African American businessman in the community, whose business has provided a safe haven for neighborhood youth for decades. Aspiring artists and neighborhood teenagers/young adults just trying to escape the violence on the streets would gather at his store to hang out, learn to use the recording equipment, and even record/perform new songs. Mr. Anderson became an advocate for these new artists and their art form before the larger record companies became involved. Rap and Hip Hop were emerging in Southern California and VIP Records was one of the few places to carry these self-published artists, some of which produced their demos at VIP Records. Many artists and groups have been associated with VIP Records including Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg,

³⁰ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, 2009, page 177.

³¹ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, 2009, page 177.

Warren G, 213, The Dogg Pound, Domino, The Twinz, Dove Shack, Ice T, Sir Jinx, Ricky Harris, DJ Quick, Eazy E, Jermaine Dupri, Dr. Dre, Big Tray Dee, and Tha Eastsidaz.

As discussed above VIP Records is associated with local businessman Kelvin Anderson, who contributed greatly to his community by providing a safe haven from gang violence for the youth in the area, as well as a number of regionally, and even world, famous musicians and groups associated with the development of the West Coast Hip Hop and Rap movements. These individuals and groups were at the forefront of the Hip Hop and Rap genres as they emerged on the West Coast especially in Southern California. Southern California and Long Beach specifically were “hot spots” during the early days of the West Coast Hip Hop genre of music. VIP Records was integral to the success of many of these artists and the genre as a place to develop and distribute their music. The Sign became an iconic symbol of their success through its inclusion in their music videos. Therefore, the VIP Records Sign and associated buildings is recommended eligible under Criterion B for its association with local businessman Kelvin Anderson and the famous musicians discussed above, especially with the group 213 (Two-One-Three), and artists Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg, and Warren G (association with significant persons).

Criterion C: Criterion C asks whether the subject resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or it represents the work of a master or it possesses high artistic values. VIP Records is in a typical 1960’s shopping center with a Googie style sign. While the style of the Sign is a good example of the Googie style the building does not represent any particular style from the era; therefore, the property as a whole does not represent a particular style. The architect/builder is unknown. As this is neither an early or excellent example of this architectural style or building type, the VIP Records Sign and associated buildings do not appear to qualify as a Local Landmark under Criterion C.

Criterion D: VIP Records does not appear to yield significant information that would expand our current knowledge or theories of design, methods of construction, operation, or other information that is not already known. As such, the VIP Records Sign and associated buildings do not appear to be eligible for listing under Criterion D.

Period of Significance: The period of significance for the VIP Records Sign and buildings is 1979-2000, the period from which the store opened to when the last music video was filmed there.

Integrity: The VIP Records Sign retains sufficient integrity to convey the period of significance. The Sign has not changed substantially over the past 30+ years and would be easily recognizable to any of the individuals associated with the property during the period of significance. While the exterior of the building is recognizable in its current form, the interior of record store has been significantly altered and would be unrecognizable to individuals associated with the property during the period of significance. While VIP Records still existed in the shopping center at the time of the survey it has since moved to another, smaller space. The space occupied by VIP Records during the period of significance has been remodeled and currently houses a beauty supply store. The stage and sound recording spaces, two of the most important features, are gone.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

Archival review and field survey resulted in the recommendation that the VIP Records Sign is eligible for listing as a City of Long Beach Local Landmark under Criteria A and B for its association with the African American community in Long Beach, especially the youth population, and the music industry in Southern California, specifically the early development of the Hip Hop and Rap genres on the West Coast, the group 213 (Two-One-Three), artists Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg and Warren G, and local businessman Kelvin Anderson. While the buildings also have these significant associations only the Sign retains enough integrity to qualify for listing as a Local Landmark. ESA recommends that alteration or removal of the iconic Sign could result in a significant impact to an historical resource. A potential future action that retains the VIP Records sign in its current state, or rehabilitates it in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, would avoid significant impacts to this historical resource. Removal or significant alterations to the Sign could result in significant impacts to this historical resource. Any future development would require independent evaluation to determine specific impacts.

CHAPTER 6

References

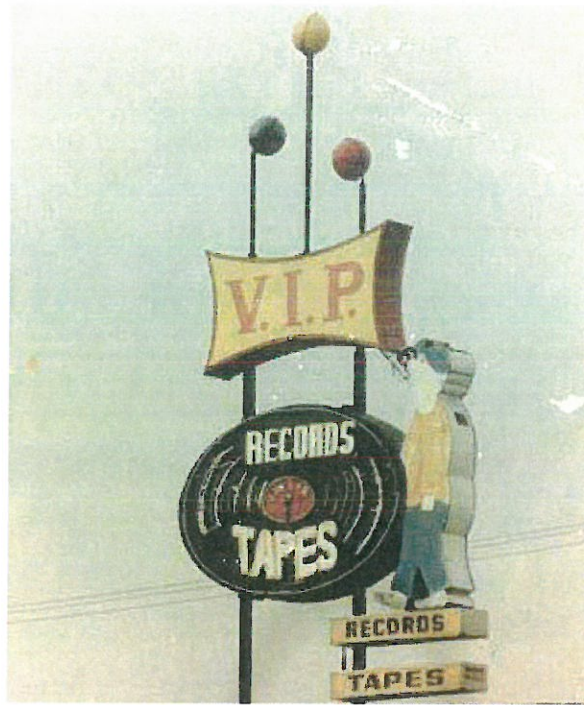
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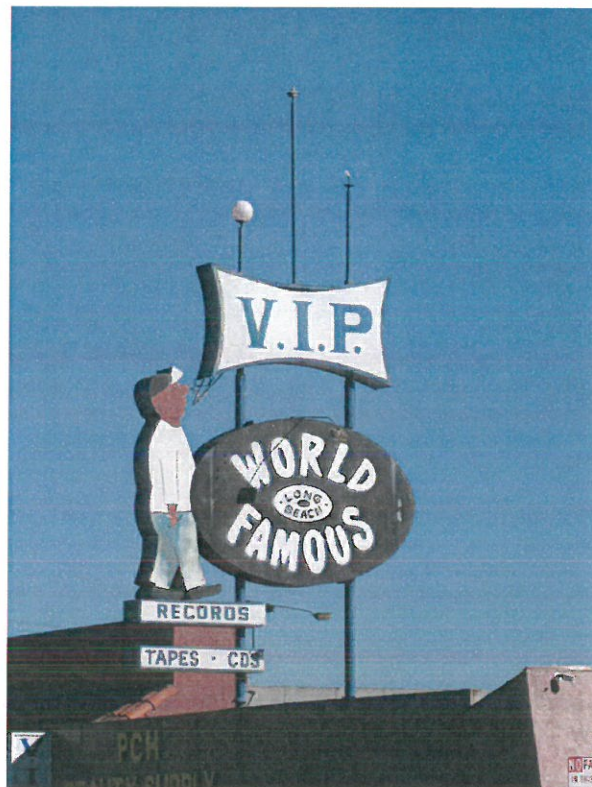
Appendix A

Photos





Early 1980s (Source: LAWeekly, 2016)



February 2016 (Source: ESA, 2016)



West façade, looking east (E. Pacific Coast Highway on left) (Source: ESA, 2016)



North and west facades, looking southeast (Martin Luther King Junior Blvd in foreground)
(Source: ESA, 2016)

Appendix B

Department of Parks and Recreation 523 Forms

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

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial

Page 11 of 11

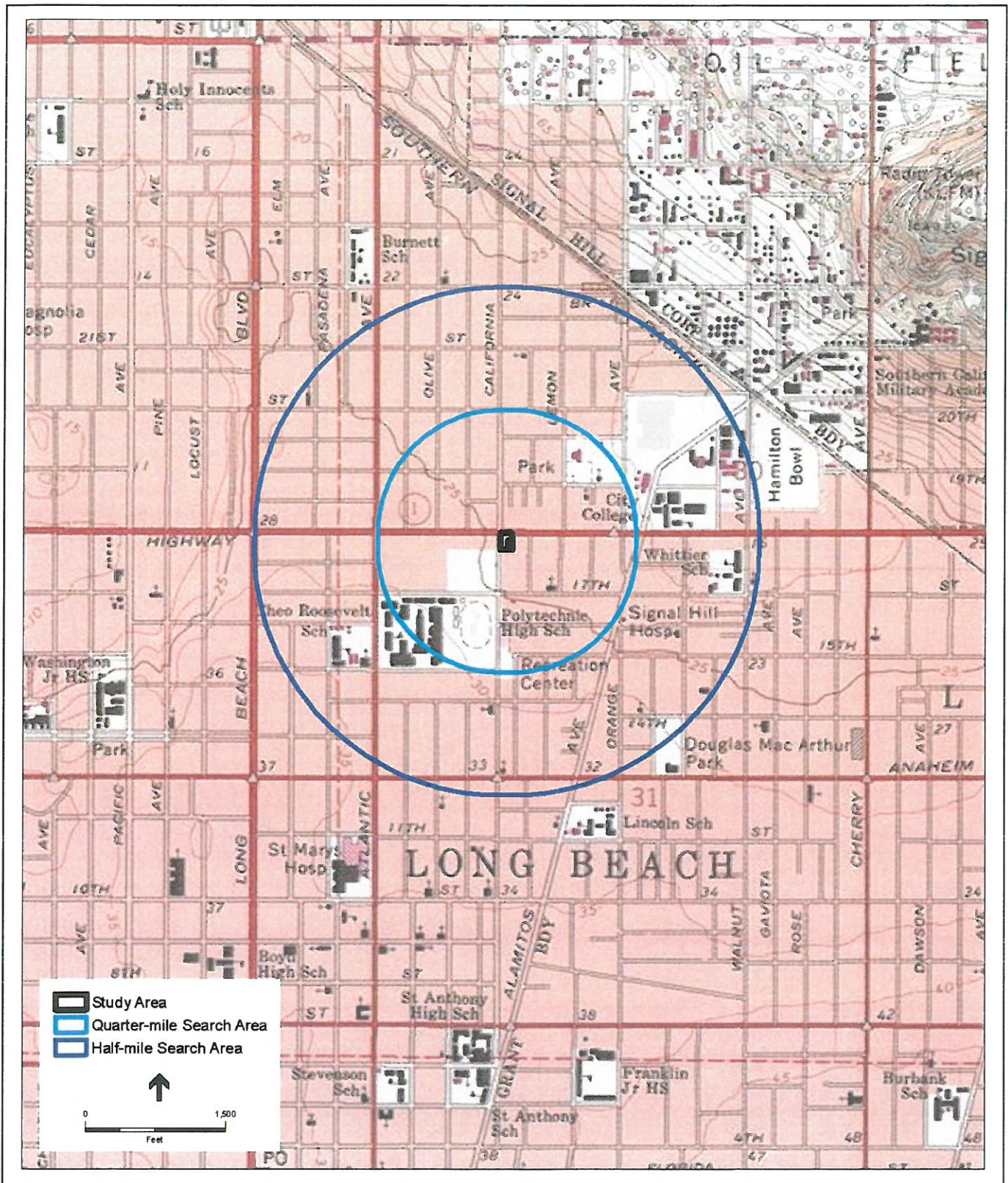
*Resource Name or #: VIP Records

*Recorded by Amber Grady

*Date 2/16/2016

☒ Continuation

☐ Update



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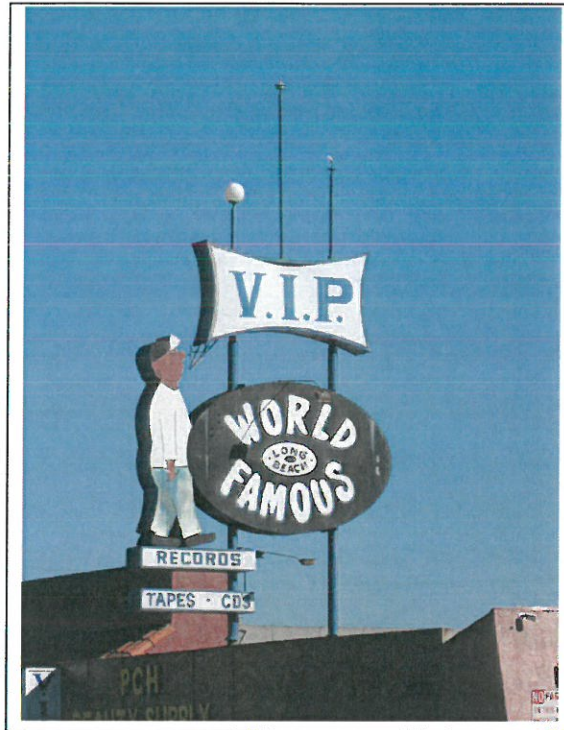
*Resource Name or #: VIP Records

*Recorded by Amber Grady

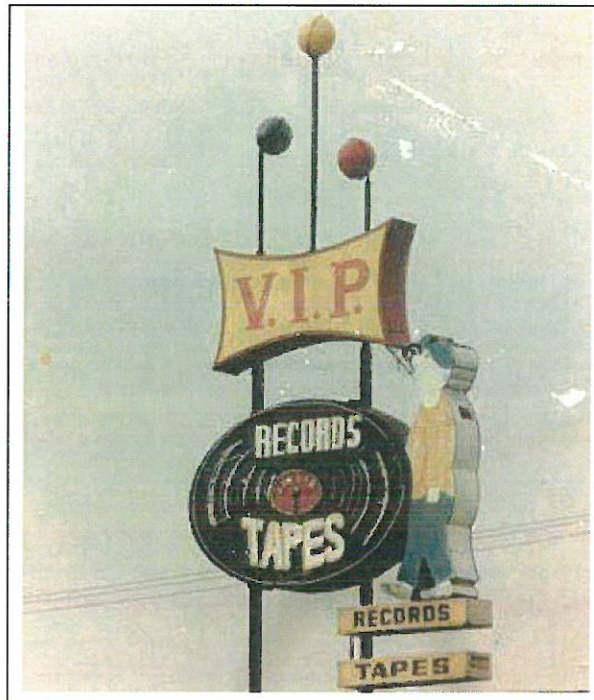
*Date 2/16/2016

☒ Continuation

☐ Update



Close up of sign (2016)



Close up of sign in the 1980s (Source: LAWeekly, 2016)



West façade (north end of shopping center), looking east



North façade (south end of shopping center), looking south

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

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial

Page 8 of 11

*Resource Name or #: VIP Records

*Recorded by Amber Grady

*Date 2/16/2016

☒ Continuation

☐ Update

- 16 Gwynn, David. *The History of the American Shopping Center*. December 3, 2008. Available: <http://www.otherstream.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/bibliography.pdf>. Accessed February 29, 2016.
- 17 Los Angeles County Assessor's Records. Available: <http://maps.assessor.lacounty.gov/>. Accessed March 2, 2016.
- 18 LA Weekly, *WORLD FAMOUS V.I.P. RECORDS TO CLOSE*, January 5, 2012.
- 19 Kelvin Anderson, email via City of Long Beach, October 12, 2017.
- 20 Kelvin Anderson, email via City of Long Beach, October 12, 2017.
- 21 Kelvin Anderson, email via City of Long Beach, October 12, 2017.
- 22 Kelvin Anderson, email via City of Long Beach, October 12, 2017.
- 23 Kelvin Anderson, email via City of Long Beach, October 12, 2017.
- 24 Press-Telegram, *Owner of World Famous V.I.P. Records in Long Beach wants to close doors for good*, December 28, 2015.
- 25 LA Weekly, *WORLD FAMOUS V.I.P. RECORDS TO CLOSE*, January 5, 2012.
- 26 Hiphopdx.com, VIP Records Owner Kelvin Anderson Recalls Recording Snoop Dogg's Demo, November 22, 2013.
- 27 Kelvin Anderson, email via City of Long Beach, October 12, 2017.
- 28 Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, 2009, p. 177.
- 29 Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, 2009, p. 177.
- 30 Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, 2009, p. 177.
- 31 Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, 2009, p. 177.

***B12. Reference: (Continued from page 2)**

California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), 1976. *California Inventory of Historic Resources*.

California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), 1996. *California Historical Landmarks*.

California Geological Survey, 2010. *Geologic Map of California*. Map. Available:
<http://www.quake.ca.gov/gmaps/GMC/stategeologicmap.html>. Accessed March 4, 2016.

Gwynn, David. *The History of the American Shopping Center*. December 3, 2008. Available: <http://www.otherstream.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/bibliography.pdf>. Accessed February 29, 2016.

Hillburg, Bill. 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp. August 31, 2000.

Hiphopdx.com, VIP Records Owner Kelvin Anderson Recalls Recording Snoop Dogg's Demo, November 22, 2013.

Johnson Heumann Research Associates. 1988. *Expanded Downtown Long Beach Historic Survey, Final Report*. Long Beach, CA: City of Long Beach, Office of Neighborhood and Historic Preservation.

LA Weekly, *WORLD FAMOUS V.I.P. RECORDS TO CLOSE*, January 5, 2012.

Los Angeles County Assessor's Records. Available: <http://maps.assessor.lacounty.gov/>. Accessed March 2, 2016.

Mullio, Cara, and Jennifer Volland. 2004. *Long Beach Architecture: The Unexpected Metropolis*. Santa Monica, CA: Hennessey and Ingalls.

Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), 1992. *California Points of Historical Interest*.

Press-Telegram, *Owner of World Famous V.I.P. Records in Long Beach wants to close doors for good*, December 28, 2015.

Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, July 10, 2009.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. 17 November 2004. "A History of Black Americans in California: A.M.E. Church." Washington, DC. Available: http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views2.htm.

Wibecan, Ken. n.d. "Help's needed to fill the gaps in early black history of L.B." *Press-Telegram*.

***B10. Significance: (Continued from page 6)**

As discussed above VIP Records is associated with local businessman Kelvin Anderson, who contributed greatly to his community by providing a safe haven from gang violence for the youth in the area, as well as a number of regionally, and even world, famous musicians and groups associated with the development of the West Coast Hip Hop and Rap movements. These individuals and groups were at the forefront of the Hip Hop and Rap genres as they emerged on the West Coast especially in Southern California. Southern California and Long Beach specifically were "hot spots" during the early days of the West Coast Hip Hop genre of music. VIP Records was integral to the success of many of these artists and the genre as a place to develop and distribute their music. The Sign became an iconic symbol of their success through its inclusion in their music videos. Therefore, the VIP Records sign and associated buildings is recommended eligible under Criterion B for its association with local businessman Kelvin Anderson and the famous musicians discussed above, especially with the group 213 (Two-One-Three), and artists Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg, and Warren G (association with significant persons).

Criterion C: Criterion C asks whether the subject resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or it represents the work of a master or it possesses high artistic values. VIP Records is in a typical 1960's shopping center with a Googie style sign. While the style of the Sign is a good example of the Googie style the building does not represent any particular style from the era; therefore, the property as a whole does not represent a particular style. The architect/builder is unknown. As this is neither an early or excellent example of this architectural style or building type, the VIP Records sign and associated buildings do not appear to qualify as a Local Landmark under Criterion C.

Criterion D: VIP Records does not appear to yield significant information that would expand our current knowledge or theories of design, methods of construction, operation, or other information that is not already known. As such, the VIP Records sign and associated buildings do not appear to be eligible for listing under Criterion D.

Conclusion

The VIP Records Sign retains sufficient integrity to convey the period of significance. The Sign havehas not changed substantially over the past 30+ years and would be easily recognizable to any of the individuals associated with the property during the period of significance. While the exterior of the building is recognizable in its current form, the interior of record store has been significantly altered and would be unrecognizable to individuals associated with the property during the period of significance. While VIP Records still existed in the shopping center at the time of the survey it has since moved to another, smaller space. The space occupied by VIP Records during the period of significance has been remodeled and currently houses a beauty supply store. The stage and sound recording spaces, two of the most important features, are gone.

Endnotes:

- 1 Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 22.
- 2 Johnson Heumann Research Associates. 1988. *Expanded Downtown Long Beach Historic Survey, Final Report*. Long Beach, CA: City of Long Beach, Office of Neighborhood and Historic Preservation, p. 11.
- 3 Sapphos Environmental, Inc., 10 July 2009, *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 175.
- 4 U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. 17 November 2004. "A History of Black Americans in California: A.M.E. Church." Washington, DC. Available: http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views2.htm.
- 5 U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. 17 November 2004. "A History of Black Americans in California: Business." Washington, DC. Available: http://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views2.htm.
- 6 Mullio, Cara, and Jennifer Volland. 2004. *Long Beach Architecture: The Unexpected Metropolis*. Santa Monica, CA: Hennessey and Ingalls, p. 36.
- 7 Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 90.
- 8 Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 32.
- 9 Wibecan, Ken. n.d. "Help's needed to fill the gaps in early black history of L.B." *Press-Telegram*.
- 10 Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 90.
- 11 Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 90.
- 12 Mullio, Cara, and Jennifer Volland. 2004. *Long Beach Architecture: The Unexpected Metropolis*. Santa Monica, CA: Hennessey and Ingalls, p. 35.
- 13 Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 99.
- 14 Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 99.
- 15 Gwynn, David. *The History of the American Shopping Center*. December 3, 2008. Available: <http://www.otherstream.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/bibliography.pdf>. Accessed February 29, 2016.

***B10. Significance: (Continued from page 5)**

"Property types associated with the African American community may include residences, businesses and places of employment, institutions, and other gathering places, such as churches that were owned, used, or built by African Americans."²⁹ VIP Records is owned and operated by Kelvin Anderson, a well-known African American businessman in the community, whose business has provided a safe haven for neighborhood youth for decades. Aspiring artists and neighborhood teenagers/young adults just trying to escape the violence on the streets would gather at his store to hang out, learn to use the recording equipment, and even record/perform new songs. Mr. Anderson became an advocate for these new artists and their art form before the larger record companies became involved. Rap and Hip Hop were emerging in Southern California and VIP Records was one of the few places to carry these self-published artists, some of which produced their demos at VIP Records. Many artists and groups have been associated with VIP Records including Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg, Warren G, 213, The Dogg Pound, Domino, The Twinz, Dove Shack, Ice T, Sir Jinx, DJ Quick, Eazy E, Jermaine Dupri, Dr. Dre, Big Tray Dee, and Tha Eastsidaz.

Therefore, VIP Records sign and associated buildings is recommended eligible under Criterion A (association with events) for its association with both the African American community, especially the youth population, and the music industry in Southern California, specifically the early development of the Hip Hop and Rap genres on the West Coast, the group 213 (Two-One-Three), and artists Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg and Warren G.

Criterion B: Criterion B applies to properties associated with the lives of persons significant in the City's past. Individuals involved in the design or construction of the building are discussed under Criterion C, if known. The Context Statement provides Themes and Associated Property Types by which many of the City's potentially eligible resources can be evaluated. Unfortunately, the Context Statement ends in 1965 and the VIP Records at this location did not come about until 1979; however, if the timeframe were extended out further it would appear that it would fit under the *Theme: African Americans* under the Ethnographic portion of the Context Statement. VIP Records fits into the continuing ethnographic story of the African American population in Long Beach through the end of the 20th century. It is located in a neighborhood that is primarily African American, both historically and currently. It is across the street from Long Beach Poly Technic High School (i.e., Poly Tech High School) and a few blocks north of the intersection of Anaheim Street and Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard, the site of the commercial complex noted as Long Beach's first African American-owned businesses. "Most residences inhabited by the African American community were located near Poly High School."³⁰ Religious institutions, community centers, and social clubs such as the Christ Second Baptist Church, the New Hope Baptist, Grant Chapel AME, and the Congo Club, all significant places to the African American population in Long Beach, are located nearby as well. "Property types associated with the African American community may include residences, businesses and places of employment, institutions, and other gathering places, such as churches that were owned, used, or built by African Americans."³¹ VIP Records is owned and operated by Kelvin Anderson, a well-known African American businessman in the community, whose business has provided a safe haven for neighborhood youth for decades. Aspiring artists and neighborhood teenagers/young adults just trying to escape the violence on the streets would gather at his store to hang out, learn to use the recording equipment, and even record/perform new songs. Mr. Anderson became an advocate for these new artists and their art form before the larger record companies became involved. Rap and Hip Hop were emerging in Southern California and VIP Records was one of the few places to carry these self-published artists, some of which produced their demos at VIP Records. Many artists and groups have been associated with VIP Records including Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg, Warren G, 213, The Dogg Pound, Domino, The Twinz, Dove Shack, Ice T, Sir Jinx, Ricky Harris, DJ Quick, Eazy E, Jermaine Dupri, Dr. Dre, Big Tray Dee, and Tha Eastsidaz.

(Continued on page 7)

***B10. Significance: (Continued from page 4)**

VIP Records was expanding in the 1980s and 90s as gang violence escalated in the neighborhood throughout this time. In reaction to the escalating violence Mr. Anderson built a recording studio in the back of his store and a small stage area out front in the sales area.²² Mr. Anderson purchased the south recording equipment, an SP1200 drum mackinge and sampler combo, with the assistance of producer Sir Jinx.²³ Aspiring artists and neighborhood teenagers/young adults just trying to escape the violence on the streets would gather at his store to hang out, learn to use the recording equipment, and even record/perform new songs. Mr. Anderson became an advocate for these new artists and their art form before the larger record companies became involved. Rap and Hip Hop were emerging as new urban music forms in Southern California and VIP Records was one of the few places to carry these self-published artists, some of which produced their demos at VIP Records. Many artists and groups have been associated with VIP Records including Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg, Warren G, 213, The Dogg Pound, LL Cool J, Domino, The Twinz, Dove Shack, and Tha Eastsidaz. Snoop Dogg recorded his first demo here and at least two music videos have been filmed at VIP Records, both featuring the iconic Sign; "Who Am I (What's My Name?)" (1993) by Snoop Dogg and "G'd Up" by Tha Eastsidaz (1999/2000).^{24,25,26} The Sign has also appeared in "Welcome To Atlanta Remix 2002" (2010) by Jermaine Dupri featuring Snoop Dogg, "I'm From Long Beach" (Official Video) (2016) by Snoop Dogg, the Warren G Documentary "G Funk" (2017), and HBO's "The Defiant Ones" (2017).²⁷

The iconic VIP Records sign was modified from the original Whistler Liquors sign, a business that formerly occupied the shopping center, when the record store moved in. The Sign has undergone some minor modifications over the years, but retains its Googie Style. Googie is an architectural style that was very popular in the middle of the 20th century and was greatly influenced by car culture, jets, the Space Age, and the Atomic Age. The Sign is comprised of five parts; "V.I.P." on the top banner-shaped portion, the large oval in the middle with the male figure attached to the north side, and two smaller rectangular parts that say "Records" and "Tapes CDs" all topped by three globe lights. The Sign has been painted differently over the years since becoming the Sign for VIP Records and some of the lighting is missing, but it is otherwise unaltered. The large oval sign, painted to appear as a record, once said "Long Beach" in large letters and now it says "World Famous" around the outer edge and "Long Beach" in smaller letters in the middle. The bottom-most portion once said "Tapes" where now it says "Tapes CDs".

Historic Resources Evaluation

The Sign and the associated buildings are the physical representations of the significant events and associations with happened at VIP Records. The Sign would not have existed without the business it was an advertisement for and their history is linked. The following evaluates these physical elements (the Sign and associated buildings) for inclusion as a City of Long Beach Landmark. The criteria for designation are set forth in the City ordinance as described above. The period of significance is 1979-2000, the period from which the store opened to when the last music video was filmed there.

Criterion A: Criterion A applies to resources associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the City's history. The Context Statement provides Themes and Associated Property Types by which many of the City's potentially eligible resources can be evaluated. Unfortunately, the Context Statement ends in 1965 and the VIP Records at this location did not come about until 1979; however, if the timeframe were extended out further it would appear that it would fit under the *Theme: African Americans* under the Ethnographic portion of the Context Statement. VIP Records fits into the continuing ethnographic story of the African American population in Long Beach through the end of the 20th century. It is located in a neighborhood that is primarily African American, both historically and currently. It is across the street from Long Beach Poly Technic High School (i.e., Poly Tech High School) and a few blocks north of the intersection of Anaheim Street and Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard, the site of the commercial complex noted as Long Beach's first African American-owned businesses. "Most residences inhabited by the African American community were located near Poly High School."²⁸ Religious institutions, community centers, and social clubs such as the Christ Second Baptist Church, the New Hope Baptist, Grant Chapel AME, and the Congo Club, all significant places to the African American population in Long Beach, are located nearby as well.

(Continued on page 6)

***B10. Significance: (Continued from page 3)**

Shopping Centers

The evolution of centers of commerce has been closely linked with the evolution of personal transportation. From the downtown commercial centers to streetcar strips to the modern shopping mall the location and scale of these facilities has changed to meet the needs of customers. The following has been excerpted from The History of the American Shopping Center by David Gwynn.¹⁵

Even in ancient times, cities were built around a central area that was more or less planned for commerce. Until the early years of the twentieth century, the keyword was "central"; in a society where transportation was dependent upon horses, transit, or feet, the downtown area acted as a hub for most activity within the city. Developments over the past century, however, have brought dramatic changes in the way people shop and live.

The earliest suburbs had been dependent upon the transit network, and around the beginning of the twentieth century, "streetcar strips", or low-rise commercial developments adjacent to the streetcar routes became the site of choice for convenience shopping (groceries, sundries, etc.) among housewives in the area. These stores were often haphazardly constructed, with little if any central planning. There was, of course, no parking, because there were no cars. The downtown shopping area still reigned supreme for most purchases; its large department stores saw no need to locate branches adjacent to grocers and butchers in outlying areas. Confident of the continuing primacy of the center city, they shunned these new commercial areas for decades.

As the automobile grew in popularity, developers like J.C. Nichols of Kansas City, feeling less restricted by the constraints of the transit network, began taking advantage of the increased mobility of the population. Nichols' concept for the Country Club District was for a planned community with its own small-scale convenience retail centers interspersed throughout, but also for a major shopping district of its own, one that might even come to compete with the downtown area. In 1923, Country Club Plaza opened for business as what is now regarded as America's first large centrally planned and managed shopping center. That its patrons would arrive by automobile was assumed; parking was an integral part of the plan. While the residential areas provided one-time profits, the retail center was a source of ongoing income; many developers took note and began building new residential areas primarily to support retail centers.

In the 1930s shopping centers often included a small grocer, a butcher, and a drug store and were very similar to the "streetcar" strips except for the building(s) were set back from the street and included automobile parking in the front.¹⁶ These small, automobile-centric, shopping centers continued to be very popular for many decades and are now generally considered local, or neighborhood, shopping centers with businesses targeting the surrounding neighborhoods.

VIP Records and Hip Hop Music

VIP Records is in a strip mall-style shopping center on the southeast corner of Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard and E. Pacific Coast Highway. The shopping center is comprised of three adjacent/connected buildings that form an L-shape. The buildings are one-story with an exterior walkway that is covered by an angled, cantilevered awning that stretches the full length of the two facades that face the parking lot and Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard and E. Pacific Coast Highway. A surface parking lot is located between the buildings and the streets. The shopping center was constructed in 1962 and VIP Records opened at this location in January 1979.¹⁷

VIP Records was a regional chain of stores in Southern California originally owned and operated by Cletus Anderson.¹⁸ Kelvin Anderson, Cletus's younger brother, bought the Long Beach store from him on January 15, 1979.¹⁹ Cletus Anderson was well known in the area as the owner of VIP Records and played a role in recording Ice T's first album.²⁰ At this time the store specialized in R&B, Gospel, Jazz, and Blues music. In the 1980's, as Rap music was beginning to take hold on the West Coast, future artists such as Snoop Dogg, Warren G, and Nate Dogg were growing up in this Long Beach neighborhood at the time. Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg, and Warren G purchased music from VIP Records, food from the fish market (also in the same shopping center), and got their hair cut at the local barber shop.²¹ VIP Records is currently still owned and operated by Kelvin Anderson, a well-known African American businessman in the community, whose business has provided a safe haven for neighborhood youth for decades.

(Continued on page 5)

***P3a. Description: (Continued from page 1)**

The Sign has been painted differently over the years since becoming the Sign for VIP Records and some of the lighting is missing, but it is otherwise unaltered. The large oval sign, painted to appear as a record, once said "Long Beach" in large letters and now it says "World Famous" around the outer edge and "Long Beach" in smaller letters in the middle. The bottom-most portion once said "Tapes" where now it says "Tapes CDs".

***B10. Significance: (Continued from page 2)**

The new colony was to feature a main boulevard, known as American Avenue (now Long Beach Boulevard), which would link to Los Angeles; resort quarters along the town's waterfront; and a downtown business district. The remaining acreage of the American Colony was to be divided into 40-acre lots and sold as small family farms.¹ The original town site was bounded by present-day Tenth Street on the north, Alamitos Avenue on the east, the Pacific Ocean on the south, and Magnolia Avenue on the west. At the time of its inception, the only building in the proposed colony was an old shepherd's shack used by the Bixby ranch personnel, which was located near the present-day intersection of First Street and Pine Avenue.²

African Americans

The following has been excerpted from the City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement.³

California joined the Union as a non-slavery state. However, the state legislature wrote restrictions into its state laws prohibiting African American citizens from testifying against a Caucasian in court, receiving a public education, owning public land, or voting.⁴ Racially restrictive measures against African Americans limited access to local resources such as housing, employment, public education, and accommodations. Housing restrictions caused overcrowding in African American neighborhoods and depressed economic growth. Consequently, banks refused to grant loans to residents living in these areas, leading to slum conditions.⁵

The African American community initially came to the West Coast at the turn of the 20th century, taking refuge from the racism and violence of the South. In Long Beach, many settled in the vicinity of Anaheim Street and California (now Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard), an area designated as a ghetto near Poly Tech High School.^{6,7} John R. Barner, an African American who came to Long Beach from Oklahoma in 1905, is credited for this settlement. Barner did not appear to be African American and was able to purchase an abundance of commercial and residential properties along the edges of the City of Long Beach. Due to deed restrictions in various parts of the City of Long Beach, Barner purchased property in nonrestricted areas beyond the City of Long Beach limits, allowing him to "corner the real estate market for minorities."⁸ A commercial complex located at the intersection of Anaheim Street and Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard became Long Beach's first African American-owned businesses. By 1910, the U.S. Census recorded the presence of 100 African Americans in Long Beach.⁹

On June 25, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order that "outlawed racial discrimination in hiring and the workplace for all government agencies and all private companies holding federal defense contracts."¹⁰

As a result, a surge of African Americans from Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas migrated to Long Beach to work in the defense industry, causing the number of African Americans living in Long Beach to jump from 2,000 in 1940 to 15,000 in 1945...¹¹

Although the Supreme Court ruling in 1948 had prohibited the United States from enforcing restrictive real estate covenants, it did not abolish the voluntary practice of deed restrictions, which continued until the 1960s. As a result, the majority of African Americans lived in the Cabrillo Housing III, which was part of military housing in west Long Beach. They were subsequently evicted to make room for the construction of new subdivisions. Many resettled in Willowbrook, Watts, and Compton.¹² Those who stayed in Long Beach purchased land and built homes in west Long Beach on former government housing sites and farms. These small-scale developers were happy to sell their "spec" homes to non-Whites, using their profits to finance larger developments elsewhere.¹³ The African American population would tumble to 9,500 by the early 1950s and would not grow to the number it once was until the 1970s.¹⁴ Most African Americans in Long Beach in the postwar era were employed at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard.

(Continued on page 4)

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Page 2 of 11

*NRHP Status Code

*Resource Name or # VIP Records

B1. Historic Name: VIP Records

B2. Common Name: none

B3. Original Use: Commerical

B4. Present Use: Commercial

*B5. **Architectural Style:** Mid-Century modern/Googie

*B6. **Construction History:**

Built in 1960 and 1962.

*B7. **Moved?** ☒No ☐Yes ☐Unknown **Date:**

Original Location:

*B8. **Related Features:** Sign

B9a. Architect: unknown

b. Builder: unknown

*B10. **Significance: Theme:** African Americans, Music Industry

Area: Long Beach

Period of Significance: 1979-2000

Property Type: Commercial

Applicable Criteria: Local Criteria applied

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

The City of Long Beach has developed a Historic Context Statement (Context Statement) that covers a broad timeframe from the period of Native American habitation through 1965. A brief history of the City of Long Beach is provided below as it relates to the subject property followed by a more detailed history of the property itself.

City of Long Beach

The following history has been taken from the City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement.¹

Settlement within the Long Beach area began as early as 1875, when Jotham Bixby began selling lots along the Los Angeles River in the area that is now west Long Beach, near Willow Street and Santa Fe Avenue. The Cerritos Colony consisted of farms and homes, as well as the area's first school house, Cerritos School.²

The second attempt at settlement began in 1881, when William Erwin Willmore entered into an agreement with J. Bixby & Co. to develop the American Colony, a 4,000-acre piece of Rancho Los Cerritos with a 350-acre town site that was named Willmore City. Willmore had first visited California in 1870, after emigrating from London to the United States. Upon his arrival in Southern California, he worked as a promoter of Southern California real estate with Jotham Bixby and served as the Southern California manager of the California Emigrant Union, which encouraged settlement and facilitated large real estate deals.

(continued on page 3)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: none

*B12. **References:** (see page 8)

B13. Remarks:

*B14. **Evaluator:** Amber Grady, ESA
2600 Capitol Ave, Ste. 200
Sacramento, CA 95816

(This space reserved for official comments.)

Location Map on page 11

¹ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., 10 July 2009, *City of Long Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 34.

² Hillburg, Bill. 31 August 2000. *Long Beach: A City and Its People*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp, p. 22.

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 11

*Resource Name or #: VIP Records

P1. Other Identifier: The World Famous V.I.P. Records

***P2. Location:** ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted
and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*a. County: Los Angeles

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad:

Date: T ; R ; ¼ of ¼ of Sec ; M.D. B.M.

c. Address: 1008 E. Pacific Coast Highway

City: Long Beach

Zip: 90806

d. UTM: Zone: ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)

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

APN 7268-025-025 and 7268-025-027

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)
VIP Records is in a strip mall-style shopping center on the southeast corner of Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard and E. Pacific Coast Highway. The shopping center is comprised of three adjacent/connected buildings that form an L-shape. The buildings are one-story with an exterior walkway that is covered by an angled, cantilevered awning that stretches the full length of the two facades that face the parking lot and Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard and E. Pacific Coast Highway. A surface parking lot is located between the buildings and the streets. It is a very utilitarian and car centric building as were most strip malls built in the 1950s and 60s. The iconic VIP Records sign was modified from the original Whistler Liquors sign, a business that formerly occupied the shopping center, when the record store moved in. The Sign has undergone some minor modifications over the years, but retains its Googie Style. Googie is an architectural style that was very popular in the middle of the 20th century and was greatly influenced by car culture, jets, the Space Age, and the Atomic Age. The Sign is comprised of five parts; "V.I.P." on the top banner-shaped portion, the large oval in the middle with the male figure attached to the north side, and two smaller rectangular parts that say "Records" and "Tapes CDs" all topped by three globe lights. (Continued on page 3)

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** HP6: 1-3 story commercial building

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

P5a. Photo or Drawing



P5b. Description of Photo:

Primary (west) façade

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

☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1960/62, LA County Assessor

***P7. Owner and Address:**

Triss, LLC
6350 Laurel Canyon Blvd. #404
North Hollywood, CA 91606

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

Amber Grady
ESA
2600 Capitol Ave, Ste 200,
Sacramento, CA 95816

***P9. Date Recorded:** 2/16/2016

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

Intensive

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

ESA, VIP Records Long Beach, Los

Angeles County, Local Landmark Evaluation Report, 2016.

***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):