

Tempe Historic Preservation Office Research Report

TEMPE MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Tempe Historic Property Register #46

Preliminary Determination of Eligibility

6-402 HPC Neighborhood Meeting

printed 12/01/2011 9:43 AM

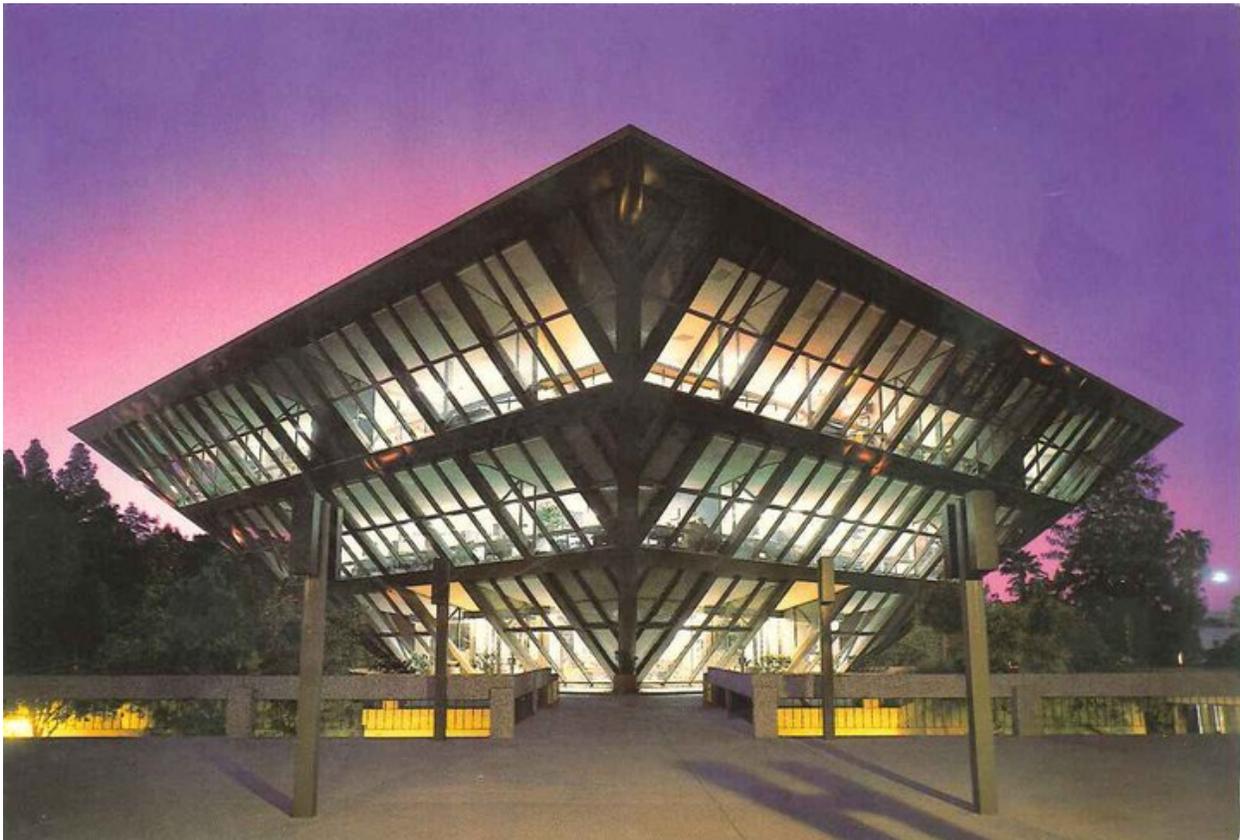


photo: City of Tempe

Designed as a “lantern to the city,” the landmark 1970 Tempe Municipal Building is a metaphor for openness and accessibility in municipal government and emblematic of a progressive community. The building is also significant as the most recognizable work of local Tempe Architect Michael Goodwin, as an early example of passive solar design, and as an uncommon example of the Mid-Century Modern style.¹ The property was classified *Historic Eligible* by the Tempe Historic Preservation Commission on 05/03/2001. In conveying that classification the commission noted the building is significant for its role in initiating a focused redevelopment effort to sustain the historic downtown core as the center of the community.

Upon completion of a nomination for historic property designation, staff shall compile and transmit to the commission a report on the property. Property research prepared for the neighborhood meeting addresses location, condition, age, significance and integrity of historic features and other relevant information along with a staff recommendation with respect to commission action on the nomination. This information is subsequently condensed to produce summary reports for public hearings. Research in this preliminary report develops the significance of the property in the context of Residential Architecture in Tempe, Arizona, 1940, and other relevant historic contexts.² The intent of this research is to inform an opinion of eligibility as the basis for a recommendation for historic designation. In preparing this preliminary determination of eligibility for consideration by the Commission, HPO finds this nomination to be complete and considers the historic 1970 Tempe Municipal Building to be eligible for historic designation and listing in the Tempe Historic Property Register.

Staff recommends that the Tempe Historic Preservation Commission reach consensus to hold a public hearing on January 12, 2012, to approve, deny, conditionally approve or continue this nomination.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Located on 5th street just east of Mill Avenue, Tempe Municipal Building was completed in 1970. The construction of this building incorporated the latest techniques of steel construction. Goodwin used the structural properties of steel to design an inverted pyramid structure. The building is centered on 2 ½ acres of land that combines the building with plazas, gardens, pedestrian bridges, and promenade decks to achieve a “center-of-the-city” effect. The site also contains a sunken courtyard space known as the “Garden Level” where additional office space is located. This sunken courtyard was designed to create an intimate feeling for its occupants when they walked into the space. The intention of inverting the glass pyramid was to keep the building cool in the summer months, and to allow for significant public space on a small site. The design strategy of passive solar cooling and heating was achieved by trapping heat in areas of the walls so it would radiate into the building in the winter months. In the summer months, the affect is slightly different. The building was turned forty-five degrees to the street grid to minimize glass exposure to direct sunlight. The glass is tinted with a sun-bronze tint, and in combination with the shade provided by the angled walls, it is estimated that only 18% of the sun’s heat permeates the building. The extensive amount of glass was desired by city officials so they could always have visual access to their surroundings. Tempe prides itself on being a “progressive, forward looking community” and the Tempe Municipal Building reinforces that statement with its bold form and advances in architectural technology.³

LOCATION

The Tempe Municipal Building is located in the heart of downtown Tempe at 31 East Fifth Street, between Mill and College Avenues, just north of the Arizona State University Tempe campus, and is the centerpiece of the Harry E. Mitchell Government Complex. The Tempe Municipal Building has become the symbolic center, not only of the downtown, but the entire community. Adjacent to the hustle and bustle of Mill Avenue, citizens of Tempe know this building as the “upside-down pyramid.” Its unique form has made it an iconic part of the downtown atmosphere. Although not quite 50 years old, its distinctive form, as well as its historical impact on the city, qualifies the Tempe Municipal Building to be designated as a local landmark.⁴

CONDITION

The Tempe Municipal Building is a prime example of the Mid-Century Modern style of commercial architecture in Tempe. The property has been well maintained over the last forty years. Despite several expansions and alterations all of its original materials have been preserved. Mature landscaping around the property is all well maintained and cared for. With additions of other buildings in and around the complex, the only deviations from the original site have been within the complex itself, where pathways and pedestrian bridges have either been changed or removed. This prime example of a modern style has been exceptionally maintained, guessing its age might prove difficult.

AGE

Tempe Municipal Building opened its doors to the public in 1971. According to the City of Tempe Historic Preservation ordinance (Tempe City Code Chapter 14 A-4 a) 3) the building may qualify for historic property designation and listing in the Tempe Historic Property Register as a historical landmark because it has “achieved significance within the past 50 years, expresses distinctive character worthy of preservation, and because it exceeds the criteria for designation as an historic property.” If so designated, in 2021, when the landmark becomes fifty (50) years old, it will automatically be reclassified as an historic property in accordance with ordinance provisions.⁵

SIGNIFICANCE

The Tempe Municipal Building derives significance from several important associations, including surviving as an example of the Mid-Century Modern architectural style. This significant style arrived in the Salt River Valley during the mid-1960s, when local architects ramped up efforts to reconcile the principles underlying architectural design with rapid technological advancement and the modernization of society.

One of these local architects was Tempe born Michael Goodwin who, along with his father Kemper Goodwin, took on the challenge of designing the Tempe Municipal Building. The Tempe Municipal Building would go on to become the heart of the downtown Tempe, and serve as a catalyst for revitalization for the rest of downtown. This building is also significant for its use of new technologies and design strategies. The Mid-Century Modern movement brought with it the use of the new material steel. Michael Goodwin’s cunning engineering of the steel to construct the upside down pyramid form was an early attempt at a passive solar design.⁶

INTEGRITY

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be listed in the Tempe Historic Property Register, a property must be significant under ordinance criteria and it must also possess sufficient integrity to communicate its significance to persons familiar with the property or to the community at large. The integrity of a property is evaluated according to aspects which must be present in different combinations depending on the criteria from which historic significance is derived.

The Tempe Municipal Building derives significance because of its association with the broad patterns of community development. Accordingly, (under NPS Criterion A) the property must maintain integrity of **location, materials, feeling** and **association** in order to convey its significance. In addition, the Tempe Municipal Building derives significance because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type of construction, represents the work of a master, possesses high artistic value, and represents a significant and distinguishable entity. Accordingly, (under NPS Criterion C) the property must maintain integrity of **design, workmanship, materials, and feeling** in order to convey its significance. As seen in the following discussion, the property exceeds these minimum requirements and retains more than adequate integrity to qualify for designation and listing.⁷

Location – Tempe Municipal Building exists on the site of the 1914 Tempe City Hall. When construction of a new city hall building was first being talked about, city officials were strongly considering moving it to a new location on the Rural Road and Southern Avenue to escape the deteriorating conditions of the downtown district. Architect Michael Goodwin thought otherwise and saw this as a challenge and a beginning for revitalization of downtown Tempe. Goodwin convinced officials to keep the location, and he designed a new building that sparked the beginning of the revitalization project for downtown Tempe.

Over the past 140 years, Tempe holds national, state, and local significance for its important role in the development of the Salt River Valley as a center of commerce and education, as a critical link in the transportation networks during the settlement of the territory, and for its associations with important political figures. Tempe's unique heritage is exemplified in its significant cultural architecture and infrastructure. These qualities exist today in the Tempe Municipal Building as well as the rest of the downtown area. The Tempe Municipal Building, located at 31 East Fifth Street, between Mill and College Avenues and forms the heart of the Harry E. Mitchell Government Complex in the historic core of downtown Tempe.

Design – Design is the composition of elements that constitute the form, plan, space, structure, and the style of a building. In many cases properties tend to change over time in order to more conveniently accommodate its occupants. In the case of the Tempe Municipal Building, the property has maintained its original design properties. The intent of Michael Goodwin was for this property to be the “center-of-the-city.” His original site plans incorporated these pathways that radiated out into the city from the building. These have since been modified to some extent to make room for adjacent new construction, but hints of them still exist. The Tempe Municipal Building received an award of merit from the Western Mountain Region of the American Institute of Architects in 1972.⁸

Goodwin designed the building as an upside down pyramid for two reasons. First, he wanted this building to become an icon for the city, which it certainly has. Programs within the building have been organized in a way that is convenient for the public to access, with the most public necessities towards the bottom of the pyramid and the more private spaces near the top. Second, the building functions a passive solar building because of the inverted pyramid. With the walls slanted at a forty-five degree angle, the roof becomes a shading structure for the entire building. In winter the building is engineered to trap the heat in order to warm interior spaces. In 2010, the Tempe Municipal Building received the 25 Year Award from the Arizona Society of the American Institute of Architects, in part for its innovations in sustainable design. These design aesthetics could not have been achieved without the influence of the Mid-Century Modern style that arrived in the Salt River Valley in the mid-1960s. This movement brought with it new ideas and technologies that made the design of the Tempe Municipal Building possible.⁹

Setting – Setting is the physical environment of a historic property that illustrates the character of the place. The property retains connections to the physical environment of its surroundings evident in the walkways and bridges that radiate outward into downtown in order to connect everything back to the city's center. The decision to keep city hall functions in the historic commercial core of the community overcomes temporal changes in the built surroundings of the Tempe Municipal Building and lies at the heart of concept of a setting. The hotel, the Police/Courts Building, the Transit Center, the parking garage, the Brickyard, and the 525 Building all came later, along with a wide variety of new commercial and office buildings in and around city hall. But these are the all in many ways the result of the continued existence of City Hall at the very heart of Downtown Tempe. A practical definition of setting in the context of the Tempe Municipal Building is simply at the heart of the community in the middle of the downtown commercial district that it helped preserve and perpetuate.

Materials – Materials are the physical elements used to construct a form or structure. In order for a property to be considered historic, the property must retain key exterior materials dating from the period of its historic significance. The Tempe Municipal Building continues to retain its key exterior elements in their original configuration.

Architect Michael Goodwin chose these materials that exemplify technologies characteristic of the Mid-Century Modern style. Use of steel members to construct the frame of the Tempe Municipal Building's structure was Goodwin's experimentation of the limits of the material. The Tempe Municipal Building was awarded a national U.S. Steel award for its innovative techniques in steel construction and a merit award from the Western Mountain Region of the American Institute of Architects.

Goodwin also implemented a new type of structural glazing system engineered to withstand weather changes and multiple structural forces encountered because of the forty-five degree angle of the walls. The lustrous exterior glass reflects light evenly and efficiently without glitter or sparkle and is representative of the state of the art of energy conserving glass, a nascent technology in 1971.

Workmanship – Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period of history. Workmanship is important because it can furnish evidence of the technology of the craft, illustrate the aesthetic principals of an historic period, and reveal individual, local, regional or national applications of both technological practices and aesthetic principals. Before construction had begun on the Tempe Municipal Building, a major stylistic shift in the architecture community had occurred. New construction materials and technologies were introduced to the United States in conjunction with the new stylistic approach that was known as Modern style Architecture which aimed to simplify the form of the building using clean lines and little ornament decoration. Architect Michael Goodwin was inspired by these new techniques along with the new advances in the technology of steel construction, and aimed to integrate these aesthetics into the Tempe Municipal Building design. The excellent workmanship and attention to detail is what gave this building its character. The use of steel construction gave Goodwin the ability to be able to orient the building as an upside down pyramid in order to minimize the solar impact on the building. These specific techniques would not have been achieved without the invention of these new technologies which aided Goodwin in his excellent workmanship of this iconic building.

Feeling – Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. This property expresses the aesthetic sense of its Mid-Century Modern era of significance. The variety of Modern style architecture produced during the mid-century throughout Central Arizona is, taken together, emblematic of that economic boom time. Goodwin's intent for this building was for it to have a "center-of-the-city" feel. Its unique form invokes curiosity in passersby, but it also has an inviting quality that radiates to the rest of the city. Since Tempe Municipal Building so eloquently retains its original design, materials, workmanship, and setting as described previously, it creates a sufficient feeling and special sense of place as an historic property.

Association – Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and an historic property. A property retains association if it is the place where the event or activity occurred and it is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. Like feeling, association requires the presence of physical features that convey a property's historic character. The Tempe Municipal Building's physical features relate closely to the features that made up the Mid-Century Modern architecture style; these features are what define this property as historic. The movement of this architectural style to the Salt River Valley was an important event in history. It helped to further establish the valley just like the new Municipal Building helped to further establish downtown Tempe.

Careful evaluation of integrity has been made to inform an opinion of eligibility based on guidance provided in National Register Bulletin 15 "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation". The landmark 1970 Tempe Municipal Building is significant for its role in initiating a focused redevelopment effort to sustain the historic downtown core as the center of the community. Designed as a "lantern to the city" the landmark property is a metaphor for openness and accessibility in municipal government and emblematic of a progressive community. The building is also significant as the most recognizable work of local Tempe Architect Michael Goodwin, as an early example of passive solar design, and as an uncommon example of the Mid-Century Modern style.¹⁰

HISTORIC CONTEXTS

To evaluate the historic significance of cultural resources and their eligibility for inclusion in historic property registers, a site or property must be understood within its interpretive contexts. The National Park Service provides the following guidance regarding significance, integrity, and eligibility based on consideration of historic context.

“To qualify for the National Register, a property must be significant; that is it must represent a significant part of history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture of an area, and it must have characteristics that make it a good representative of properties associated with that aspect of the past. The significance of an historic property can be judged and explained more completely when it is evaluated within its historic context. Historic contexts are those patterns themes or trends in history by which a specific occurrence, property, or site is understood and its meaning (and ultimately its significance) within prehistory or history is made clear.”¹¹

Community Planning & Development in Tempe, Arizona 1968-1970

Planning and construction of a new Tempe Municipal Building, which began in earnest in 1968 and concluded with opening the building in 1971, was one component of a comprehensive campaign to renovate and modernize the city’s facilities infrastructure financed through the sale of municipal bonds. Construction of the new city hall occurred simultaneously with development of a new cultural center campus on city land at Rural Road and Southern Avenue. Development of the cultural center introduced an alternative to locate the new city hall away from the downtown. This would become highly controversial. Likewise, the modern design of the Tempe Municipal Building distinguished it from contemporaneous facilities constructed by the city and became the subject of much consideration and criticism alongside ongoing debate surrounding where to locate traditional city hall services.¹²

Tempe was a small agricultural community through most of its history. After World War II, Tempe began growing at a rapid rate and soon the last of the farms disappeared. By 1970, Tempe had grown into a modern city and along with it; the teachers college had evolved into Arizona State University. Through annexation, Tempe’s corporate limits were rapidly expanding to the south both east and west until, by the early 70s, the city’s ultimate boundaries were established. During this period of rapid areal expansion the traditional downtown commercial core of the community lapsed into a period of disinvestment and deterioration. As downtown businesses followed their customers into the suburbs; the central business district, which had existed along Mill Avenue for almost 100 years began to transform itself into an automobile-oriented commercial strip, compromising both the historic integrity and the pedestrian character of the traditional downtown.¹³

Municipal services struggled to keep pace with the rapid growth of the community until, by 1968; the Tempe City Council faced a momentous decision. Prior to redevelopment, the 300-foot by 300-foot city hall site housed the city jail, the firehouse, the library, and the court, all in one 1920s building, with numerous eclectic additions and with additional City offices located in various nearby residences and converted commercial properties. The need for expanded City facilities was obvious, but debate centered on the location for a new city hall.¹⁴

Sentiments were divided between redevelopment of the tight downtown site or removal to a more geographically central location at the southwest corner of Rural Road and Southern Avenue; at the site of the planned new cultural complex on an expansive 22 acres. Centrally located and with ample parking provided in a park-like suburban setting, programming the new cultural complex soon sparked interest in relocating city hall out of the downtown. When the Mayor and Council considered options for a new municipal complex in 1968, some Council members, and not a few citizens, favored the Rural and Southern site, reasoning that the site was bigger and more conveniently located.¹⁵

Tempe's traditional downtown commercial center along Mill Avenue had been declining during the 1950s and 60s. What began as a disorderly adaptation of the Territorial era downtown to automobile-based commerce during the post WWII decade continued apace as the street increasingly dominated the sidewalk. Visual clutter was further compounded in 1959, when the Arizona Highway Department upgraded the status of Federal Highways US 60, US 70, US 80, US 89 and State Route 93 all of which crossed the Salt River on the Mill Avenue Bridge and were then routed through downtown Tempe. The associated program of right-of-way improvements and widening drastically altered the character of the central business district streetscape and building facades along Mill Avenue. Although targeted for redevelopment, opinions varied as to the appropriate method of redevelopment for downtown Tempe. Many community leaders touted the wholesale demolition and replacement tactics of "urban renewal" employed by many cities in the 1950s and 60s. Others favored a more hands-off approach to downtown redevelopment and Mill Avenue revitalization.¹⁶

In a Tempe Oral History Project interview U.S. Representative Harry E. Mitchell, who was on the Tempe City Council at the time, observed, *"It had gotten so bad and so low, people were embarrassed about downtown, even though it was an entry-way to the city, entry to the university. Most people tried to AVOID downtown, felt that it gave a very negative impact on the city - so most people just didn't care. Anything was better. In fact, the first, I would say probably the first redevelopment between Second Street and Third Street, where America West is now, that whole area, probably all the way over to Ash Avenue, was just bulldozed, and there was a sign put up, "Will build to suit." That was our first effort at urban renewal."*¹⁷

By the end of the 1960s, Urban Renewal had suffered widespread criticism for its adverse effects on economic intensification, social vivification, and preservation of community cultural resources in urban areas across the country. Even as planning for a new Municipal Building began, the wholesale demolition practices of Urban Renewal were changing into what would become a more place-based redevelopment strategy under the Community Development Block Grant program. For the time being, however, several more downtown historic buildings would be lost to demolition despite preservation efforts strengthened by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.¹⁸

The downtown site was selected to remain the location of city hall by the narrowest of margins. By a 4-3 vote, the decision was made to redevelop the original location thus setting in motion what was to become decades of reinvestment and focused redevelopment along Mill Avenue and throughout the district. Completion of the strikingly modern Municipal Building in 1970 symbolized a commitment by the City

Council to the revitalization of downtown Tempe and a desire to be seen as a progressive community. Tempe would go on to become a world-class showcase of downtown revitalization best-practices even as the Valley of the Sun would become the model for Modern style architecture in the midcentury era from 1945 to 1975. The design of the Tempe Municipal Building continues to reflect a progressive architectural identity which once helped send a message to the community about the city's commitment to the future of downtown.¹⁹

Spurred on by Tempe's centennial in 1971, Downtown Tempe, the Mill Avenue District, and Tempe Town Lake continued to be revitalized as an entertainment and shopping venue that attracts people from throughout the Valley and beyond. The commitment to downtown that began with the Tempe Municipal Building in 1971 was further bolstered in 1973 with the creation of the University-Hayden Butte Redevelopment Area and again in 1974 with participation in the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program. The center-city location of municipal government, selected by the City Council as a demonstration of confidence in the future of the downtown area, has come to represent the cornerstone of these downtown redevelopment efforts.²⁰

Now the centerpiece of the Harry E. Mitchell Government Complex, the Tempe Municipal Building is a unique pyramid of solar-bronzed glass and steel inverted in a sunken garden courtyard. Since opening in 1971, the Tempe Municipal Building has continued to provide a focal point for downtown redevelopment and a landmark for community building while supplying space for the growing community's city government. Aesthetics, accessibility, energy conservation, and expandability were the major components of its architectural concepts. The building provides maximum space without overpowering the available site in Tempe's compact central business district. The landmark building continues to exemplify progress in government and to have a timeless beauty compatible with ongoing redevelopment and reinvention of downtown Tempe. Certainly the Tempe Municipal Building meets the ordinance definition of a landmark, which is a property that "has achieved significance within the past fifty (50) years and which expresses a distinctive character worthy of preservation and which otherwise fulfills or exceeds the criteria for designation as an historic property."

Michael Goodwin, Architect 1939-2011

Tempe City Hall is significant under NPS Criterion C as the Work of a Master, noted long-time Tempe architect Michael Goodwin, who passed away May 9, 2011 at the age of 72.²¹ Along with his father Kemper, Michael Goodwin left an indelible mark upon the City of Tempe and the surrounding communities through his innovative architectural designs. Tempe's iconic upside-down pyramid arguably serves as Goodwin's greatest architectural accomplishment and provides a lasting vestige to the memory of a highly influential Tempe family. "He created stunning, striking works that were groundbreaking but practical for their environment," Tempe Mayor Hugh Hallman explained following Michael's recent death.²² Still another individual, commenting recently, noted that, "he was a visual artist whose structures weren't simply attractive and functional, but also a celebration of the land that surrounded them."²³

Born in 1939, Michael Goodwin was the son of prominent local architect Kemper Goodwin and the grandson of early Tempe businessman Garfield Goodwin. Kemper Goodwin was born in Tempe, Arizona on April 28, 1906 and received his architectural training at the University of Southern California. Although he received his architecture license in 1931, Kemper did not establish his own firm until 1945. Kemper's firm ultimately employed more than forty individuals and became one of the most prosperous in Arizona. He specialized in educational facilities and designed more than 200 such structures over a period spanning several decades. Their designs included several buildings on the Arizona State University campus: the Memorial Union; Wilson Hall; and the Mathematics Building, among several others. Kemper Goodwin retired in 1975 and passed ownership of the firm along to his son, Michael. Kemper died December 24, 1997.²⁴

Following in his father's footsteps, Michael left Tempe for a time in the early 1960s to attend USC, graduating from there with a degree in architecture in 1963. Following his graduation, Michael returned to his Arizona hometown and, in 1967, formed the architectural firm of Michael and Kemper Goodwin, Ltd. In addition to his work in architecture, Goodwin also became politically active, serving two terms in the Arizona House of Representatives in the 1970s (the first and only architect to serve in that capacity in the State of Arizona). As his work began to garner considerable attention among colleagues in his field he won the Arizona Architects' Medal in 1975 and, three years later, became the youngest person ever to be awarded the distinction of Fellow in the American Institute of Architects. The firm designed relatively few homes, concentrating instead on projects such as schools and government buildings.²⁵

In Tempe, Michael Goodwin designed several middle and high schools, including Marcos de Niza High School (1971) and Corona del Sol High School (1976). The former was considered to be revolutionary in design of an open-space campus, while the latter incorporated one of his earliest solar-based technological designs. Indeed many modern architects—and historians too, for that matter—acknowledge that Michael Goodwin's designs exuded a profound consciousness of the need to incorporate environmentally-friendly, or "green," components into buildings to make them both more practical for their surroundings and more sustainable in the long-term. Goodwin, according to one historian, "was doing all that before it was a movement. And what he was doing was simply being a responsible architect who didn't put his ego ahead of the building's intended function."²⁶

Michael Goodwin was also active in the Episcopal Church throughout much of his lifetime and was a founding member of the leadership group that brought the Cursillo Movement to the Episcopal Church in the 1970's. He served on the Vestry and in other leadership roles at St. Augustine's in Tempe; Church of the Epiphany and St. Columba Mission in Flagstaff; St. Stephen's in Phoenix; and, most recently, at Transfiguration in East Mesa.²⁷

Mid-Century Modern Architecture in the Salt River Valley, 1945 – 1975

Mid-century modern was one of the most prominent architectural styles of its time because of its impact on technological and stylistic advances. This architecture had a dramatic impact on the Salt River Valley. It has been noted as the only true attempt at creating a distinct Arizona architecture style. Mid-century modern style evolved from a coalescence of three types of modern design: Art deco, stripped classical, and streamlined modern. Although all have slight variations in modern techniques, they all aim to do one uniform thing: simplifying the building by removing ornamental details and incorporating crisp lines and curves. Mid-century modern was greatly influenced by the industrial design style that preceded it. It uses glass, concrete, and steel while also incorporating new technologies, materials, and methods to produce its own distinctive forms and geometries.²⁸

The Modern style originated in Europe by a group of master architects including Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier. Images of their works travelled overseas to the states and sparked the modern movement beginning with the famous exhibit in the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 1932. This movement was initially nicknamed the “International Style”. It rapidly spread through the nation after being featured in articles in popular magazines like *Better Homes and Gardens*. Overnight, architects were adopting these new ideas into their own work and structures began to go up that resembled the work of the European masters.²⁹

The Mid-Century Modern movement flourished for 30 years, between 1945 and 1975. During this time there were many local architects who created noteworthy works. Some of these include Al Beadle’s IBEW Union Hall, built in 1967 and James Flynn’s 1974 Vlassis Ruzow and Associates Office, both located in the Metro Phoenix area. These works were prominent examples of the incorporation of steel and glass construction. Another with great impact on the valley, even more so on the City of Tempe, was Michael Goodwin’s design for the Tempe Municipal Building.³⁰

In the mid 1960s, the City of Tempe was in a state of architectural turmoil. Buildings in the downtown area had been poorly maintained and city officials were to the point of relocating the city hall complex out of the downtown area. Architect, Michael Goodwin, intended this building to initiate the revitalization of downtown Tempe and it did become the catalyst for downtown revitalization. He envisioned the building as being the “lantern for the community.” Before the design phase started, Goodwin created the Tempe Redevelopment Committee who then convinced the city council to create the urban renewal program. This program used federal funds to acquire properties in the downtown area that they then assembled for redevelopment. Tempe Municipal Building was the start of that revitalization.³¹

Located on 5th street just east of Mill Avenue, Tempe Municipal Building was completed in 1970. The construction of this building incorporated the latest techniques of steel construction. Goodwin used the structural properties of steel to design an inverted pyramid structure. The building is centered on 2 ½ acres of land that combines the building with plazas, gardens, pedestrian bridges, and promenade decks to achieve a “center-of-the-city” effect. The site also contains a sunken courtyard space known as the “Garden Level” where additional office space is located. This sunken courtyard was designed to create an intimate feeling for its occupants when they walked into the

space. The intention of inverting the glass pyramid was to keep the building cool in the summer months, and to allow for significant public space on a small site. The design strategy of passive solar cooling and heating was achieved by trapping heat in areas of the walls so it would radiate into the building in the winter months. In the summer months, the affect is slightly different. The building was turned forty-five degrees to the street grid to minimize glass exposure to direct sunlight. The glass is tinted with a sun-bronze tint, and in combination with the shade provided by the angled walls, it is estimated that only 18% of the sun's heat permeates the building. The extensive amount of glass was desired by city officials so they could always have visual access to their surroundings. Tempe prides itself on being a "progressive, forward looking community" and the Tempe Municipal Building reinforces that statement with its bold form and advances in architectural technology.³²

The intent of this research is to inform an opinion of eligibility as the basis for a recommendation for historic designation. In preparing this preliminary determination of eligibility for consideration by the Commission, HPO finds this nomination to be complete and considers the historic 1970 Tempe Municipal Building to be eligible for historic designation and listing in the Tempe Historic Property Register.

Staff recommends that the Tempe Historic Preservation Commission reach consensus to hold a public hearing on January 12, 2012, to approve, deny, conditionally approve or continue this nomination.

ENDNOTES

³ City of Tempe Historic Preservation Office – Historic Eligible Properties List accessed 10/03/11 online at <http://www.tempe.gov/historicpres/HE-HistoricEligible/CityHall.html> “The Tempe Municipal Building was Classified Historic Eligible by Tempe HPC on 05/03/2001.”

⁵ City of Tempe, Tempe City Code Chapter 14A – Tempe Historic Preservation Ordinance, Ord. No. 95.35, 11-9-95; Ord. No. 2004.42, 1-20-05 accessed 12/01/2011 online at: <http://www.tempe.gov/citycode/14aHistoricPreservation.htm>

⁶ In Central Arizona, where want of a truly regional architectural expression has been a constant if unfruitful quest as throughout much of the American Southwest, the Modern style continues as a dominant architectural style for commercial, institutional, and corporate buildings today.

⁷ Garrison, James, 1999; Aspects of Integrity: Generalized Application [http://www.tempe.gov/historicpres/Centennial\[SampsonTupper\]House.html](http://www.tempe.gov/historicpres/Centennial[SampsonTupper]House.html) [State Historic Preservation Officer Jim Garrison created a matrix titled “Aspects of Integrity: Generalized Application” to illustrate how to evaluate the integrity of a property. This chart indicates those aspects of integrity that must be present for different property types to remain eligible. For example, to identify aspects necessary for a District to maintain eligibility under criteria C (Design/Construction) enter the chart criteria column at “C – Design/Construction” and move across to the property type column for “District”, to see that four of the seven aspects of integrity must be present to maintain the integrity of a district that has significance under criteria C, they are; Setting, Design, Feeling, and Materials. (see chart below)]

J. Garrison 1989

Aspects of Integrity: Generalized Application

Criteria	Property Types				
	Building	Distirct	Site	Structure	Object
A. Event/ History	Location Materials Feeling Association	Location Setting Feeling Association	Historic Location Setting Feeling Association	Location Materials Feeling Association	Materials Feeling Association
B. Person	Materials Feeling Association	Location Setting Materials	Historic Location Setting Association	Materials Feeling Association	Materials Feeling Association
C. Design/ Construction	Design Workmanship Materials Feeling	Setting Design Feeling Materials	Architectural Setting Design Feeling	Design Workmanship Materials Feeling	Design Workmanship Materials Feeling
D. Likely to Yeild/ Has Yeilded	Workmanship Materials	Location Materials	Archaeological Location Materials	Workmanship Materials	Workmanship Materials

Aspects of Integrity: Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, Association

⁸ Goodwin, Michael and Sam, 2002; Images and Insights: Reflections of an Architect. Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University.

⁹ (2009, September 27). Sustainable Design Honored at Architecture Awards. *Phoenix Business Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.bizjournals.com/phoenix/stories/2009/09/21/daily85.html?page=2> “At the Architecture Awards Gala in 2009, SRP awarded the Tempe Municipal Building their SRP Sustainability Award for its innovations in sustainable design.”

¹⁰ National Park Service Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/> “Comparative information is particularly important to consider when evaluating the integrity of a property that is a rare surviving example of its type. The property must have the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historic character or information. The rarity and poor condition, however, of other extant examples of the type may justify accepting a greater degree of alteration or fewer features, provided that enough of the property survives for it to be a significant resource.”

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² City of Tempe Planning Dept, 1966 “CIVIC CENTER DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT STUDY” Harry F Higgins, Planning Depa-rtment Director, Joseph L. Dwight, Arthur L. Livingston, William J. LoPiano, Harry E. Mitchell, Dorothy Cooper Nelson, Richard G. Neuheisel, A. P. “Rowd” Sanders, City Council, Ken MacDonald, City Manager. KARL CATALOG NUMBER 1999.2010.193

¹³ City of Tempe Community Development Dept, 2004 “3 Decades of Development: Tempe Downtown Redevelopment Guide” accessed 10/11/2011 online at <http://www.tempe.gov/3Decades/Intro.htm> “the Guide is an illustrated history of the rebirth and regeneration of downtown Tempe as the functional and symbolic heart of the community. It is intended that this Guide, in addition to chronicling Tempe's redevelopment efforts and plans to-date, will be a primer for future successes.”

¹⁴ Van Cleve Associates, 1966 “GENERAL PLAN 1967 COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROGRAM REPORT NUMBER 5 - COMMUNITY FACILITIES” One of ten planning studies prepared in creation of General Plan 1967: Schools - Recreation - Public Buildings: school planning factors - existing school systems & facilities - school planning - future school needs
KARL CATALOG NUMBER 1999.2035.143

¹⁵ Van Cleve Associates, 1967 “GENERAL PLAN 1967” This was Tempe's first general plan, adopted by the City Council on May 25, 1967. It contained specific elements with specific goals for future development of the city to the year 1985. It preceded State mandated statutes for municipal planning.
KARL CATALOG NUMBER 1999.2035.119

¹⁶ Sargent, Susan Riches 2002 “Main Street Meets Megastrip: Suburban Downtown Revitalization in Tempe, Arizona” Dissertation, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ“ p.118, quoting Dave Fackler, City of Tempe Redevelopment Supervisor 1979-2000: “loss of economic vitality, patterns of disinvestment, and conditions of deterioration, neglect, and blight ensued in the downtown after the mid-1960s as many owners of older buildings failed to maintain or update their properties.”

¹⁷ Mitchell, Harry 1992 “Oral History Interview Tempe History Museum, July 16, 1992” Interview Number: OH – 128 (Mark Klobas, Interviewer) accessed online 10/13/2011 at <http://tempethoughts.wordpress.com/2011/09/21/1992-oral-history-interview-with-harry-mitchell/>

¹⁸ US Congress, 1974 [24CFR570.3] Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 accessed on line 10/14/2011 at http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/rule_sandregs#laws “When Congress passed the Housing and Community Development (HCD) Act of 1974, it broke down the barriers of prevailing practice -- where under separate categorical programs, the Federal Government had made the decisions about every community development project undertaken by cities. The HCD Act departed from this model by creating the CDBG program. CDBG merged 7 categorical programs into a block of flexible community development funds distributed each year by a formula that considers population and measures of distress including poverty, age of housing, housing overcrowding, and growth lag. Grantees now determine what activities they will fund as long as certain requirements are met, including that each activity is eligible and will meet one of the three broad national objectives of the program.”

¹⁹ City of Tempe Community Development Dept, 2004 “3 Decades of Development: Tempe Downtown Redevelopment Guide” accessed 10/11/2011 online at <http://www.tempe.gov/3Decades/Intro.htm> “Ultimately, a strategy, proposed by a team of local architects, that called for the preservation of significant historic structures, combined with compatible new construction, was adopted. Public involvement, by utilization of federal funds, tax credits and deferrals, generation of master plans and development concepts, and implementation of capital improvement projects, proved essential to the success of the redevelopment process.”

²⁰ Library of Congress, American Memory, Historic American Building Survey number HABS AZ-142 accessed 10/13/2011 online at http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?hh:3:./temp/~ammem_08HM:: “Significance: The Tempe Municipal Building, erected in 1971, was designed to be a unique and innovative focal point, the purpose of which was to supply adequate space for the growing community's

city government. Aesthetics, accessibility, energy conservation, and expandability were the major components of its architectural concepts. In addition, the building was to provide maximum space without overpowering the available site -- near Tempe's Central business district. This particular location was selected by the City Council to show confidence in the downtown area; consequently, it was felt that the building should exemplify progress in government yet have a timeless beauty that would be compatible with future redevelopment.”

²¹ <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/azcentral/obituary.aspx?n=michael-kemper-goodwin&pid=150853683>

²² Arizona Republic, May 9, 2011.

²³ “Michael Goodwin’s Architecture Was Green Before the Movement,” by Robert L. Pela, in *Phoenix New Times*, May 19, 2011. <http://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/2011-05-19/culture/michael-goodwin-s-architecture-was-green-before-the-movement/>

²⁴ <http://lib.asu.edu/architecture/collections/goodwin>

²⁵ One of the more prominent historic residences designed by Kemper Goodwin in 1940 is the Selleh House, listed on the Tempe Historic Property Register. See <http://www.tempe.gov/historicpres/SellehHouse.html>

²⁶ Mark Funk, quoted in “Michael Goodwin’s Architecture Was Green Before the Movement,” by Robert L. Pela, in *Phoenix New Times*, May 19, 2011.

²⁷ <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/azcentral/obituary.aspx?n=michael-kemper-goodwin&pid=150853683>

²⁸ City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office and Ryden Architects, Inc.; 2010. *Midcentury Marvels: Commercial Architecture of Phoenix 1945 – 1975*. Phoenix, AZ: City of Phoenix

²⁹ City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office and Ryden Architects, Inc.; 2010. *Midcentury Marvels: Commercial Architecture of Phoenix 1945 – 1975*. Phoenix, AZ: City of Phoenix

³⁰ City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office and Ryden Architects, Inc.; 2010. *Midcentury Marvels: Commercial Architecture of Phoenix 1945 – 1975*. Phoenix, AZ: City of Phoenix

³¹ Goodwin, Michael and Sam, 2002; *Images and Insights: Reflections of an Architect*. Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University.

³² Goodwin, Michael and Sam, 2002; *Images and Insights: Reflections of an Architect*. Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University.