

**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_

HRI # \_\_\_\_\_

Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_

NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_

Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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\*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) King City Courthouse

P1. Other Identifier: King City Courthouse

\*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

\*a. County Monterey

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Monterey Date 2012 T ; R ; ¼ of ¼ of Sec ; Mount Diablo B.M.

c. Address 250 Franciscan Way City King City Zip 93930

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone ; mE/ mN

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

APN 026-391-012

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

Built in 1973, the 8600 square foot King City Courthouse is an L-shaped building set on a concrete slab foundation. The cross-hip roof, covered with concrete tiles, has an open eave overhang with covered rafters. A wood fascia and T1-11 plywood soffit run directly beneath the eaves, accentuating the building's horizontality. The exterior walls are covered with cement plaster. The building's front entrance is located in the interior corner created by the L-shaped plan. The aluminum framed glass door is set within a window wall divided by aluminum frames – a typical feature in contemporary architecture. Fenestration throughout the building is vertically oriented, running from floor to soffit. Each window is set in a resawn wood frame, and a steel T-bar divides the lower quarter of the glass. The front elevation's principal design feature is a colonnade of square concrete columns which are fluted on all four sides. A concrete walkway extends under the colonnade and abuts the parking lot in front of the building. A low curb separates the parking lot from the walkway. (continued p. 3)

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP14, Government Building

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



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) East Elevation, 02/2024

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and

Sources: 1973 ☒ Historic

☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both

Building Plans/Assessor

\*P7. Owner and Address:

Monterey County

1441 Schilling Pl.

Salinas, CA. 93901

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

Meg Clovis

14024 Reservation Rd.

Salinas, CA 93908

\*P9. Date Recorded: 10/2023

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe)

Intensive

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

\*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☐ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure and Object Record

☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record

☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List)

## BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

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\*NRHP Status Code 6Z

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) King City Courthouse

B1. Historic Name: King City Courthouse  
B2. Common Name: King City Courthouse  
B3. Original Use: Courthouse

B4. Present Use: Government Offices

\*B5. Architectural Style: Modernist Classic

\*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alteration, and date of alterations) Constructed in 1973; Interior remodels in 1981, 1990, & 2001.

\*B7. Moved? x ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B8. Related Features: Parking lot

B9a. Architect: Holewinski & Blevens

b. Builder: Unknown

\*B10. Significance: Theme Government

Area King City

Period of Significance N/A

Property Type Building Applicable Criteria N/A

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

In 1873 Monterey County's government center was moved from Monterey to Salinas, when Salinas became the County seat. The Board of Supervisors rented a rattletrap, two-story building on Main Street for the courthouse. Two years later the courthouse burned to the ground, taking the tax rolls and the Tax Collector's box of gambling debt IOUs with it. In 1879 a new fireproof courthouse was constructed on property that Jesse D. Carr sold to the County for \$1. That courthouse remained in use until 1937 when a new, WPA funded courthouse (listed on the National Register) was built around the 1879 courthouse. The interior patio is the former footprint of the 1879 courthouse.

Over the years the population growth of the County necessitated the establishment of three more courthouses; one in Monterey (1960s), one in King City (1970s), and one in Marina (1990s). The courthouse in King City was constructed in 1973 on the old city sewer plant property off Canal Street. The 8600 square foot building housed the sheriff's department, the justice court, the mental health department, and the welfare and building inspector's offices. The architectural firm of Holewinski and Blevens designed the building with future expansion in mind.

**Peter Holewinski** (1928-2013) graduated from the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. in 1951 with a degree in architecture. He worked as an architect for the US Navy and then moved to the Monterey Peninsula in 1962. That year he founded the Salinas architectural firm of (cont. p. 5)

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

\*B12. References:

Various news articles, *Salinas Californian*.

Building File, Monterey County.

Rifkind, Carole. *Contemporary American Architecture*. New York, 1998.

National Register Bulletin 15

Blevens, Melvin, Obit. *Monterey Herald*, 1/15/2020.

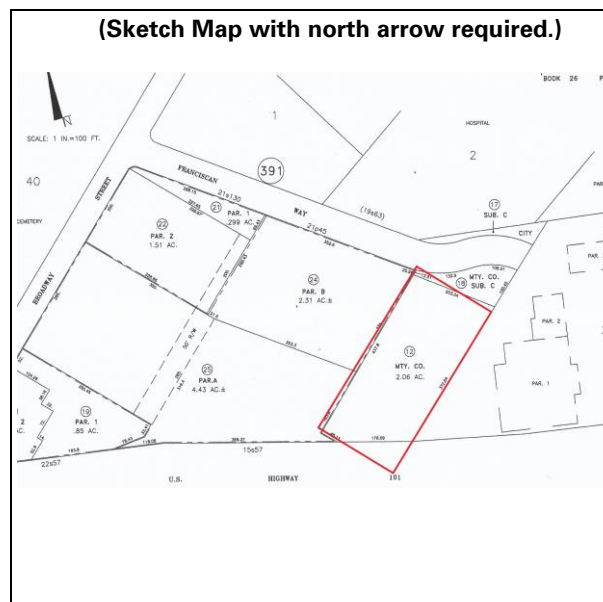
Holewinski, Peter, Obit., *Press Democrat*, 1/9/2013.

B13. Remarks

\*B14. Evaluator: Meg Clovis

\*Date of Evaluation: 2/2024

(This space reserved for official comments.)



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### P3a. Description continued:

Changes were made to the building in 1981, 1990, and 2001. All were interior remodels except for a small bump out on the north elevation in 2001.



Figure 1: View of colonnade, front elevation.

Architects Holewinski and Blevens designed the courthouse in the Modernist Classic style. Carole Rifkind outlines the basic tenants of the Modernist Classic style as follows, "A maturing modernism asserted many commonalities with classicism: a uniform construction grid, a carefully organized hierarchy, a clarity of geometric form. Searching for symbolic meaning, Modernist architecture grasped Classic precedent in the use of travertine or marble sheathing, the colonnade as a compositional device, and the elevated podium."<sup>1</sup> This style of architecture was favored for public buildings in the 1960s and 1970s.

Budget constraints<sup>2</sup> no doubt dictated what type of materials were selected, so T1-11 is used in the Courthouse rather than travertine. Although Holewinski and Blevens utilized the colonnade feature, they did not employ the elevated podium device. Rather, the building is basically on the same level as

<sup>1</sup> Rifkind, Carole. *Contemporary American Architecture*. New York, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> The King City Courthouse was built for \$258,000.



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the parking lot. Another deviation from the Modernist Classic style is the use of the hip roof rather than a flat roof. Although the King City Courthouse exhibits some Modernist Classic traits, it does not fully exemplify the style, and therefore cannot be considered a good example of this type of architecture.



Figure 2: View of front entrance with window wall.

### Character Defining Features

Character refers to all the visual aspects and physical features that comprise the appearance of a historic building. Character-defining features include the overall shape of the building, its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details, and the various aspects of its site and environment. The King City Courthouse is a modest example of the Modernist Classic style. Character-defining features associated with the style include:

- Colonnade on the front elevation
- Window wall entrance
- Vertically oriented windows
- Open eave overhang with enclosed rafters

There are many good examples of Modernist Classic public and commercial buildings throughout Monterey County. Two government buildings that exemplify the style include the Monterey Courthouse (Wallace Holm Associates) and the Seaside City Hall (Edward Durrell Stone).

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**B10. Significance continued:**

Holewinski and Blevens with his partner Melvin Blevens. **Melvin Leroy Blevins** (1932-2020) earned his architecture degree from the University of Oregon. Over the next 45 years, Holewinski and Blevens designed multiple schools, subdivisions, apartment buildings, and government buildings. At the time of their retirement in 2007, their architectural firm had become the second largest in Monterey County. Their most well-known buildings include Harden Middle School in Salinas, Casa de Oro senior housing in Gonzales, Greenfield Middle School, St. Dunstan's Church in Carmel Valley, Madonna del Sasso Church in Salinas, the Japanese Buddhist Temple in Salinas, the Salinas Civic Center Addition, and the Immaculate Heart Monastery in Big Sur. Both men were honored with Lifetime Achievement Awards from the AIA Monterey Bay Chapter.<sup>3</sup>

The King City Courthouse was closed in 2013 due to budget constraints caused by the Great Recession. It reopened in 2021, providing limited services and traffic courts. A new courthouse is now planned at a Fort Ord location.



Evaluation for Significance

Historians use National Register Bulletin 15<sup>4</sup> as a guide when evaluating a property's significance whether on a local, state, or national level. To qualify as a significant historic resource the property must be evaluated within its historic context and the applicable context area is Monterey County within the theme of Government. For the purposes of this evaluation, which must meet the State of California's requirements under PRC § 5024 and 5024.5, the King City Courthouse will be evaluated for eligibility based on the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources, the California Historical Landmarks Program, and Monterey County's Historic Register. The Criteria describes how properties are significant for their association with important events or persons, for their importance associated with design or construction, or for their information potential. In addition, a significant property must represent an important part of the identified context and must retain integrity – the characteristics that make it a good representative of properties associated with that aspect of the past.

Figure 3: View of parking lot looking west.

<sup>3</sup> Carmel Pine Cone. 12/10/2014, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> National Register Bulletin 15. *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. National Park Service. 1998.

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Following is a description of the applicable criteria:

National Register of Historic Places

A resource is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places if it:

- A. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction; or
- D. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history.<sup>5</sup>

California Register of Historical Resources

A resource is eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources if it:

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage.
2. Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
4. Has yielded, or may likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.<sup>6</sup>

California Historical Landmarks

A resource is eligible for the California Historical Landmarks Program if it:

1. Is the first, last, only, or most significant of its type in the state or within a large geographic region (Northern, Central, or Southern California).
2. Is associated with an individual or group having a profound influence on the history of California.
3. Is a prototype of, or an outstanding example of, a period, style, architectural movement, or construction or is one of the more notable works or the best surviving work in a region of a pioneer architect, designer, or master builder.

Monterey County Register of Historic Resources

A resource is eligible for the Monterey County Register of Historic Resources if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

A. Historical and Cultural Significance:

1. The resource or district proposed for designation is particularly representative of a distinct historical period, type, style, region, or way of life.
2. The resource or district proposed for designation is, or contains, a type of building or buildings, which were common but are now rare.
3. The resource or district proposed for designation was connected with someone renowned.
4. The resource or district proposed for designation is connected with a business or use that was once common but is now rare.

<sup>5</sup> 16 U.S.C. 470 et seq., as amended. 36 CFR §60.1(a).

<sup>6</sup> California Public Resources Code §5024.1(c).

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5. The resource or district proposed for designation represents the work of a master builder, engineer, designer, artist, or architect whose talent influenced a particular architectural style or way of life.
6. The resource or district proposed for designation is the site of an important historic event or is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state, or community.
7. The resource or district proposed for designation has a high potential of yielding information of archeological interest.

**B. Historic, Architectural, and Engineering Significance:**

1. The resource or district proposed for designation exemplifies a particular architectural style or way of life important to the County.
2. The resource or district proposed for designation exemplifies the best remaining architectural type of a community.
3. The construction materials or engineering methods used in the resource or district proposed for designation embody elements of outstanding attention to architectural or engineering design, detail, material, or craftsmanship.

**C. Community and Geographic Setting:**

1. The proposed resource materially benefits the historic character of the community.
2. The unique location or singular physical characteristics of the resource or district proposed for designation represents an established and familiar visual feature of the community, area, or county.
3. The district is a geographically definable area, urban or rural, possessing a significant concentration or continuity of site, buildings, structures, or objects unified by past events, or aesthetically by plan or physical development.
4. The preservation of a resource or resources is essential to the integrity of the district.<sup>7</sup>

For a property to be listed under **Criterion A** (National Register), **Criterion 1** (California Register), **Criterion 1** (California Landmark), and **Criteria A1 and A6** (Monterey County Register) it must be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The King City Courthouse has not been associated with events that have made significant contributions to the broad patterns of our history and is therefore not eligible for listing under the aforementioned criteria.

For a property to be listed under **Criterion B** (National Register), **Criterion 2** (California Register), **Criterion 2** (California Landmark), or **Criterion A3** (Monterey County Register) it must be associated with a person or persons who are significant on the local, state, or national level. An individual must have made contributions or played a role that can be justified as significant, and the contributions of the individual must be compared to others who were active, successful, prosperous, or influential in the same sphere of interest. No individual or group associated with the King City Courthouse meets the aforementioned criteria.

<sup>7</sup> Monterey County Municipal Code, Chapter 18.25.  
DPR 523L (1/95)



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For a property to be listed under **Criterion C** (National Register), **Criterion 3** (California Register), **Criterion 3** (California Landmark), or **Criteria A1, A5, and B1-3** (Monterey County Register) it must embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values. The King City Courthouse does not embody the distinctive characteristics of the Modernist Classic style. Although Holewinski and Blevens were prolific architects, their work and their firm are not included in the inventory of modernist buildings in the County compiled by DOCOMOMO<sup>8</sup> or in the US Modernist Archives<sup>9</sup>. Finally, the King City Courthouse does not express aesthetic ideals or design concepts. The King City Courthouse is not eligible for listing under the aforementioned criteria.



**Criterion D** (National Register), **Criterion 4** (California Register), and **Criterion A7** (Monterey County Register) are applicable to properties that have yielded, or may likely yield, information important to history or prehistory. In other words, these criteria are reserved for archeological sites, and they are not relevant to the evaluation of the King City Courthouse.

**Integrity** was not assessed for this property since it did not meet any of the national, state, or local eligibility criteria.

**Summary**

The King City Courthouse did not meet any of the national, state, or local eligibility criteria for historic resources. The King City Courthouse is not an historic resource under CEQA.

Figure 4: View of the windows and extended eaves.

<sup>8</sup> Documentation and Conservation of the Modern Movement - Monterey.

<sup>9</sup> <https://usmodernist.org>.