

**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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Prince Hall Masonic Temple

other names/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & number 1050 E. 50<sup>th</sup> Street N/A  not for publication

city or town Los Angeles N/A  vicinity

state California code CA county Los Angeles code 037 zip code 90011

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

California Office of Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the  
National Register  
 See continuation sheet.

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

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

### Name of related multiple property listing

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

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

### Historic Resources Associated with African Americans in Los Angeles

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL - Meeting Hall

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### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL - Meeting Hall

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN  
MOVEMENTS – Commercial Style

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### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

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roof Synthetic

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walls Brick

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other

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 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.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage - Black

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### Period of Significance

1926 - 1958

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### Significant Dates

1926 – Building Constructed

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### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

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### Architect/Builder

Unknown

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### Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

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## 10. Geographical Data

### Acreage of Property

Less than one acre

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	—	_____	_____	3	—	_____	_____
2	—	_____	_____	4	—	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Assessor Parcel Number 5108-015-005, which corresponds to the attached map.

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) The legal lot the building historically and currently occupies.

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Teresa Grimes

organization Christopher A. Joseph & Associates date 6/01/08

street & number 523 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1134 telephone (213) 417-4400

city or town Los Angeles state CA zip code 90014

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Prince Hall Masons Association

street & number 1050 E. 50<sup>th</sup> Street telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Los Angeles state CA zip code 90011

**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. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

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Prince Hall Masonic Temple  
Los Angeles, California

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**DESCRIPTION**

The Prince Hall Masonic Temple is located on the south side of East 50<sup>th</sup> Street in the City of Los Angeles. The building occupies its entire legal lot and has no landscaping. Single-family residences occupy the rest of the street. The two-story un-reinforced masonry building has a rectangular shape and a flat roof. It is very simple in design and almost appears to be commercial in use. It retains all aspects of integrity.

The street-facing (north) elevation is symmetrically organized and faced with medium brown brick. It is divided into three bays by pilasters. The middle bay contains the main entrance to the building. The main entrance is composed of a set of non-original slab doors flanked by narrow sidelights. Above the doors in a transom area is a painted sign that reads "Masonic Temple, 1050." A flat metal canopy extends over the main entrance. A metal blade sign is attached between the central and eastern bays. It reads "Prince Hall Masons."

A dark red brick is used to outline rectangular panels between the first and second stories and along the parapet. The same contrasting brick is used to delineate the pilasters as well as the sills and lintels. The only decorative element on the building is a simple cast stone capital near the top of the pilasters. The side bays have large multi-paned steel sash windows on the first and second stories. The same window type is found on the second story of the central bay as well.

The side and rear elevation are very utilitarian in design. They are faced with a soft-fired brick that has been painted. The windows are also multi-paned steel sash that are generally distributed evenly across the facades. Some of the window openings are smaller than others.

The only apparent exterior alteration appears to be the replacement of the front doors. The building permit records indicate a limited number of interior alterations. In 1941 a chimney and baring wall were removed and a steel I-beam was installed. In 1953 the rear doors were replaced and steps to the stage were added. In 1933 and 1971 earthquake damage was repaired.

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Prince Hall Masonic Temple  
Los Angeles, California

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**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Prince Hall Masonic Temple is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. It meets the registration requirements for club buildings outlined in the Multiple Property Documentation (MPD) Form for Historic Resources Associated with African Americans in Los Angeles. Constructed in 1926, the Prince Hall Masonic Temple is significant as one of two club buildings remaining in Los Angeles that were founded by and for African Americans.

Clubs and organizations played a significant role in the social history of black Angelenos. While some clubs were organized for purely social purposes, others worked to improve the lives of African Americans through charitable and political activities. The Order of Odd Fellows, Order of the Eastern Star, Order of Elks, and the Prince Hall Masons were “colored chapters” of national fraternal orders, while the Twelve Knights and Daughters of Tabor were founded by African Americans. The 1921 City Directory documents no less than 33 chapters of such fraternal orders. These orders promoted morality, charity, and community service among its membership.

On March 6, 1775 an African American named Prince Hall was made a Master Mason in Irish Constitution Military Lodge No. 441, along with 14 other African Americans. When the Military Lodge left the area, the African Americans were given the authority to meet as a lodge and conduct Masonic funerals, but not to confer degrees nor to do other Masonic work. These individuals applied for and obtained a Warrant for Charter from the Grand Lodge of England in 1784 and formed African Lodge #459. This led to a tradition of separate, predominantly African American jurisdictions in North America, which are known collectively as Prince Hall Freemasonry. Widespread racism and segregation in North America made it impossible for African Americans to join many mainstream lodges, and many mainstream Grand Lodges in North America refused to recognize as legitimate the Prince Hall Lodges and Prince Hall Masons in their territory.

In 1926 the black Masons of Los Angeles had constructed the Prince Hall Masonic Temple on 50<sup>th</sup> Street, just off South Central Avenue. They had been meeting at 1209 South Central Avenue, a building that was shared by numerous other societies and fraternal organizations. During the 1930s several chapters of the Order of the Eastern Star were also meeting at the Prince Hall Masonic Temple. The construction of the building reflects the movement of the African American community south along the Central Avenue corridor.

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Prince Hall Masonic Temple  
Los Angeles, California

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**REFERENCES**

Building Permits

Sanborn Map, 1950, vol. 4

Prince Hall Freemasonry, [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

Flamming, Douglas. *Bound for Freedom: Black Los Angeles in Jim Crow America*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

“Prince Hall Masonic Temple Improvement Association sponsored by members of Unity Temple Lodge #22, F & AM (colored masons) has filed articles of incorporation to erect new lodge hall,” *Southwest Builder & Contractor*, 11/13/1925, p. 58.

“Los Angeles Consistory Celebrates Annual Founder’s Day,” *Los Angeles Sentinel*, 11/7/1974, p. C5.

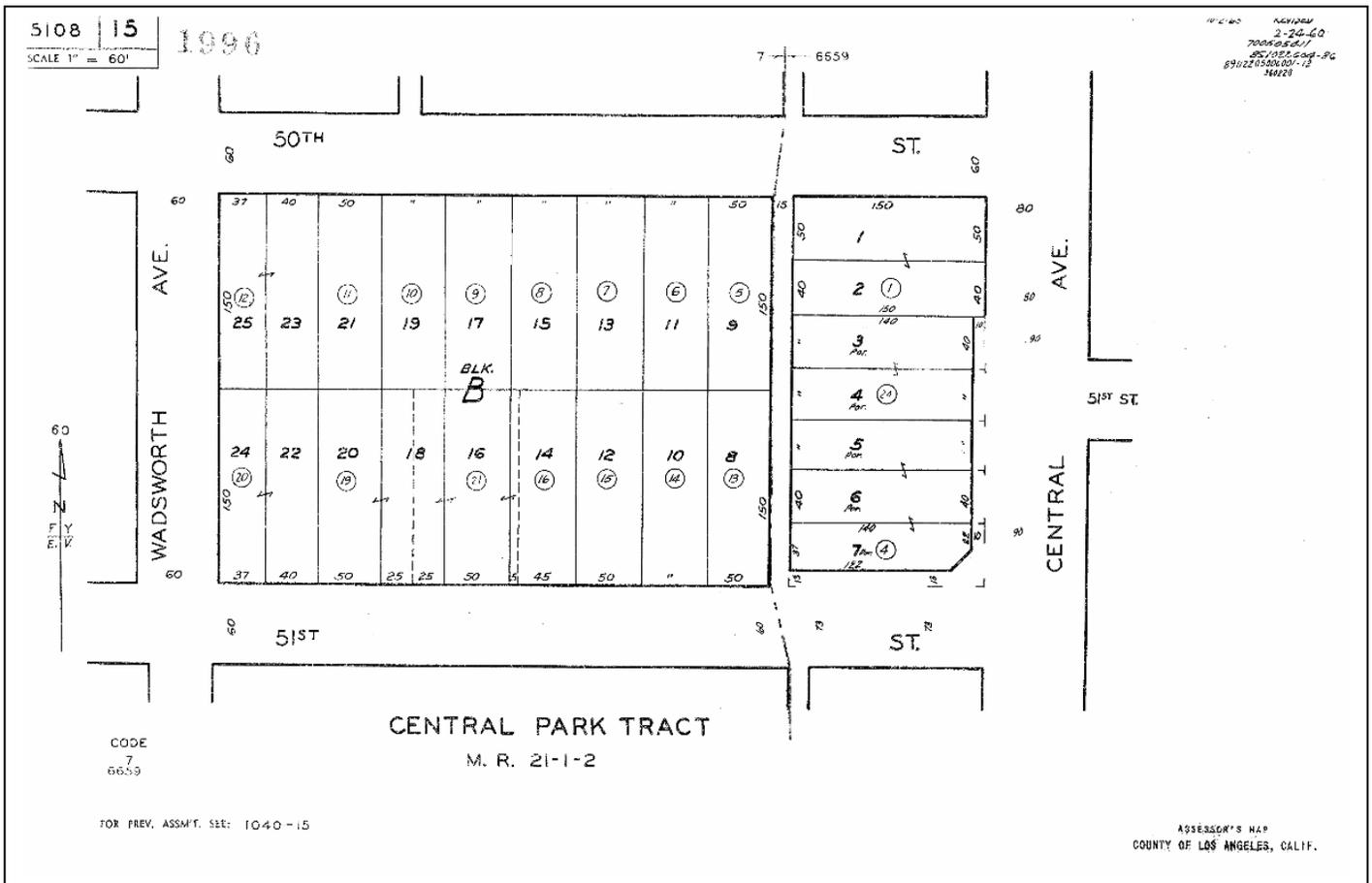
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Prince Hall Masonic Temple  
Los Angeles, California

SKETCH MAP



Property boundary outlined in bold  
Source: Los Angeles County Tax Assessor