

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

DRAFT

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Grether & Grether Building

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 730-732 S. Los Angeles Street

City or town: Los Angeles State: California County: Los Angeles

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ Title : State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Beaux Arts

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK and CONCRETE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Grether & Grether Building is a simplified Beaux-Arts style, six-story, reinforced concrete building located at 730-732 S. Los Angeles Street in Los Angeles, California. The building sits on a parallelogram-shaped parcel located on the east side of S. Los Angeles Street, between E. 7th Street to the north and E. 8th Street to the south. The building is situated within the Garment District and is surrounded by similar sized buildings constructed for manufacturing purposes, many of which have been converted to residential use with retail at the ground floor. The Grether & Grether Building is rectangular at its ground floor, occupying the entirety of its lot, and T-shaped from the second through sixth floors. The base of the T forms light wells along the lot lines, extending to an alley-like private open space (alley) along the rear (east side) of the parcel. The Grether & Grether Building has the character of a commercial-retail office building along S. Los Angeles Street and the aesthetic of an industrial manufacturing building at its side and rear elevations. The property is undergoing a certified rehabilitation and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Narrative Description

Exterior

The Grether & Grether Building is six stories in height constructed of reinforced concrete and is designed in a simplified Beaux-Arts style. The building is rectangular at its ground floor, occupying the entirety of its lot and touching the neighboring buildings at 724 S. Los Angeles to

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the north and 738 S. Los Angeles to the south. Brass letters embedded in the concrete sidewalk mark the frontage of the building along S. Los Angeles Street. From the second through sixth floor the building is T-shaped creating light wells that extend to an alley-like private open space (alley) along the rear (east side) of the parcel. The building reaches the edges of its lot at the ground level along the rear alley.

The primary façade is organized in a typical Beaux-Arts base-shaft-capital arrangement. The façade is symmetrical and divided into five bays. The “base” level, comprising the ground and second floors, is sheathed in cast stone painted a cream color to mimic terra cotta or natural stone. The primary entrance is located in the center bay and features a decorative painted cast stone door surround with segmental arch framing a transom opening with fixed wood frame windows above a metal roll-up door. An entry vestibule behind the roll-up door contains hexagonal tile flooring with a Greek key-pattern border and shield emblem with tile letters reading Grether & Grether Inc. in front of a non-historic entry door that was installed between approximately 1972 and 1982. Flat, painted cast stone pilasters without capitals articulate each bay at the base. Four storefronts with metal roll-up doors occupy the outer bays of the ground floor. The building is undergoing a certified rehabilitation and non-historic storefronts, also installed between approximately 1972 and 1982, have been removed. Above the storefronts are vertically oriented transoms, divided into four hopper, wood sash windows. A decorative frieze running between the ground and second floors features bas-relief balusters in each bay above a stringcourse of rosettes. Square panels with roses demarcate each bay between the balusters.

A narrow cast stone stringcourse delineates the second floor from the third and the fifth floor from the sixth, framing the “shaft” of the Beaux-Arts column arrangement. Facing at the upper floors is light brown unpainted brick. Metal fire escape platforms, with the stairs removed, extend from second floor to the roof at the southernmost bay. From the second through sixth floors, fenestration is wood sash Chicago windows with a fixed center pane flanked by single light, double-hung outer panes. The “capital” of the façade is a painted cast stone cornice with shallow acanthus-leaf brackets spanning the top of the sixth floor. A cast stone sign with incised letters reading “GRETHER & GRETHER INC” interrupts the cornice and spans the entire center bay. The cornice is capped with a triangular parapet rising above the center bay.

The secondary north, east, and south elevations are board-formed concrete. Only the north and east elevations are painted. Fenestration is regularly spaced and sized across these elevations, generally grouped across each level with large industrial, steel sash hopper and awning windows with clear safety glass. The windows have low sills, stretching from slightly above the floor level to somewhat below the ceiling level on the second through sixth floors. On the north and south side elevations, new balconies with steel guardrails accessed by multi-light steel doors were installed in 2016. Along the rear east elevation ground floor are two loading docks with metal, roll-up doors. A fire escape is located in the center bay of the east elevation. The roof is flat with a raised parapet on all four sides. Toward the center of the roof is a reinforced concrete armature, approximately 30 feet high, which formerly supported a water tank.

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Interior

The interior of the Grether & Grether Building has always contained minimally finished spaces. Originally, the interior featured a lobby and retail spaces at the ground floor and industrial lofts with flexible open plans to accommodate tenant needs at upper floors. The building is currently undergoing a certified rehabilitation and interior spaces are under construction and largely void of finishes.

The first floor is an open space interrupted only by mushroom-capped concrete columns. The center portion of the first floor is a high volume space that opens to the second floor. The second floor (mezzanine) is accessed by way of a central split staircase with a scrolling metal handrail, the only ornamental feature that remains in the interior space. The columns in this central high volume space extend to the ceiling of the second floor. The second floor encircles the high volume area with a solid railing wall. The second floor has been expanded slightly as part of the certified rehabilitation, extending in one additional bay from the front façade. New reinforced concrete moment frames have been installed for seismic reinforcement at each floor and abut columns at the front of the building.

All floors are accessed by way of two stairwells and two elevators; the first set is located on the northwest side of the building and the second is located along the east elevation behind the mezzanine stairs. At the upper third through seventh floors, new partition walls have been installed to accommodate the building's conversion to residential use. Each floor plan generally consists of two central corridors that form a T-shape accessing individual units and elevator and stair lobbies. Mushroom-capped concrete columns remain intact throughout the space. Columns generally have a plaster finish in these areas and floors are exposed concrete.

The building has a below grade full basement that will be used for parking. The space is lined by mushroom-capped concrete columns and includes separated rooms at corners that house mechanical and other auxiliary building needs. A new opening has been added on the east elevation linking the basement with an underground vehicular access shared by neighboring buildings.

Alterations

Since construction, the building has undergone some alterations. Exterior alterations are minimal and include modernization of storefronts and the main entrance along the primary (west) façade and removal of the rooftop water tank at an unknown date. In 1952 the parapet was altered to comply with a citywide ordinance, and this alteration has since taken on historic significance. The interior of the Grether & Grether Building always contained minimally finished spaces. The interior originally featured a lobby and retail spaces at the ground floor and industrial lofts with flexible open plans to accommodate tenant needs at upper floors. No historic interior finishes were extant prior to the certified rehabilitation.

At upper floors, the interior configuration was typical of the garment factory property type with an emphasis on flexible open floor plans. Most added finishes in the interior were minimal. Beginning in 1925, immediately following the building's completion, alterations to upper floors

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were made regularly on a tenant-by-tenant basis and floor plans were never repetitive between levels. Where added, demising walls were typically constructed of gypsum block or hollow clay tile and clad in expanded metal lath and plaster or drywall. As part of the certified rehabilitation, past demising walls were removed and new walls have been constructed to accommodate the building's new residential use.

Integrity

Exterior alterations to the original building are minimal and limited to the storefronts, main entrance, and the water tower. Despite these alterations, the Beaux-Arts style building maintains its character defining features and a high degree of integrity. Overall the building retains all aspects of integrity: location, setting, association, feeling, design, workmanship, and materials.

Integrity of location and setting remains intact as the building is still in its original location in the midst of downtown Los Angeles's manufacturing district, now Garment District, surrounded by similarly sized manufacturing loft buildings. The design continues to reflect the building's historic function, appearance, and industrial design philosophy of architect John Montgomery Cooper; specifically, its combination commercial-retail office aesthetic along S. Los Angeles Street and industrial aesthetic of a manufacturing loft building type at the rear elevation and on the interior. Despite alterations to the storefronts and entry door, the key historic character defining architectural features and materials remain intact and convey the significance of the building's commercial and industrial function. While the parapet was altered in 1952, this alteration occurred during the building's historic period of significance. Integrity of workmanship is evident in the construction methods and techniques utilized, such as the cast stone decoration used to replicate stone or terra cotta on the façade, mushroom-capped concrete columns throughout the building's interior, and board formed concrete construction. While no longer utilized as a manufacturing and office building, the building retains integrity of feeling and association as the physical features of the property continue to convey its historic character as an office and industrial loft space of early twentieth century Los Angeles.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE

INDUSTRY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1924-1961

Significant Dates

1924

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Cooper, John Montgomery

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Grether & Grether Building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce and Industry and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The Grether & Grether Building is significant under Criterion A for its association with the growth of manufacturing in Los Angeles. The mercantile and industrial building, located in the center of Los Angeles' manufacturing district, reflects the concurrent growth and development of manufacturing with wholesale distribution in Los Angeles during the first half of the twentieth century. Walter Grether, a principal of the building's namesake firm, was president and founder of the Wholesale Institute and helped establish Los Angeles as a major center of manufacturing in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s through the creation of Market Week, a buyers' convention showcasing Los Angeles-made products. The Grether & Grether Building period of significance under Criterion A is 1924 to 1961, reflecting the years when the Grether & Grether firm and a combination of wholesale and manufacturing businesses occupied the building. The Grether & Grether Building is also significant under Criterion C as an exemplary mid-rise 1920s commercial and manufacturing building designed by local architect John Montgomery Cooper. The building is a rare example of a Beaux Arts-style design by Cooper that combines a commercial-retail office aesthetic with the industrial aesthetic of a manufacturing loft building type. A high percentage of historic character defining architectural features are intact and convey the significance of the building's commercial and industrial function as well as the industrial design philosophy of the era. The period of significance for the Grether & Grether Building under Criterion C is 1924, the year of its construction.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Commerce and Industry, Sale and Manufacturing of Goods in Los Angeles

As a building of combined mercantile and manufacturing functions, the Grether & Grether Building is significant in the areas of Commerce and Industry, for its association with growth and development of the wholesale and manufacturing industries in Los Angeles. Established in 1909, the Grether & Grether dry goods wholesale firm was one of the important commercial links between manufacturers in Los Angeles and retailers across the United States. Walter Grether, one of the firm's founders, was influential in the development of Los Angeles as a center of manufacturing in the first half of the twentieth century. The building's initial tenants included dry goods wholesalers, textile industry manufacturers, light machinery manufacturers, and retail buyers from cities across the United States, reflecting the nature of the manufacturing industry in the Los Angeles during this period of railroad-based growth. The period of significance under Criterion A begins in 1924 when the building was constructed and ends in 1961 when the Grether & Grether firm closed; reflecting the years when the Grether & Grether firm and a combination of wholesale and manufacturing businesses occupied the building.

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Garment District

The manufacturing district of Los Angeles, now known as the Garment District, is bounded roughly by Santee Street to the east, Broadway to the west, Santa Monica Freeway (I-10) to the south, and 7th Street to the north. In the early twentieth century, the area within this boundary was largely a residential neighborhood of single-family homes, livery stables, lumberyards, creameries, markets, and churches. The City of Los Angeles grew exponentially in population and land during the first decades of the twentieth century and residential growth radiated away from the historic core of downtown as surrounding territory was gradually annexed by the City, transforming the areas in the historic core into dense commercial and industrial zones.¹

This area, southeast of the financial district, developed into a primarily industrial neighborhood after 1922 when the City officially rezoned the area for denser retail, office, and manufacturing to encourage growth and concentration of these uses.² The manufacturing development paralleled the trunk and spur lines of the national railroads.³ Though businesses including bakeries, foundries, printing, and machine shops were located along railroad corridors in the southeast historic core as early as the 1870s, newer industrial loft-style buildings were constructed in the manufacturing district during the 1920s and 1930s, immediately following the rezoning. Connected by transportation (railroad linked to the port) and communication (telegraph and telephone) infrastructure, the businesses that emerged in this section of the City could serve a larger network of western consumers. Proximity to firms that supplied, sold, and produced goods and capital was an asset to businesses within this manufacturing district.⁴

The industrial core was dominated by apparel manufacturing, furniture makers, food processing, jobbers, wholesalers, and associated warehouses.⁵ Around 1910 an influx of apparel manufacturers arrived in the district. These manufacturers came to take advantage of the abundance of locally produced wool, cotton, and silk fibers available at cheap prices, which had previously been shipped to the East Coast for use in textile production. The success of the textile

¹ The early twentieth century growth of the City of Los Angeles is well documented in other sources, but is illustrated simply with population statistics showing the growth in residents between decades in this era:

Year	Population
1890	50,395
1900	102,479
1910	319,198
1920	576,673

Data Source: *US Census Bureau*. Office of Historic Resources, Los Angeles Department of City Planning, *Historic Context Statement: SurveyLA Industrial Development, City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California*, LSA and Chattel, Inc, Los Angeles, Los Angeles City Hall, 2011, 126.

² Los Angeles Conservancy, *The Arts District: History and Architecture in Downtown L.A.*, Los Angeles, 2013.

³ Greg Hise, "'Nature's Workshop' industry and urban expansion in Southern California, 1900-1950." (*Journal of Historical Geography*, 27:1, 2001, 74-92) 78.

⁴ Hise, 76.

⁵ Hise, 79.

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and garment industries was noteworthy on a national scale; by the late 1920s, Los Angeles' garment industry was about equivalent in size to that of New York City.⁶

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The Grether & Grether Building, a mercantile and industrial loft type building commissioned by the wholesale dry goods merchant firm of the same name, was completed in the manufacturing district in 1924. The building accommodated the combined uses of light industrial production and sale of dry goods—generally clothing and nonperishable household goods, including drapes, linens, clothing, kitchenware, toys, and furniture—produced in the surrounding manufacturing area. The location perfectly positioned the wholesale firm to connect the manufacturers of Los Angeles with commercial retailers across the United States, linked to the region by extensive transportation and communication networks.

Established by prominent businessmen and brothers Walter W. Grether (1871-1949) and Ernest Grether (1877-1972) in 1909, the firm of Grether & Grether, functioning as wholesalers acting as intermediaries between manufacturers and retailers, was one of the important commercial links between producers in Los Angeles and retailers across the United States. The firm's founders were influential in Los Angeles' development as a center of manufacturing in the first half of the twentieth century.⁷

The Grether brothers were originally from the Midwest and moved to Los Angeles in 1903 from Illinois. Walter briefly worked as a department manager for the Broadway Department Store before becoming the head of the drapery department of Los Angeles' Fifth Street Store when it opened in 1906.⁸ The brothers began their business partnership in the dry goods industry with the purchase of a Mojave general store in 1909. In 1911, the firm expanded to include a business specializing in hotel and apartment furniture. Grether & Grether formed a drapery and upholstery fabrics department in 1914 and a full dry goods division in 1919, evolving their focus from retail sales to wholesale dry goods sales.⁹

The firm's success generally mirrored the development of the wholesale dry goods industry across the United States. By the 1910s, the majority of clothing was produced outside of the home. Wholesale networks, conceptualized in the 1850s with the advent of reliable

⁶ Galvin Preservation Associates and Ben Taniguchi, "Garment Capitol Building" *Historic-Cultural Monument Application*. (Los Angeles: Cultural Heritage Commission, October 23, 2007); Office of Historic Resources, 128.

⁷ United States Federal Census: 1920; Census Place: *Los Angeles Assembly DISTRICT 66, Los Angeles, California*; Roll: T625_110; Page: 1A; Enumeration DISTRICT: 263. Ancestry.com. 1920 *United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010; United States Federal Census: 1940; Census Place: *Glendale, California*; Roll: T627_230; Page: 5B; Enumeration DISTRICT: 19-193. Ancestry.com. 1940 *United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012; Ancestry.com. *U.S., Social Security Death Index, 1935-Current* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2011. Original data: Social Security Administration. *Social Security Death Index, Master File*. Social Security Administration.

⁸ "Display Ad 80," *Los Angeles Times*, September 20, 1905, I17.

⁹ "Walter Grether," *The Credit Monthly*, January 1921, 26; "Display Ad 40," *Los Angeles Times*, January 1, 1925, 25.

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transportation (railroads) and communication (telegraph) networks, reached their peak in the 1920s. The continentally dispersed population of the United States could link its manufacturing centers with consumers by utilizing wholesale networks. Clothing, furniture, and other dry goods produced in major cities were linked to smaller retail stores across the country by networks of wholesale merchants.

After two decades of expansion, Grether & Grether commissioned architect John Montgomery Cooper to design a mercantile building near their existing offices at 752 S. Los Angeles Street, in the heart of the manufacturing district of Los Angeles.¹⁰ The Grether & Grether firm strategically chose a location amidst manufacturing buildings and in the center of a growing industrial area, demonstrating the close relationship between production and sales in Los Angeles at the time. The site for the Grether & Grether Building was surrounded on three sides by manufacturing buildings built by the M.J. Connell Company between 1911 and 1917.¹¹ When the firm occupied its eponymous building at 730-732 S. Los Angeles Street in January 1925, its wholesale merchandise included draperies, rugs, bedding, and linens, most of which was likely manufactured in nearby industrial buildings.¹²

The Grether & Grether Building functioned primarily as a flexible space for retail, offices, manufacturing, and wholesale storage. The tenants listed at the building in the Los Angeles City Directories for 1926 and 1938 included garment manufacturers, wholesale dry goods merchants, manufacturers' agents, importers, and sales people. The majority of firms in the manufacturing district produced machine parts, paint, furniture, and household goods.¹³ The tenants of the Grether & Grether Building represented this variety of dry goods-related industries, small machinery manufacturing, and sales occupations.

Among the tenants were branches of national firms, including agents for the Marshall Field & Co. department store in Chicago and Dun & Bradstreet, which evolved into a national credit rating agency. Lamson, a pneumatic tube supplier for the United States Postal Service, was also a tenant through the late 1930s. In addition, Daniel R. Hull and Gilbert Stanley Underwood, two prominent figures and collaborators in the development and planning of the western National Parks during the 1920s, occupied office space in the building from 1925 to 1928.¹⁴ The general composition of tenants at the building did not vary significantly over the building's first 20 years of use.

¹⁰ "Local Men Buy Tract on Coast," *Los Angeles Times*, December 27, 1923, I19.

¹¹ Teresa Grimes, "M.J. Connell Buildings 4, 5, & 6" *Historic-Cultural Monument Application*. (Los Angeles: Cultural Heritage Commission, 2002) 4.

¹² "Display Ad 40," *Los Angeles Times*, January 1, 1925, 25.

¹³ Hise, 79.

¹⁴ Linda Flint McClelland, *Presenting Nature: The Historic Landscape Design of the National Park Service 1916-1942* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1993), part iv.; "Gilbert Stanley Underwood," ahd1045846. *The AIA Membership Directory, 1927-1928*. Washington, DC: The American Institute of Architects Archives. The exact location of the Hull and Underwood offices in the Grether & Grether Building could not be determined; however, no original features of the interior offices in the building remained intact from the time Hull and Underwood occupied the building.

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Walter Grether was influential in growth and stability of the textile and dry goods manufacturing, merchandizing, and trading industries in Los Angeles from the 1920s through 1940s. He was the long-term president and one of the founders of the Wholesale Institute, an organization that grew to include 80 major wholesale merchants who promoted the manufacturing industry in Los Angeles through annual conventions for buyers during the 1930s and 1940s. The organization's first Los Angeles Market Week was held in 1934 and attracted over 5,000 buyers from around the country. Similar to modern "fashion weeks" in centers of garment design, wholesale market events showcased new merchandise and manufacturing capabilities to buyers, generating excitement for new products and advance orders for manufacturers.

Events at Market Week included fashion shows at the Biltmore Hotel, machinery and equipment expositions, and exhibits of furniture, pottery, and toys manufactured in Los Angeles.¹⁵ The Wholesale Institute events contributed to stability of the industry in Los Angeles during the Great Depression by guaranteeing future work through advance orders placed during conventions. The events also helped establish Los Angeles as a center of manufacturing in the United States by demonstrating local production capacities and capabilities to buyers nationwide. Market Week events were critically important to survival of manufacturing in Los Angeles, and the Great Depression-era stability of the industry created a base for later growth through World War II.

While a diversity of dry goods manufacturing had been located in the manufacturing district during its initial development, by the 1950s most manufacturers in the district were related to the textile and garment industries. In the mid-1950s, the Grether & Grether firm was purchased by the Rice-Stix Corporation, a national wholesale and dry goods manufacturing conglomerate based in St. Louis. It continued to operate as Grether & Grether at 730-732 S. Los Angeles Street until 1961.¹⁶ By the 1960s, tenants at the Grether & Grether Building were increasingly directly related to the garment industry as manufacturers or designers. This reflects the general trend within the manufacturing district southeast of downtown Los Angeles as it transitioned from a variety of industries to a concentrated center of garment production and, later, garment wholesaling and importing.

The attraction of the district for other industries faded as shipment of goods shifted from railroads to trucks and land for new factory buildings became scarce or cost prohibitive. The manufacturing district consists of a number of intact garment factory buildings that have been locally recognized for contributing to the historic development of manufacturing and the garment industry in Los Angeles.¹⁷

¹⁵ "Trade Week Inaugurated: Biltmore Floors Packed with 5000 Buyers to View Exhibits of Six-Day Event," *Los Angeles Times*, July 31, 1934, A1.

¹⁶ Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, *Los Angeles Street Address Directory*, March 1960.

¹⁷ These include: Maxfield Building, Textile Center Building, Garment Capitol Building, Gerry Building, Gray Building, M.J. Connell Buildings 1, 2, 3, & 7, and M.J. Connell Buildings 4, 5, & 6.

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Though the firm sold the Grether & Grether Building in 1932, it continued to occupy the building until the firm closed in 1961. The building passed through several owners until 1962, when it was purchased by a partnership of Jack and Annette Needleman, founders of Anjac Fashions, and Stanley Hirsh. Hirsh owned other garment manufacturing buildings in the area, including the Cooper Building (860 S. Los Angeles Street, built 1927) and served as president of the Jewish Federation Council of Los Angeles.¹⁸ Hirsh sold his interests in 1965 and Anjac was the sole owner of the building until 2007.

Jack Needleman and his wife Annette were co-founders of Anjac Fashion Company, a clothing manufacturing company they started in the early 1940s using a portmanteau of their first names. The Anjac firm owned many buildings in the manufacturing district that, partly due to their concentrated ownership and production of clothing, later became known as the Garment District.

The Grether & Grether Building is significant under Criterion A for its association with growth and development of the wholesale and manufacturing industries in Los Angeles. Walter Grether was heavily involved in growth of Los Angeles' manufacturing industry through his efforts to establish Los Angeles as a major center of manufacturing in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s. The building is also significant for its association with Los Angeles' development as a center of manufacturing in the first half of the twentieth century.

Criterion C: John M. Cooper-designed industrial loft building

The Grether & Grether Building is significant under Criterion C as an exceptional commercial and manufacturing loft type building designed by prolific local architect John Montgomery Cooper (1883-1950). The building exemplifies the distinguishing characteristics of an important property type for industry and commerce in Los Angeles during the 1920s and 1930s: the combined industrial loft, textile factory, and wholesale mercantile commercial building. A licensed architect who played an important role in the creation of factory building property types in the city, Cooper designed a variety of building types, and strongly influenced the aesthetic of industrial buildings in Los Angeles during the 1920s when he was the architect for a concentration of manufacturing and industrial loft buildings in the manufacturing district (later Garment District) southeast of downtown Los Angeles.

Cooper's designs typically used exposed concrete and cast stone in a variety of architectural styles. These materials shaped the industrial and commercial buildings of Los Angeles' manufacturing district in the 1920s. Completed at the end of 1924, the Grether & Grether Building is a rare example of a Beaux Arts-style design by Cooper and combines a decorative commercial-retail office aesthetic with the industrial character of a manufacturing loft type building.¹⁹ The open floor plan and spatial arrangements reflect technological changes in industrial design that resulted from use of reinforced concrete. The Grether & Grether Building period of significance under Criterion C is 1924, the year of its construction.

¹⁸ "Obituary; Stanley Hirsh; Led Jewish Journal," *Los Angeles Times*, March 29, 2003.

¹⁹ John Stingel, "Big Transactions Are Closed During Week," *Los Angeles Times*, December 30, 1923, V5.

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John Montgomery Cooper

Cooper was born in Dayton, Ohio and attended Yale University. After his studies, Cooper worked on the Panama Canal as an engineer. He moved to Los Angeles in 1910 and received his architectural license in 1913.²⁰ Shortly thereafter, he opened his first practice with architect Frank H. Webster in Long Beach, California, but the partnership dissolved in 1919. Cooper went on to establish his own company, the John M. Cooper Company, Inc., both an architectural and general contracting firm.²¹ During his career Cooper designed and often served as contractor of retail stores, industrial warehouses and factories, office buildings, theatres, hotels, religious buildings, civic buildings, educational institutions, and single-family residences. Cooper's designs ranged in style, including: Mediterranean Revival (Hotel Knickerbocker addition and Bakersfield's Padre Hotel); Art Deco (Roxie and Wilshire Theaters); commercial vernacular (San Diego Wholesale Terminal Market and Angelus Furniture Company); and Moderne (Pepperdine College's first campus on 78th Street and Vermont Avenue in south Los Angeles).²²

Between 1922 and 1930, Cooper designed over twenty industrial manufacturing buildings in Los Angeles, nine of which are known to be extant. Cooper's designs for industrial loft type buildings emphasized efficient and flexible floor plans and rapid construction techniques, with decorative elements limited to the ground floors and primary elevations. Concrete, used for its fireproof qualities, came to define Cooper's increasingly understated industrial aesthetic over the course of the 1920s. Cooper's manufacturing buildings were typically four to twelve stories tall (the height limit in Los Angeles at the time was twelve stories).

Early façades, like that of the Grether & Grether Building, were somewhat decorative with simplified Beaux-Arts elements, while later buildings had simplified Moderne elements. The interiors and secondary elevations were essentially the same, flexible industrial loft design characterized by an understated, utilitarian appearance. Interiors usually featured exposed concrete and open floor plans interrupted only by structural supports, usually mushroom-capped concrete columns. These flexible plans could accommodate large equipment or be divided for office functions.

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The Grether & Grether Building exemplifies the Cooper-designed industrial loft property type, and is distinguished from Cooper's other industrial buildings by its decorative Beaux-Arts façade with wood sash Chicago windows at the Los Angeles Street façade. In contrast, most of Cooper's designs feature large expanses of industrial steel sash windows on all elevations. The Grether & Grether Building's primary façade makes some concessions to cost, revealing its utilitarian nature. Painted cast stone ornament on the façade mimics more expensive terra cotta and natural stone cladding that was popular during the era. Only the primary façade has wood sash windows. It is likely that all non-manufacturing functions, such as office space, were concentrated in the front behind the bays of the building's west façade. Towards the rear, the

²⁰ "John M. Cooper, Noted Southland Architect, Dies," *Los Angeles Times*, May 29, 1950, A2.

²¹ Alan Michelson, "Cooper, John," *Pacific Coast Architecture Database*, <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/520/>.

²² Peter Moruzzi, "Supplemental Information: John M. Cooper, architect; Wilshire Theatre character defining features." Memorandum to Roxanne Tanemori, City of Santa Monica, January 8, 2008.

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building is entirely industrial in character on the exterior and interior. All secondary elevations have large expanses of steel sash industrial windows, allowing for the maximum amount of light to enter the building. The duplicitous commercial and industrial quality of the exterior elevations is an exceptional example of Cooper's work, incorporating the office and retail requirements of a mercantile building at its front façade and ground level with the industrial aesthetic of a manufacturing building at its rear elevation and upper floors.

The Grether & Grether Building is significant under Criterion C as an exemplary industrial loft building designed by John Montgomery Cooper, a notable architect and builder who specialized in designing and constructing industrial warehouses and factories. It is a rare combination of Cooper's signature utilitarian aesthetic and efficiency in design with an understated Beaux-Arts ornamentation.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: University of Southern California Library Special Collections

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 34.042341 Longitude: -118.251098

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Assessor Parcel No. 5145-002-001. The building occupies the full footprint of Lot "P" and "Arable Lot 1" of Tract No. 1489. The parallelogram shaped lot is approximately 95' by 149'. In addition, there is a right of way and easement over lots "B," "C," and "J" permitting vehicular access to the Grether & Grether Building basement.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary represents the parcel historically associated with the Grether & Grether Building.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Robert Chattel
organization: Chattel, Inc.
street & number: 13417 Ventura Blvd.
city or town: Sherman Oaks state: CA zip code: 91423
e-mail Robert@chattel.us
telephone: (818) 788-7954
date: August 2016

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Grether & Grether Building

City or Vicinity: Los Angeles

County: Los Angeles

State: California

Photographer: Robert Chattel

Date Photographed: July 27, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 42 Exterior view of west (front) façade, looking southeast
- 2 of 42 Detail view of parapet and Grether & Grether Inc. signage, looking southeast
- 3 of 42 Exterior view of west façade, looking south
- 4 of 42 Exterior view of west façade, looking east
- 5 of 42 Exterior view of east (rear) elevation, looking northwest
- 6 of 42 Exterior view of south and east (rear) elevations prior to start of certified rehabilitation in 2013, looking north

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- 7 of 42 Detail view of exterior sidewalk and Grether & Grether Inc. signage at northwest corner of lot, looking southwest
- 8 of 42 Interior view of basement, looking north
- 9 of 42 Interior view of basement and new vehicular opening, looking southeast
- 10 of 42 Interior view of first floor central entrance, looking southeast
- 11 of 42 Detail view of Grether & Grether Inc. emblem at first floor central entrance, looking southeast
- 12 of 42 Interior view of first floor framing for new storefronts, looking northeast
- 13 of 42 Interior view of first floor central high volume space, looking southeast
- 14 of 42 Interior view of first floor at central entrance, expanded second floor area visible above, looking northeast
- 15 of 42 Interior view of first floor central high volume space, looking west
- 16 of 42 Interior view of first floor split staircase accessing second floor, looking southeast
- 17 of 42 Interior view of second floor at new expanded floor area, looking west
- 18 of 42 Interior view of second floor across high volume space, looking northeast
- 19 of 42 Interior view of second floor across high volume space, looking east
- 20 of 42 Interior view of first and second floors from rear split staircase, looking northwest
- 21 of 42 Interior view of third floor corridor with new partition walls and existing mushroom-capped concrete column, looking northeast
- 22 of 42 Interior view of third floor elevator lobby, looking northwest
- 23 of 42 Interior view of third floor residential unit under construction, looking east
- 24 of 42 Exterior view of third floor multi-light steel sash window and opening for new door accessing patio space, looking west
- 25 of 42 Interior view of fourth floor corridor, looking southwest
- 26 of 42 Interior view of fourth floor corridor, looking east
- 27 of 42 Interior view of fourth floor along west façade, looking northwest
- 28 of 42 Interior view of fourth floor along west façade, looking southeast
- 29 of 42 Interior view of fourth floor along alley, looking east
- 30 of 42 Detail view of new balcony under construction at fourth floor along alley, looking northeast
- 31 of 42 Interior view of elevator lobby and trash chutes, looking southeast
- 32 of 42 Interior view of seventh floor along west façade with skylight above, looking northwest
- 33 of 42 Interior view of seventh floor skylight above unit, looking southeast
- 34 of 42 Interior view of seventh floor along west façade, looking northwest
- 35 of 42 Interior view of seventh floor corridor intersection, looking south
- 36 of 42 Interior view of seventh floor along south elevation, looking southwest
- 37 of 42 Interior view of window in stairwell at seventh floor, looking southeast
- 38 of 42 Interior view of stairwell at seventh floor, looking northwest
- 39 of 42 Exterior view of roof, looking west
- 40 of 42 Exterior view of roof, looking southwest
- 41 of 42 Exterior view of roof, looking east
- 42 of 42 Exterior view of roof and stair penthouse, looking southeast

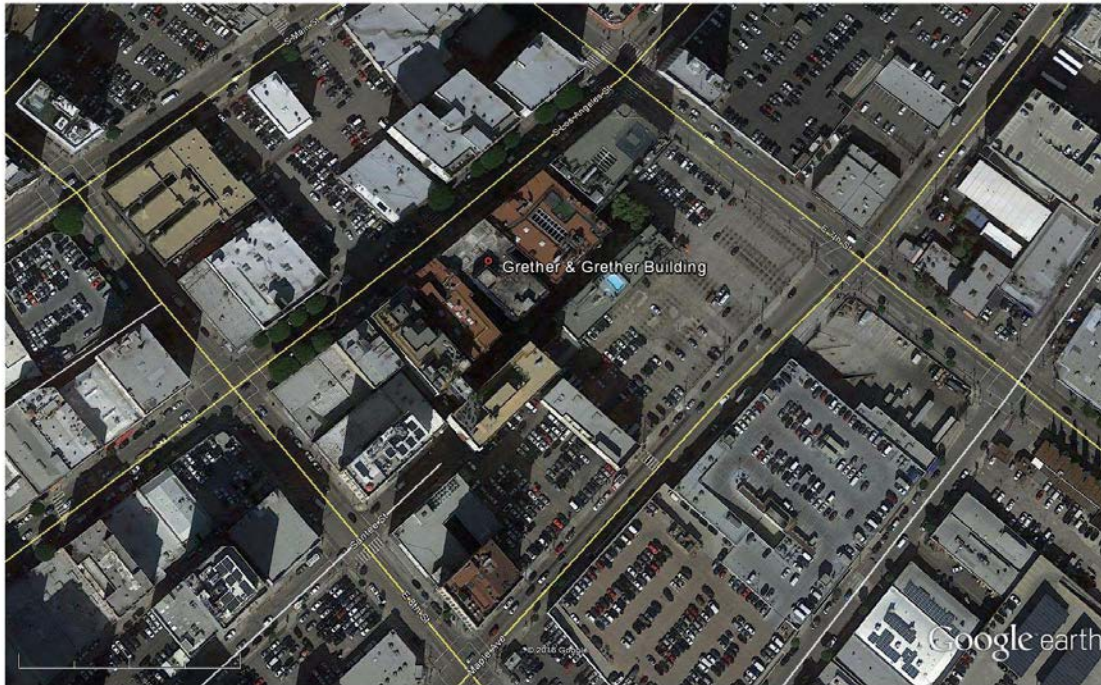
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Location Map

Latitude: 34.042341

Longitude: -118.251098



Google earth

feet 700
meters 200



	Grether & Grether Building 730 S. Los Angeles St. Coordinates: 34.042341°, -118.251098°
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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Photo Key 1 of 8: Exterior

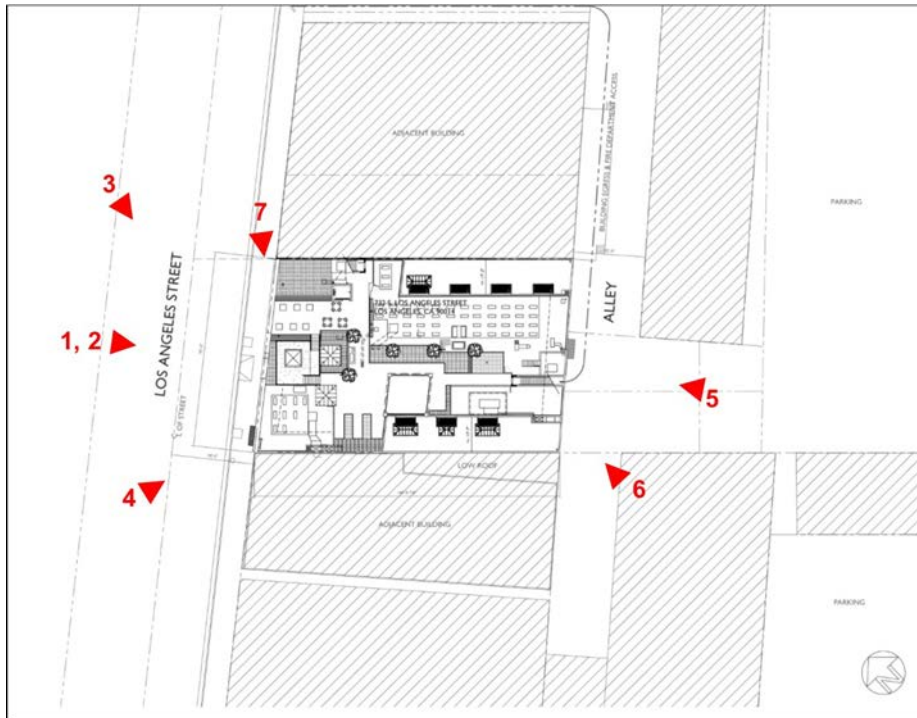
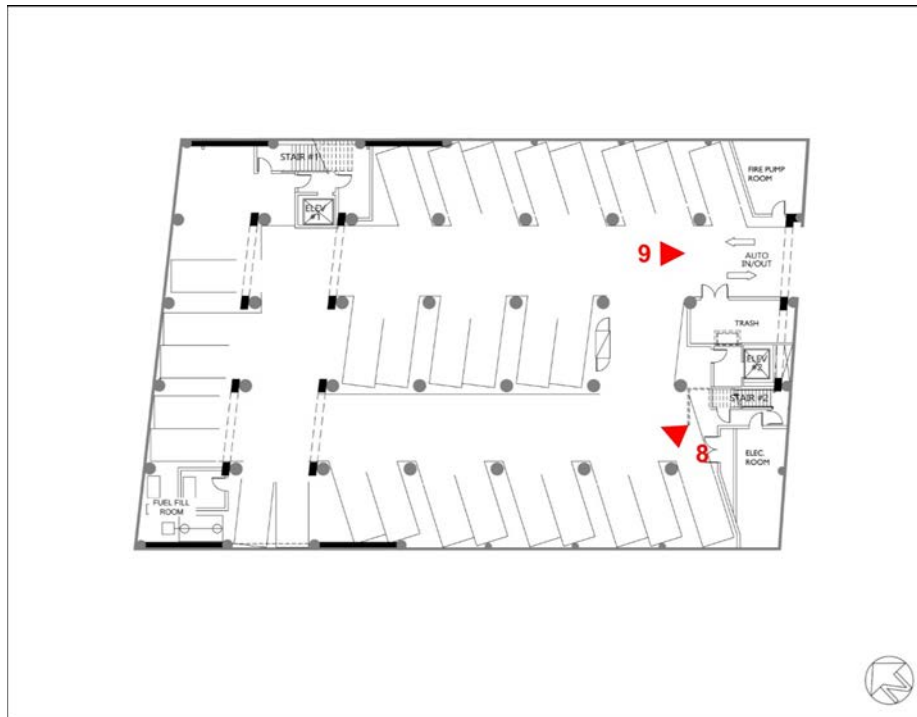


Photo Key 2 of 8: Basement



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Photo Key 3 of 8: First Floor

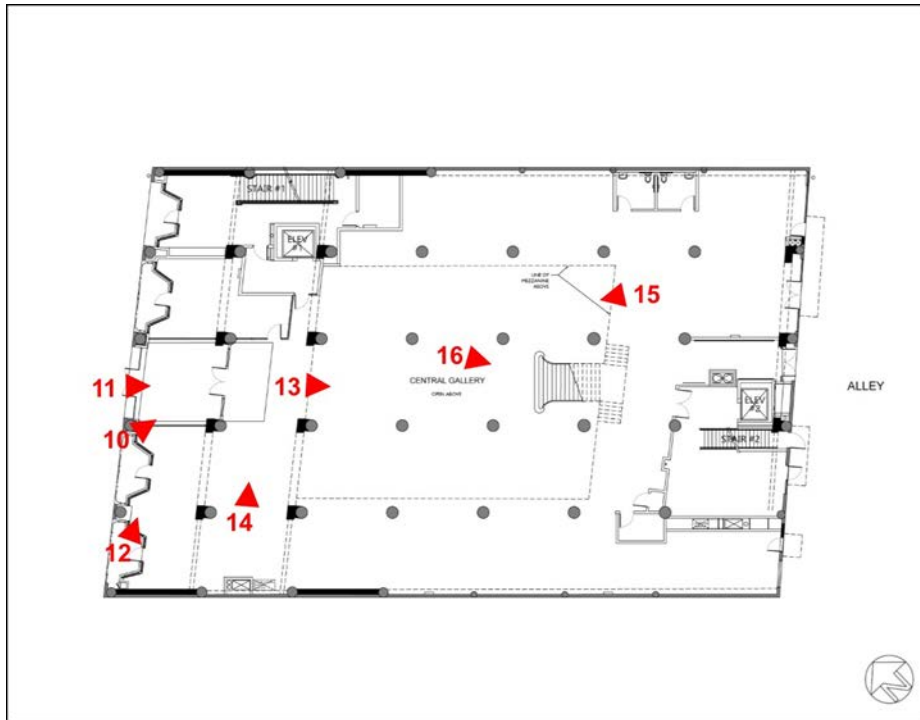
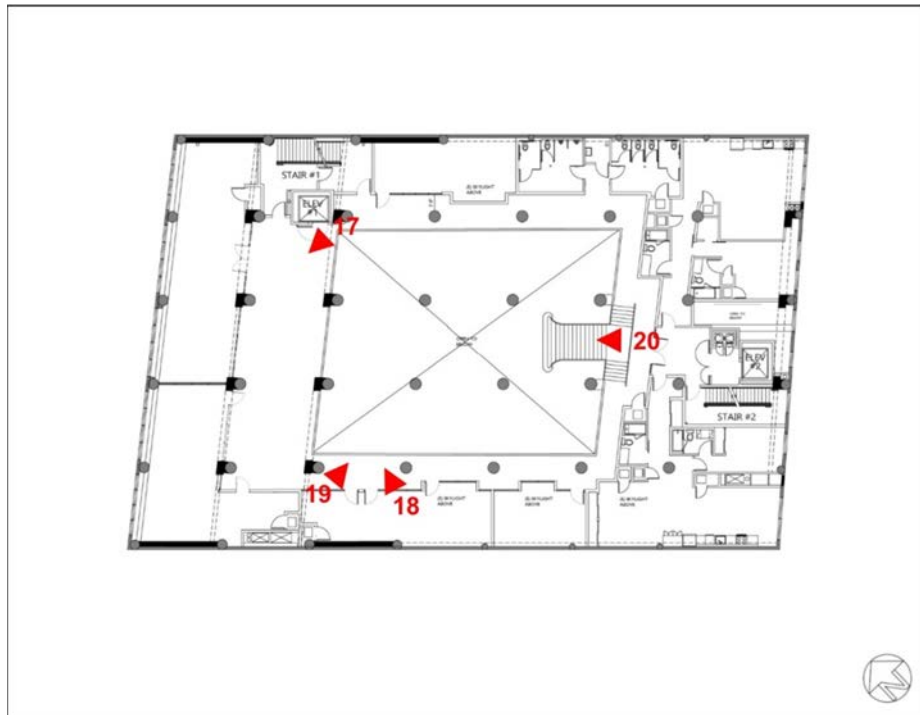


Photo Key 4 of 8: Second Floor



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Photo Key 5 of 8: Third Floor

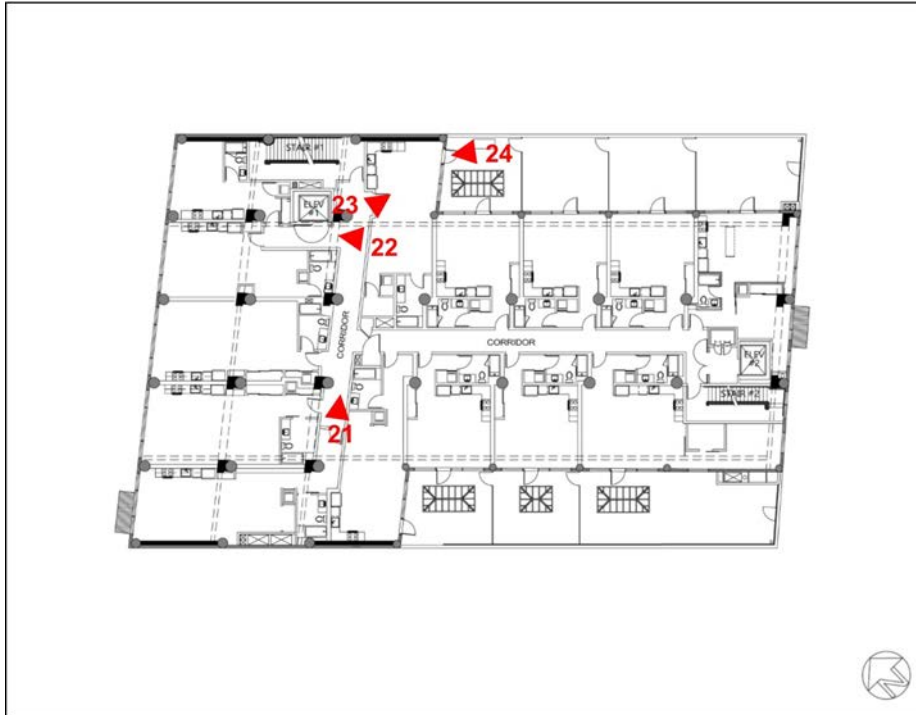
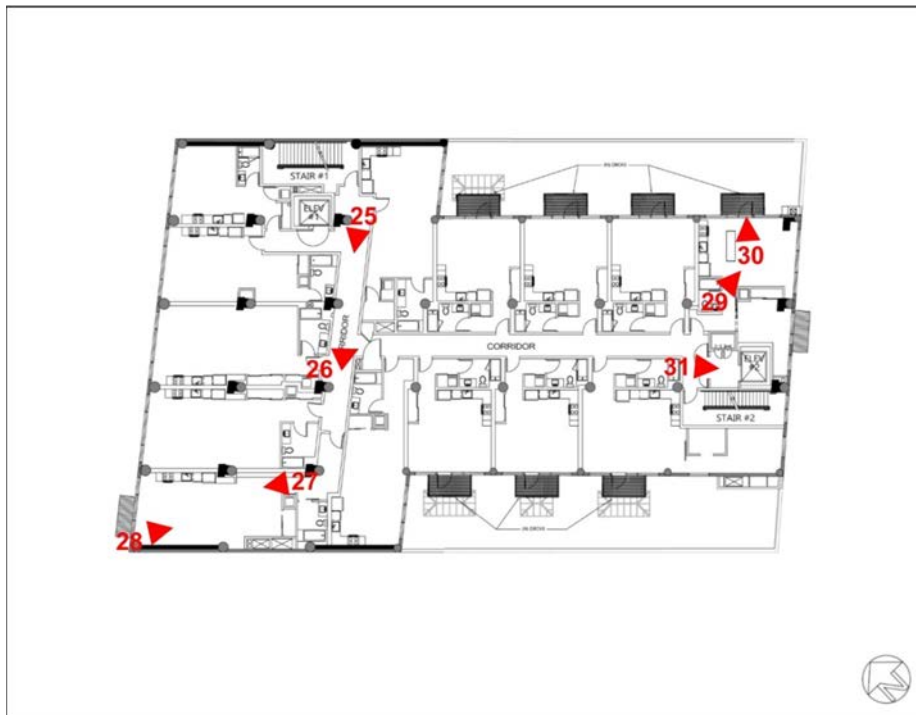


Photo Key 6 of 8: Fourth Floor



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Photo Key 7 of 8: Seventh Floor

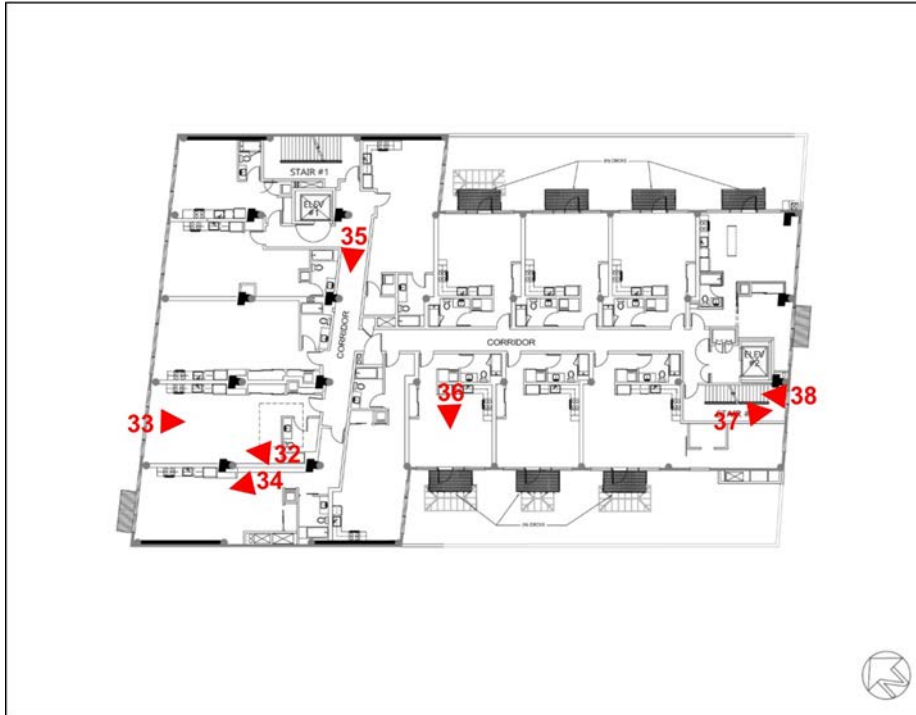


Photo Key 8 of 8: Roof



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Figure 1 Grether & Grether Building, Display Advertisement in *Los Angeles Times*, January 1, 1925.



Figure 2 View of S. Los Angeles Street between 7th Street and 8th Streets (Grether & Grether Building in center) 1926 (USC Libraries Special Collections)



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Figure 3 View of a section of the Industrial District looking southwest from Seventh Street and Santee Street (Grether & Grether Building to the right) c. 1926 (USC Libraries Special Collections)



Figure 4 Grether & Grether Building (rear and north elevations and rooftop) c. 1927 (USC Libraries Special Collections)



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Figure 5 Grether & Grether Building (facade and rooftop) c. 1927 (USC Libraries Special Collections)

