



Cultural Resources Technical Report
for the 937-945 F Street and
942 Fagan Alley Acquisition,
Demolition, and Construction of
Housing Project, Fresno,
Fresno County, California

DRAFT

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PREPARED FOR
City of Fresno

PREPARED BY
SWCA Environmental Consultants

**CULTURAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL REPORT FOR THE
937-945 F STREET AND 942 FAGAN ALLEY
ACQUISITION, DEMOLITION,
AND CONSTRUCTION OF HOUSING PROJECT,
FRESNO, FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

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Archaeological and other heritage resources can be damaged or destroyed through uncontrolled public disclosure of information regarding their location. This document contains sensitive information regarding the nature and location of archaeological sites, which should not be disclosed to the general public or unauthorized persons. This information is exempt from public disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act (California Code of Regulations Section 15120(d)).

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

Purpose and Scope: SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) was retained by the City of Fresno (the City) to provide cultural resources support for the 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley Acquisition and Demolition Project (project) located at 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley (Assessor's Parcel Number 467-074-02) near downtown Fresno, Fresno County, California. The subject property includes a two-story commercial block building fronting F Street, and a one-story commercial building fronting Fagan Alley (Figure 3). The subject property is located within the former Chinatown neighborhood of Fresno, which was been subject to numerous cultural resource studies to study and document both archaeological and built environment historical resources in the vicinity. The intent of this cultural resources inventory report is to identify potential cultural resources within and adjacent to the project area and, in turn, assist in the project's requirements to achieve California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance.

Dates of the Investigation: SWCA sent a records search request with a 0.25-mile buffer around the project area to the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) on July 12, 2024. The records search results (SSJVIC File No. 24-317) were received on July 24, 2024. Four previously recorded resources are within or include the project area. Of these, two are built environment properties, and two are districts. Resources P-10-005862 and P-10-005874 are historic-era buildings located at 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley, respectively. Resource P-10-004294 consists of the Fresno Nihonmachi/Fresno Chinatown area which encompasses the project area, and P-10-007206 is the buried component of the town of Fresno.

SWCA performed an intensive historical resources survey of the project area on July 22, 2024, documenting built environment features. Research related to relevant historic contexts and the evolution of the project area was conducted over July and August 2024. An archaeological survey of the project area was conducted on August 7, 2024. No archaeological resources, artifacts, or features were observed within the project area.

SWCA contacted the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on July 12, 2024, requesting a search of its Sacred Lands File for traditional cultural resources. SWCA sent letters to Native American contacts identified by the NAHC via email on August 1, 2024, and via post office on August 13, 2024. Follow-up telephone calls were made August 8 and August 13, 2024. Heather Airey, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer with the Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians noted that they do not typically deal with Fresno and defer to Table Mountain and that there are no concerns on behalf of the tribe. The remainder of the telephone calls went unanswered.

Investigation Constraints: There were no investigation constraints during this review.

Number and Types of Identified Cultural Resources: Preliminary investigations found that the subject building at 937-945 F Street was previously surveyed in 2006 and identified as a potential contributor to a locally eligible Chinatown Historic District. Similarly, the same survey found that the rear adjacent building on the property, addressed as 942 Fagan Alley, also was considered a contributor, in addition to being individually eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources and Fresno's Local Register of Historical Resources. The historical resources survey found that all properties have continued to be altered since the original documentation such that 942 Fagan Alley no longer exhibits sufficient integrity to qualify as an individual historic resource, and that the overall Chinatown Historic District has lost significant integrity, which was already noted as being diminished. Despite this, the neighborhood of Chinatown is noted as having potential intangible cultural significance and sensitivities, even though this is not currently reflected in the built environment or traditional historic resources under CEQA. The project area is also directly adjacent to an individual historic resource at 947-951 F Street, which has the potential to be physically impacted by demolition activities of the project. No resources

were identified during the August 7, 2024, intensive archaeological survey of the project area, although the area is noted as having heightened archaeological sensitivities.

Report Format: The format of this report follows *Archaeological Resource Management Reports (ARMR): Recommended Contents and Format* (California Office of Historic Preservation [OHP] 1990).

Conclusions: With implementation of conditions to monitor the potential physical alterations to the adjacent historical resource at 947-951 F Street, the creation of a Chinatown Cultural District overlay to address the intangible aspects of the neighborhoods cultural significance, archaeological monitoring of the basement demolition, and the execution of regulatory compliant measures related to the inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources and human remains, SWCA finds that the proposed project will have a less-than-significant impact on cultural resources under CEQA.

Recommendations: No cultural resources were noted on the ground surface during the intensive archaeological pedestrian survey. However, the possibility of encountering cultural resources during excavation remains. Because ground-disturbing activities would have a maximum depth of excavation up to 10 feet, SWCA recommends that a qualified archaeologist be present to monitor the demolition of the basement to identify any intact archaeological resources related to the historic Chinatown. If cultural materials are uncovered during project work, the Inadvertent Discovery procedures provided at the end of this report should be followed.

Disposition of Data: This report will be filed with the SSJVIC and San Luis Obispo, California, office of SWCA. Field notes, photographs, and records related to the current study are on file at SWCA's San Luis Obispo office.

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INTRODUCTION

SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) was retained by the City of Fresno (the City) to provide cultural resources support for the 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley Acquisition, Demolition, and Construction of Housing Project (project) located at 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley (Assessor's Parcel Number [APN] 467-074-02) near downtown Fresno, Fresno County, California (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The subject property includes a two-story commercial block building fronting F Street and a one-story commercial building fronting Fagan Alley (Figure 3). The subject property is located within the former Chinatown neighborhood of Fresno, which has been subject to numerous cultural resource studies to study and document both archaeological and built environment historical resources in the vicinity, particularly as part of the California High Speed Rail (HSR) project that is occurring only a few blocks east of the subject property. The property was also included in the 2006 *Chinatown Historic Resource Survey*, which was completed by Architectural Resources Group (ARG).

The purpose of the current study was to identify, evaluate, and record any cultural resources that may be present within the project area. SWCA archaeologist Brandon Foster, M.A., conducted the archaeological fieldwork for this project. To address historical resources, SWCA architectural historian Dan Herrick, M.H.C., visited the project area to document the existing conditions of the built environment, focusing primarily on the subject property addressed as 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley. Sections related to historical resources were authored by SWCA architectural historians Daniel Herrick, M.H.C. and Susan Zamudio-Gurrola, M.H.P. These efforts were carried out under the direction of and reviewed for quality assurance/quality control by SWCA Senior Project Manager Christina Alonso, M.A., RPA, Principal Cultural Resources Team Lead for Architectural History Garret Root, M.A., and Cultural Resources Principal Investigator Joshua Peabody, M.A., RPA, all of whom meet and exceed the requirements of the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) Professional Qualification Standards in their respective categories of Archaeology, History, and Architectural History (National Park Service [NPS] 1983). All work was completed to achieve California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance as it relates to cultural resources.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project entails the acquisition and demolition of two existing buildings located at 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley in the City of Fresno to allow for the construction of up to 100 new residential units and commercial space within a four-story mixed-use building. The project site consists of a 0.33-acre lot (APN 467-074-02) zoned Downtown Neighborhood (DTN). As per the legal description, this property consists of lots 3, 4, 5, and 6 in Block 38 of the Town (now City) of Fresno.

The project includes the acquisition and demolition of an existing 12,568-square-foot building that was originally constructed ca.1907 but continuously altered and added to over the following decades. Generally, the buildings are brick masonry construction, but feature a number of additions that feature a variety of material types. The buildings are generally unoccupied and are in poor condition overall.

Following acquisition and demolition activities, the project would construct a four-story mixed-use building consisting of up to 100 new residential units, which may consist of affordable and market rate housing units and commercial uses. The first floor would consist of commercial uses and the second through fourth floors would consist of residential units. The project would result in approximately 75 to 150 new residents depending on the final unit mix. Specific design plans are currently not available; however, the proposed project would be 60 feet in height and would include architecture and design materials consistent with the surrounding neighborhood.

Proposed construction activities would result in limited ground-disturbing activities associated with demolition of the existing building and future construction of the new mixed-use building. Ground-disturbing activities would have a maximum depth of excavation up to 10 feet for the demolition of the basement. Demolition of the existing buildings is expected to occur over a 30- to 60-day period beginning in mid-to-late 2025. Construction activities are expected to require the use of typical construction equipment for demolition. The subsequent construction of the new building is expected to occur over a two year period starting in early 2025. The exact staging area is not currently known, but is likely to occur within a nearby developed area.

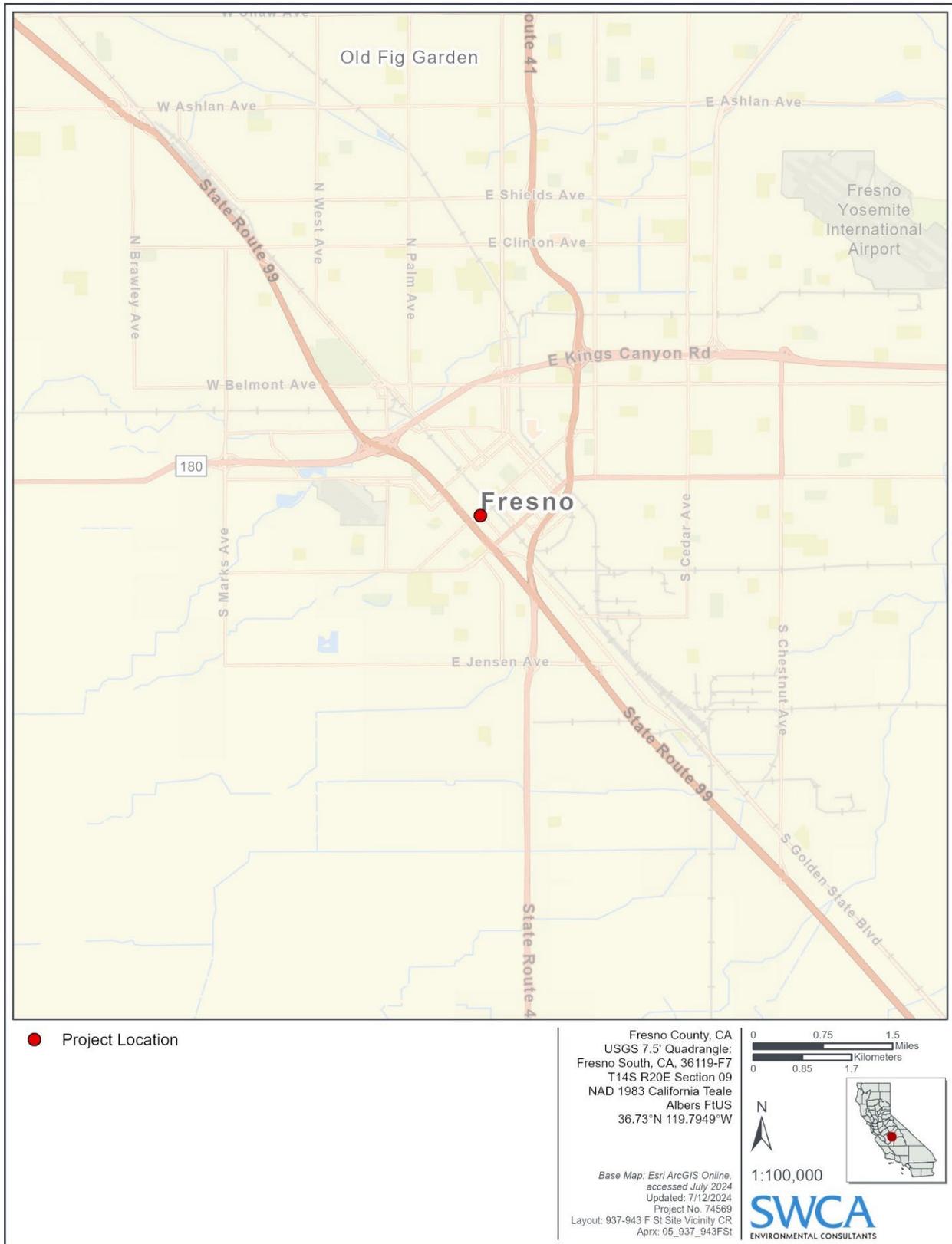


Figure 1. Project vicinity map.

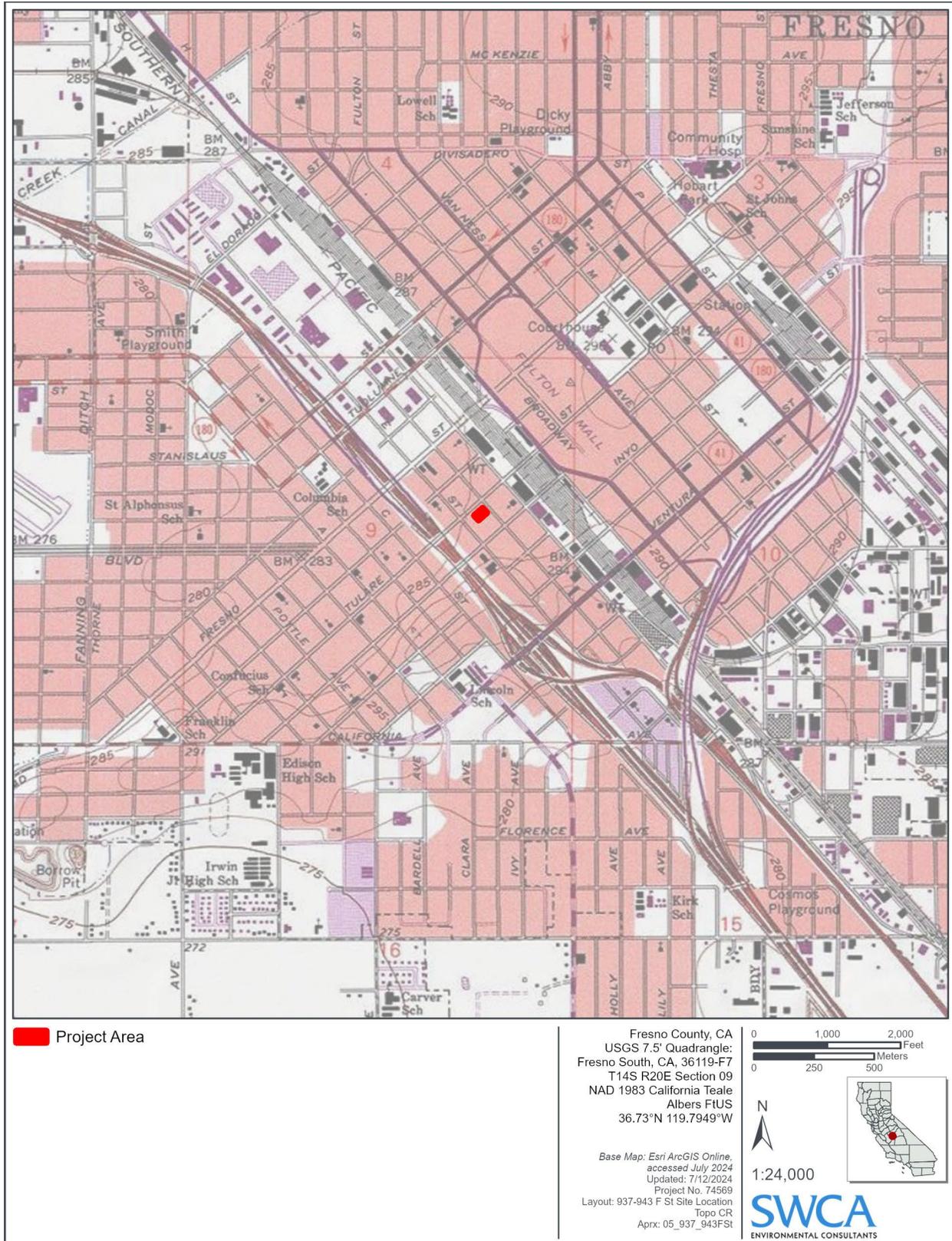


Figure 2. Project location map.

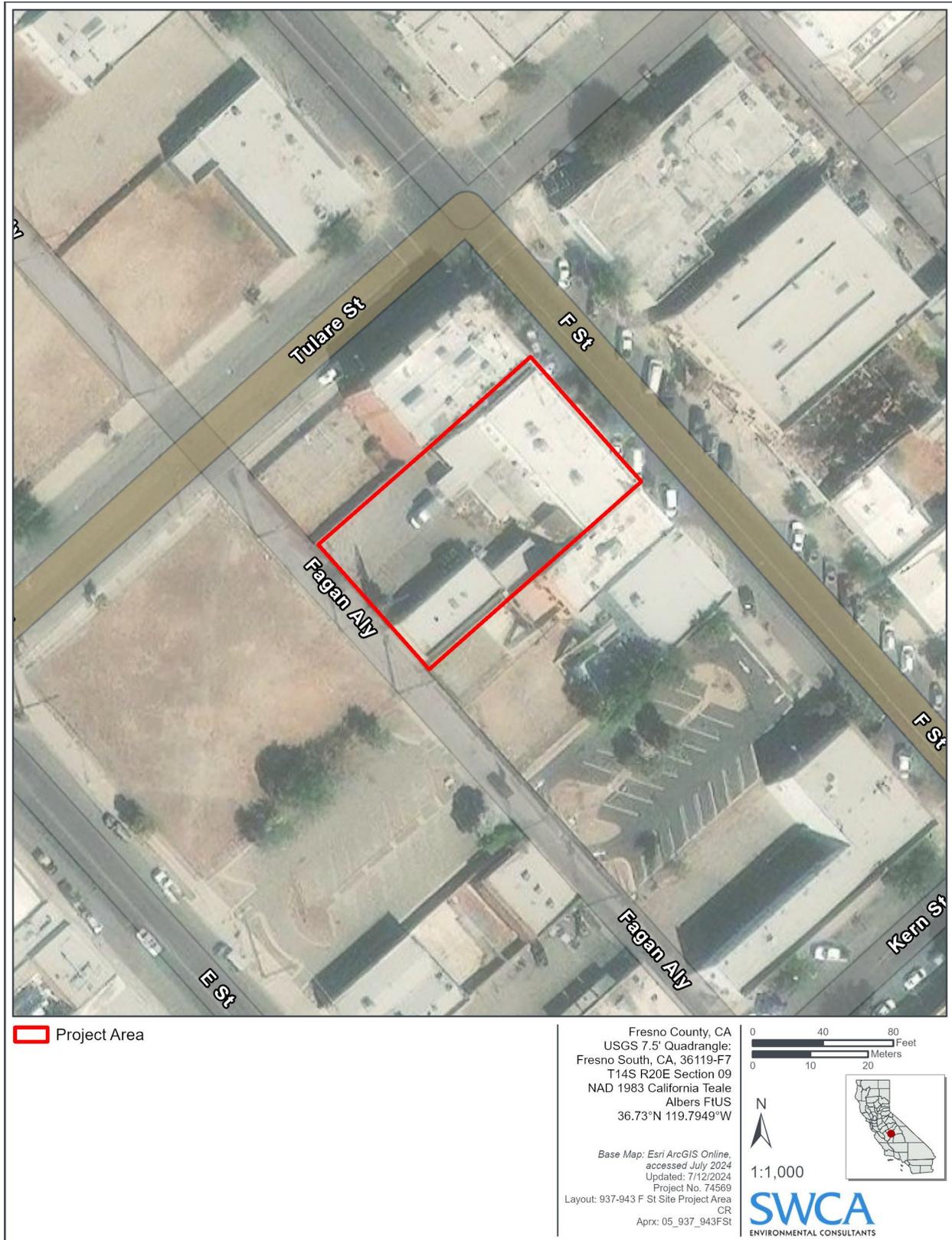


Figure 3. Project area map.

Current Historic Status

The subject property, containing buildings addressed as 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley, has been included within the study area of several previous cultural resource surveys that have been conducted to identify both archaeological and built environment historical resources.

The building at 937-945 F Street is not individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or the City’s Local Register of Historical Resources (LRHR) (NPS 2024; California Office of Historic Preservation [OHP] 2024; Historic Fresno 2020), nor is it on the City’s list of Heritage Properties (Historic Fresno 2019). In 2006, the building was documented as part of the *Chinatown Historic Resource Survey* and was not identified as individually eligible for listing in any of the above inventory programs (ARG 2006). However, the building at 937-945 F Street was identified as a contributor to a potential Chinatown historic district, discussed further below. The California OHP-prepared Built Environment Resources Directory (BERD) lists 937 F Street with a California Historical Resource Status Code 5D3, meaning it “appears to be a contributor to a district that appears eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation” (California OHP 2003).

The building at 942 Fagan Alley is not individually listed on the NRHP, the CRHR, or the City’s LRHR (NPS 2024; California OHP 2024; Historic Fresno 2020), nor is it on the City’s list of Heritage Properties (Historic Fresno 2019). In 2006, the building at 942 Fagan Alley was documented as part of the *Chinatown Historic Resource Survey* (ARG 2006) and was identified as eligible for the CRHR under Criterion C and for the City LRHR under Criterion iii as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type—worker housing in Chinatown. In addition, the building at 942 Fagan Alley was identified as a contributor to a potential Chinatown historic district, discussed further below. The building is listed on the BERD with a California Historical Resource Status Code 5B, meaning it is “locally significant both individually (listed, eligible, or appears eligible) and as a contributor to a district that is locally listed, designated, determined eligible or appears eligible through survey evaluation” (California OHP 2003).

The 2006 *Chinatown Historic Resource Survey* (ARG 2006) identified a potential Chinatown historic district which was found eligible under City “Criterion i” as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. At the time it was recorded, in 2006, it was noted that “The district is important for its representation of Fresno’s Chinatown and a new phase of growth after WWII [World War II]. Despite the modifications of some structures and vacant lots resulting from demolition, the district conveys a strong sense of time and place” (ARG 2006). Within the survey area, 17 properties were identified as contributors to the potential historic district—an area with irregular boundaries, roughly between Fagan Alley and China Alley, and between Tulare and Kern Streets (ARG 2006:12–14).

Methodology

To identify cultural resources and assess potential impacts under CEQA, SWCA architectural historians and archaeologists that meet the SOI’s Professional Qualification Standards prepared this report, which provides narrative description of the project area’s existing conditions, outlines relevant historic contexts, provides a summary of previous studies and pedestrian survey efforts, and includes an evaluation of historical significance for individual listing in the CRHR and City LRHR. This report presents the documentation and evaluation, as well as accompanying California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 series forms.

To inform this report, SWCA requested a records search of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) located at

California State University, Bakersfield. The search included previous cultural resource studies and records for archaeological and built environment resources within the project site and surrounding 0.25-mile area. The records search results were received on July 24, 2024.

SWCA also contacted the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and requested a search of the Sacred Lands File (SLF). On July 16, 2024, the NAHC responded, stating that the SLF search had produced negative results and provided a list of 18 Tribal representatives to contact. These letters provided a general project description, associated project location maps, and a request for additional information regarding potential cultural resources located within the project area. Of these 18 representatives, one—Shand Powers of the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe—had left their position, and the remaining 17 individuals were contacted via email on August 1, 2024. Additional follow-up efforts by SWCA included follow-up phone calls placed on August 8, 2024, and letters were mailed to 17 representatives via U.S. Postal Service—certified mail on August 13, 2024. The coordination effort by SWCA is in progress and will be updated with additional results as they are received. Of the phone calls placed, two phone lines were disconnected, one voice mailbox was full, and eight voicemail messages were left. Heather Airey, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians, They responded that the project was outside of the area of concern (Fresno) and that there are no concerns on behalf of the tribe; they also stated to defer to Table Mountain Rancheria.

On July 22, 2024, SWCA architectural historians performed a historical resources survey and documented existing conditions of the built environment using digital photography. The survey focused primarily on the exterior and architectural features of the buildings in the project area addressed as 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley, although photographs of interiors and the surrounding context were taken as well. On August 7, 2024, SWCA conducted a pedestrian survey of the subject property. During the survey, the property was documented extensively using digital photographs. The SWCA archaeologist walked the project area, performing boot scrapes in areas of exposed soils.

In preparing the contexts and property histories, SWCA reviewed property-specific historical information and ethnographic literature to identify relevant background for the project area and its historical inhabitants. Research focused on a variety of primary and secondary materials, including historical maps, aerial photographs, ethnographic reports, and technical reports prepared for the project. Sources and repositories consulted include the Bureau of Land Management General Land Office and the U.S. Geological Survey for historical topographic maps and geological surveys of the area, and a variety of online source materials, including the Online Archive of California, Newspapers.com, and Ancestry.com, among others.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This regulatory framework section identifies the state and local laws, statutes, guidelines, and regulations that govern the identification and treatment of cultural resources, as well as the analysis of potential impacts to cultural resources. The lead agency must consider the provisions and requirements of this regulatory framework when rendering decisions on projects that have the potential to affect cultural resources.

State Regulations

The California OHP, a division of the DPR, is responsible for performing the duties described in the California Public Resources Code (PRC) and maintaining the CRHR. The state-level regulatory framework also includes CEQA, which requires the identification and mitigation of substantial adverse impacts that may affect the significance of eligible historical and archaeological resources.

California Environmental Quality Act

CEQA requires a lead agency to analyze whether historical and/or archaeological resources may be adversely affected by a proposed project. Under CEQA, a “project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment” (PRC Section 21084.1). Answering this question is a two-part process: first, the determination must be made as to whether the proposed project involves cultural resources. Second, if cultural resources are present, the proposed project must be analyzed for a potential “substantial adverse change in the significance” of the resource.

HISTORICAL RESOURCES

According to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, for the purposes of CEQA, historical resources are as follows:

- A resource listed in, or formally determined eligible...for listing in the CRHR (PRC Section 5024.1; Title 14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 4850 et seq.).
- A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k), or identified as significant in a historic resources survey meeting the requirements of Section PRC 5024.1(g).
- Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that the lead agency determines to be eligible for national, state, or local landmark listing; generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be historically significant (and therefore a historic resource under CEQA) if the resource meets the criteria for listing in the CRHR (as defined in PRC Section 5024.1; 14 CCR Section 4852).

Resources nominated to the CRHR must retain enough of their historic character or appearance to convey the reasons for their significance. Resources whose historic integrity (as defined above) does not meet the NRHP criteria may still be eligible for listing in the CRHR.

According to CEQA, the fact that a resource is not listed in or determined eligible for listing in the CRHR or is not included in a local register or survey shall not preclude the lead agency from determining that the resource may be a historical resource (PRC Section 5024.1). Pursuant to CEQA, a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource may have a significant effect on the environment (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)).

Substantial Adverse Change and Indirect Impacts to Historical Resources

The State CEQA Guidelines specify that a “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired” (Section 15064.5). Material impairment occurs when a project alters in an adverse manner or demolishes “those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion” or eligibility for inclusion in the NRHP, the CRHR, or a local register. In addition, pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2, the “direct and indirect significant effects of the project on the environment shall be clearly identified and described, giving due consideration to both the short-term and long-term effects.”

Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, study of a project under CEQA requires consideration of “the whole of an action, which has the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the

environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.” State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(d) further defines direct and indirect impacts as follows:

- (1) A direct physical change in the environment is a physical change in the environment which is caused by and immediately related to the project.
- (2) An indirect physical change in the environment is a physical change in the environment, which is not immediately related to the project, but which is caused indirectly by the project. If a direct physical change in the environment in turn causes another change in the environment, then the other change is an indirect physical change in the environment.
- (3) An indirect physical change is to be considered only if that change is a reasonably foreseeable impact which may be caused by the project. A change which is speculative or unlikely to occur is not reasonably foreseeable.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

In terms of archaeological resources, PRC Section 21083.2(g) defines a “unique archaeological resource” as an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

- (1) Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.
- (2) Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
- (3) Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

If it can be demonstrated that a proposed project will cause damage to a unique archaeological resource, the lead agency may require that reasonable efforts be made to permit any or all of these resources to be preserved in place or left in an undisturbed state. To the extent that they cannot be left undisturbed, mitigation measures are required (PRC Sections 21083.2(a)–(c)). CEQA notes that, if an archaeological resource is neither a unique archaeological resource nor a historical resource, the effects of the project on those resources shall not be considered to be a significant effect on the environment (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(c)(4)).

California Register of Historical Resources

Created in 1992 and implemented in 1998, the CRHR is “an authoritative guide in California to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the state’s historical resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change” (PRC Sections 21083.2 and 21084.1). Certain properties, including those listed in or formally determined eligible for listing in the NRHP, and California Historical Landmarks numbered 770 and higher are automatically listed in the CRHR. Other properties recognized under the California Points of Historical Interest program, identified as significant in historical resources surveys, or designated by local landmarks programs may be nominated for listing in the CRHR. According to PRC Section 5024.1(c), a resource, either an individual property or a contributor to a historic district, may be listed in the CRHR if the State Historical Resources Commission determines that it meets one or more of the following criteria, which are modeled on NRHP criteria:

- **Criterion 1:** It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage.
- **Criterion 2:** It is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
- **Criterion 3:** It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
- **Criterion 4:** It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

As previously stated, resources nominated to the CRHR must retain enough of their historic character or appearance to convey the reasons for their significance, and resources whose historic integrity does not meet NRHP criteria may still be eligible for listing in the CRHR.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY BILL 52

Assembly Bill (AB) 52 of 2014 amended PRC Section 5097.94 and added PRC Sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2, and 21084.3.

Consultation with Native Americans

AB 52 establishes a formal consultation process for California tribes in the CEQA process, requiring the lead agency to initiate consultation with California Native American groups when a decision to undertake a project or determination that a project is complete (e.g., prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report), lead agencies are required to notify tribes who previously requested placement on the notification list. Such notification will be in writing and will include, at a minimum, a brief description of the project, lead agency contact information, and notice that receipt of the letter serves as the initiation of a 30-day comment/response period. Consultation will occur at the Tribe’s request, and mitigation measures agreed upon during this consultation will be included in the environmental documentation. Consultation may be considered concluded when parties agree to mitigation measures to avoid a significant effect on a Tribal Cultural Resource (see following subsection) or when, after a reasonable effort, a party, in good faith, determines that mutual agreement cannot be reached.

Tribal Cultural Resources

Section 4 of AB 52 adds Sections 21074(a) and (b) to the PRC, which address tribal cultural resources and cultural landscapes. Section 21074(a) defines tribal cultural resources as one of the following:

- (1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
 - (A) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources.
 - (B) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.
- (2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Section 1(a)(9) of AB 52 establishes that “a substantial adverse change to a tribal cultural resource has a significant effect on the environment.” Effects on tribal cultural resources should be considered under CEQA. Section 6 of AB 52 adds Section 21080.3.2 to the PRC, which states that parties may propose mitigation measures “capable of avoiding or substantially lessening potential significant impacts to a tribal cultural resource or alternatives that would avoid significant impacts to a tribal cultural resource.” Further, if a California Native American tribe requests consultation regarding project alternatives, mitigation measures, or significant effects to tribal cultural resources, the consultation shall include those topics (PRC Section 21080.3.2(a)). The environmental document and the mitigation monitoring and reporting program (where applicable) shall include any mitigation measures that are adopted (PRC Section 21082.3(a)).

Treatment of Human Remains

The disposition of burials falls first under the general prohibition on disturbing or removing human remains under California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. More specifically, remains suspected to be Native American are treated under CEQA at CCR Section 15064.5; PRC Section 5097.98 illustrates the process to be followed in the event that remains are discovered. If human remains are discovered during construction, no further disturbance to the site shall occur, and the County of Fresno (County) Coroner must be notified (CCR Section 15064.5 and PRC 5097.98).

Local Regulations

City of Fresno Historic Preservation Ordinance

Originally adopted in 1979, the City has continued to update and utilize its Historic Preservation Ordinance, which provides the framework for the preservation, promotion, and improvement of historic resources in the City. The City’s Historic Preservation Ordinance, as outlined under Chapter 12 Article 16 of the City’s Municipal Code, outlines the criteria and processes by which local historic resources and historic districts are determined eligible and listed in the LRHR; establishes the authority, framework, and responsibilities of the Historic Preservation Commission; and identifies review processes and procedures for projects related to historic resources throughout the City (Fresno Municipal Code Section 12-1600).

LOCAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

The City administers the LRHR, which is a designation and inventory program for historic resources within its boundaries. Per the definition outlined in the City’s Municipal Code Section 12-1603(o), a historic resource is defined as “any building, structure, object or site that has been in existence more than fifty years and possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and: is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, or is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, or 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 has yielded, or may be likely to yield, important information in prehistory or history; and has been designated as such by the Council pursuant to the provisions of this article.”

The eligibility criteria for listing in the LRHR parallels the criteria for both the NRHP and the CRHR. Specifically, the City requires a building, structure, object, or site to have been in existence more than 50 years, in addition to exhibiting historical significance under at least one of the following eligibility criteria (Fresno Municipal Code Section 12-1607(a)):

- i. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history;

- ii. It is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- iii. It 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
- iv. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

In addition to exhibiting historical significance and being constructed at least 50 years ago, a property must retain sufficient historical integrity to convey its overall significance. As with the NRHP and CRHR, aspects of integrity used for determining eligibility for listing on the LRHR include location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

If a building, structure, object or site has been in existence less than 50 years, it must meet the criteria of Subdivision 1 of Subsection a of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and be of exceptional importance within the appropriate historical context, local, state or national (Fresno Municipal Code Section 12-1607(a)(2)).

Local Historic Districts

Any finite group of resources (buildings, structures, objects or sites) may be designated as a Local Historic District if it meets the definition set forth in Section 12-1602 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance; its designation is consented to by a majority of the property owners within the Local Historic District; at least 50% of the resources within the proposed district are 50 years of age or older; and where the proposed district demonstrates significance under one or more of the following significance criteria:

1. It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, or architectural heritage, or
2. It is identified with a person or group that contributed significantly to the culture and development of the City, or
3. It embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship, or
4. Structures within the area exemplify a particular architectural style or way of life important to the City, or
5. The area is related to a designated historic resource or district in such a way that its preservation is essential to the integrity of the designated resource or Local Historic District, or
6. The area has potential for yielding information of archaeological interest (Fresno Municipal Code Article 16, Section 12-1607).

Any building, structure, object, or site may be designated as a Contributor to a Local Historic District if it contributes to the significance of the specific Historic District under the criteria set forth in the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Fresno Municipal Code Section 12-607(e)).

City of Fresno General Plan

The City's General Plan is the comprehensive planning document that outlines various goals, policies, priorities, and processes for guiding continued development in Fresno on both a short-term and long-term basis. The document addresses a multitude of topics, including the preservation of historic resources, which are specifically addressed under the Historic Preservation Element under Chapter 8. While this element identifies a number of goals and policies pertinent to the preservation of historic resources, the following are those most relevant to the current project (City of Fresno 2014):

HCR-2: Identify and preserve Fresno’s historic and cultural resources that reflect important cultural, social, economic, and architectural features so that residents will have a foundation upon which to measure and direct physical change.

- **Policy HCR 2-d, Native American Sites:** Work with local Native American tribes to protect recorded and unrecorded cultural and sacred sites, as required by State law, and educate developers and the community at large about the connections between Native American history and the environmental features that characterize the local landscape.
- **Policy HCR-2-f, Archaeological resources:** Consider State Office of Historic Preservation guidelines when establishing CEQA mitigation measures for archaeological resources.
- **Policy HCR 2-g, Demolition Review:** Review all demolition permits to determine if the resource scheduled for demolition is potentially eligible for listing on the [Local Register]. Consistent with the Historic Preservation Ordinance, refer potentially eligible resources to the Historic Preservation Commission and as appropriate to the City Council.
- **Policy HCR 2-k, City-Owned Resources:** Maintain all City-owned historic and cultural resources in a manner that is consistent with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, as appropriate.

Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan

The City’s Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan is a planning document that is focused on outlining the vision and long-term goals related to the revisitation of Fresno’s downtown core and the surrounding neighborhoods. The document addresses a number of topics related to land use and development, transportation, public infrastructure, parks, health and wellness, and cultural resources. Specifically, to cultural resources, relevant goals, objectives, and policies are outlined under Chapter 6 of this document and are tailored to preserving historic character, while also providing a framework for new development and rehabilitation. Policies pertaining to cultural resources within the Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan that are relevant to the current project include the following (City of Fresno 2016a):

Goal 6.1: Identify potential historic resources through context development, survey, evaluation, and designation.

- **6.1.1:** As resources become available, identify, document and promote all historic and cultural resources, and potential resources within the Downtown Neighborhoods.
- **6.1.4:** Incorporate knowledge of historic and potentially historic resources into planning and development.

Goal 6.2: Protect historic and cultural resources from demolition and inappropriate alterations.

- **6.2.1:** Preserve, rehabilitate, and reuse historic resources with materials and finishes consistent with their original design.
- **6.2.2:** as resources become available, protect the unique historic resources in each of Downtown Fresno’s planning areas as a means of enhancing the unique identity and character of each planning area.
- **6.2.4:** Discourage the demolition or inappropriate alteration of potential historic resources and encourage their appropriate renovation by providing guidance and incentives for rehabilitation and compatible alterations.

- **6.2.6:** Encourage salvaging of architectural elements that would otherwise be transported to landfills as a result of alterations or demolition.

Goal 6.3: Protect historic resources and their setting from incompatible new development within historically sensitive areas.

- **6.3.1:** As resources become available, preserve, rehabilitate, and reuse historic resources consistent with their original design.

Goal 6.5: Integrate historic preservation into the community and economic development strategies.

- **6.5.2:** use historic preservation as a basic tool for neighborhood improvements and community development.
- **6.5.3:** Engage community members and groups to gather information regarding historic resources.
- **6.5.4:** encourage maintenance of both designated and potential historic resources to help restore the character of neighborhoods.

Goal 6.6: Protect archaeological resources from the impacts of new development.

- **6.6.1:** Require that all mitigation measures for archaeological resources fully comply with the requirements of CEQA.

Fulton-Corridor Specific Plan

Adopted in 2016, the Fulton-Corridor Specific Plan is a planning document that outlines goals and policies specific to the future development of Downtown Fresno. Similar to the Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan, the Fulton-Corridor Specific Plan addresses several different topics, including the preservation of historic resources, which are outlined under Chapter 7 of the document. Those cultural resources goals and policies relevant to the project include the following (City of Fresno 2016b):

Goal 7-1: Identify historic and cultural resources through context development, survey, evaluation, and designation.

- **7-1-1:** Recognize that supporting existing local historic resources is critical to Downtown's future identity and character and contributes to Fresno's economic vitality goals.
- **7-1-2:** Prioritize the preservation of existing local historic resources when making decisions about development and improvement projects
- **7-1-7:** Maintain an effective dialogue with community members and groups about Downtown's significant and potentially significant resources.
- **7-1-9:** Require that all City-owned buildings determined eligible for listing on the Local, State, or National Register in a historic survey, as defined by Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(g), be preserved and timely and formally considered for designation as a Federal, State, or City historic resources pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Historic Preservation Ordinance as funds and resources are available.

Goal 7.2: Protect significant and potentially significant resources from demolition and inappropriate alterations.

- **7-2-2:** Discourage the demolition or inappropriate alteration of local and potential local historic resources and encourage their appropriate renovation by providing guidance and incentives for rehabilitation and compatible alterations.
- **7-2-3:** Encourage maintaining local historic resources and potential local historic resources in a manner that preserves the historic character of Downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods.

Goal 7-3: Encourage new development located adjacent to a significant resource to be compatible in scale, height, massing, and materials through application of the Development Code.

- **7-3-2:** Maintain the historic character of neighborhoods through the pattern of development, the size of buildings, and the spatial relationship of individual buildings to the street and to neighboring buildings.

Goal 7-5: Integrate historic preservation into the community and economic development strategies.

- **7-5-1:** Use historic preservation as a basic tool for neighborhood improvement and community development.

Goal 7-6: Protect archaeological resources from the impacts of new development.

- **7-6-1:** Require that all mitigation measures for archaeological resources fully comply with the requirements of CEQA.

PROJECT SETTING

Environmental Setting

The project area is located in the City of Fresno in the San Joaquin Valley, which comprises the southern portion of the greater Central Valley. The San Joaquin Valley is bounded by the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta to the north, Sierra Nevada to the east, Tehachapi Mountains to the south, and Pacific Coast Ranges to the west. The western slope of the Sierra Nevada is the primary source for rivers and streams that cross the San Joaquin Valley. The San Joaquin River, the largest in this portion of the San Joaquin Valley, is fed by three major tributaries: the Merced, Tuolumne, and Stanislaus rivers. Like much of the Central Valley, the San Joaquin River basin has been modified extensively for agricultural purposes (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA] Fisheries 2024).

The Central Valley is a sedimentary basin comprised of alluvial fill that exceeds 2,000 feet in thickness in some places. The soils in the Central Valley, especially its loam, are common and valuable for agricultural purposes, while its poorer soils are used primarily for grazing cattle. While much of the San Joaquin Valley was dominated by thousands of acres of marshland, little of that landscape remains after the valley was reclaimed for agricultural purposes (Peters et al. 2004:202, 205).

Like much of California, the San Joaquin Valley climate is Mediterranean in character, featuring hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters. The mean annual precipitation of this portion of the San Joaquin Valley is 9.6 inches (National Weather Service 2024). The wettest months are January and February, and the driest months are July and August. The mean annual temperature is 77 degrees Fahrenheit (°F), and the average minimum temperature is 51°F (U.S. Climate Data 2024).

The project site is in the southwest portion of Fresno within Chinatown and approximately 0.10 mile east of California State Route 99. Chinatown is a mixed-use, urban neighborhood featuring restaurants, shops, and other local businesses.

Cultural Setting

The following sections provide background for the cultural and historical contexts of the project area, including a synopsis of the archaeological record in the greater region, summary of available ethnographic literature and current status for tribal groups and native inhabitants of the region, and a summary of regional and local histories.

Precontact Overview

Despite decades of archaeological research in the San Joaquin Valley, the precontact period of the region remains poorly understood. A large body of literature is devoted to individual sites within the region, but for the most part it has not yet been synthesized. In addition, as Riddell (2002:95) suggested, up to 90 percent of all the sites in the southern San Joaquin Valley—including “most of the large, significant and important village sites”—have been destroyed by agricultural development and erosion. Nevertheless, archaeological assemblages within the San Joaquin Valley show significant variation, reflecting influences from both the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta area and southern California (Moratto 1984:185–189).

As is the case for archaeological research in many areas of California, the various classification schemes and chronologies used by researchers when addressing the prehistory of the Central Valley often conflict with one another. Most recently, Rosenthal et al. (2007) framed an overview of past research in the area by applying modern radiocarbon curves to Fredrickson’s (1973, 1974) period scheme. The following discussion is based on this revised chronological framework.

PALEOINDIAN PERIOD (11,500–8550 B.C.)

Human occupation in Central California dates to at least the terminal Pleistocene, or almost 12,000 years ago, and some of the most substantial evidence from this period has been found in the southern portion of the San Joaquin Valley. The primary time marker for sites dating to this period is the fluted and basally thinned projectile point, which appears to be limited to late Pleistocene and very early Holocene sites. Fluted points have traditionally been interpreted as tools used for hunting Pleistocene megafauna because of their clear association with megafaunal remains in the western United States. In the vicinity of the project area, fluted points have been collected from surface sites on the Pleistocene shores of Buena Vista, Kern, and Tulare Lakes.

LOWER ARCHAIC (CA. 8550–5550 B.C.)

Like the Paleoindian period, occupation of central California and the San Joaquin Valley during the Lower Archaic is largely evidenced by isolated finds, including large, heavy-stemmed points, which suggest subsistence during this period centered on hunting artiodactyls. One notable exception, site CA-KER-116, is located on the southwestern edge of Buena Vista Lake, south of the project area. CA-KER-116 yielded a deposit of deeply buried artifacts, including two large point fragments, three crescents, two knives, a human skull fragment, and a small faunal assemblage that included artiodactyls, freshwater fish, mussels, and waterfowl. Freshwater mussel shells produced radiocarbon dates ranging between 7175 and 6450 B.C. (Fredrickson and Grossman 1977; Hartzell 1992a).

MIDDLE ARCHAIC (CA. 5550 B.C.–A.D. 550)

Diet breadth gradually increased among Middle Archaic populations. Initially this diversification took the form of an increased emphasis on seed processing along with continued hunting and some fishing. Later, a shift to a greater reliance on acorns and pine nuts as a dietary staple is evidenced by an increase in bedrock mortars and pestles, which are better suited to crushing and grinding acorns, along with a decrease in hand stones and metates, which were used primarily for grinding wild grass grains and seeds (Moratto 1984:209–210). Cobble mortars also saw increased use during this period, as did wooden and hopper mortars. The frequent occurrence of dart points in Middle Archaic assemblages demonstrates that hunting remained an important dietary component.

This period also saw the establishment of trade networks for obsidian and shell beads, and major distribution trails appear to have passed through the southern San Joaquin Valley (Bennyhoff and Hughes 1987:155). Bone tools, such as awls, fish spear tips, saws, and flakers, also become prevalent during this period.

UPPER ARCHAIC (550 B.C.–A.D. 1100)

The Upper Archaic period is evidenced by a number of changes in subsistence, foraging, and land use patterns that begin to resemble those known from Historic-period Native American groups in the area. There was a substantial increase in the intensity of subsistence exploitation, including fishing, hunting, and gathering (particularly the acorn), that correlates directly with an increase in population growth during this period (Moratto 1984:211–214). Economies emphasized resources that could be harvested and processed in bulk, such as acorns, salmon, and shellfish (Rosenthal et al. 2007:156).

The period is characterized by shell beads and ornaments, stone beads, clamshell disk beads, tubular stone smoking pipes, and arrow-shaft straighteners. Shaped, flat-bottomed bowl mortars and cylindrical pestles are common. There is an increase in sedentism, accompanied by firm establishment of territorial boundaries, while networks of obsidian and shell bead exchange networks expanded.

EMERGENT PERIOD (A.D. 1000–CONTACT)

The Emergent period saw the solidification of the cultural traditions and technologies that are known from the ethnographic present. This period is marked by the introduction of the bow and arrow, which first appears in the Central Valley region between about A.D. 1000 and 1300. In the San Joaquin Valley, villages developed along many side streams of the foothills, as well as along the river channels at the valley's bottom (Rosenthal et al. 2007).

Emergent period material is present in the stratified deposits excavated at CA-KER-116. The assemblage includes baked clay objects, delicate triangular projectile points (used with the bow and arrow), bone tools, and bowl hopper mortars. Beads and ornaments are well represented and include disk *Olivella* beads, *Haliotis* beads and ornaments, and marine clamshell disk beads, as well as pendants and carvings made from steatite. Fredrickson (1986) estimates that the Emergent period deposit at CA-KER-116 dates between A.D. 1500 and historic contact.

Ethnography

SOUTHERN VALLEY YOKUTS

The current project area lies within the territory of the Southern Valley Yokuts. At the time of initial European contact, the Yokuts comprised 40 to 60 named subgroups, or tribelets, that inhabited all of the San Joaquin Valley and the foothills of the western slope of the Sierra Nevada (Arkush 1993:620).

Ethnographers have traditionally divided the Yokuts culture into Northern Valley, Southern Valley, and Foothills divisions, based on geography. The majority of the following information is excerpted from Wallace (1978), except where otherwise noted.

The territory of the Southern Valley Yokuts included Tulare, Buena Vista, and Kern Lakes; their connecting sloughs; and the lower portion of the Kings, Kaweah, Tule, and Kern Rivers. The southern San Joaquin Valley received only 5 to 10 inches of rain annually, but drainages on the valley's eastern flank were well watered by snowmelt from the Sierra Nevada, which created extensive swamps and marshlands that provided an enormous variety and abundance of wildlife and aquatic flora.

The Southern Valley Yokuts' diet was diverse and emphasized fishing, hunting waterfowl, and collecting shellfish, roots, and seeds. Most of their region was treeless except for the cottonwoods, sycamores, and willows that lined the river channels and sloughs. Because oaks did not extend far onto the valley floor, acorns were not readily available in their territory. Instead, acorns and pine nuts were generally obtained by trade with neighboring groups. Southern Valley Yokuts pursued small game but rarely ventured into the open country to capture antelope and elk. They did, however, opportunistically hunt the larger mammals when they came to the lakes and sloughs for water. Arkush (1993) believes that the valley's abundant resources allowed some Yokuts groups to intermittently acquire food surpluses, which allowed them to develop simple surplus economies without the benefit of domesticated plants or animals.

The Yokuts were extremely active traders of asphaltum, shells, obsidian, animal skins, and baskets, and there is evidence that some Yokut individuals were professional traders (Arkush 1993:623). Marine shells were secured through trade with coastal peoples and used for currency and personal adornment.

Single-family residences were constructed of stick frames that were covered with mats made from tule reeds. Some groups, using the same materials, built distinctive long, steep-roofed communal houses that could shelter 10 or more families. Additionally, each village had a communally owned sweathouse, in which men did their daily sweating and occasionally slept.

Tule, which was abundant along the river channels, provided the basis for their highest technological skill—basket weaving. Yokuts baskets varied in shape and use and included bowl-shaped cooking containers, conical burden baskets, flat winnowing trays, seed beaters, and a unique-necked water bottle. Canoe-shaped rafts that could hold six people and their belongings were constructed of dried tules, which enabled efficient travel and trade along waterways. In contrast, wood and stone crafts were relatively undistinguished, and finished items made from these materials were often obtained by trade.

The initial contact between the Yokuts and the Spaniards occurred in the fall of 1772, when a small military party led by Captain Pedro Fages crossed Tejon Pass into the southern San Joaquin Valley in search of Spanish deserters. At this time, Fages visited the village of *Tulamniu*, on the northwest shore of Buena Vista Lake (Arkush 1993:623). Over the next several decades, only a small number of Southern Valley Yokuts came under the control of the coastal Franciscan missionaries; however, significant impact to their culture resulted from infiltration of natives who had escaped from the missions. Foreign practices introduced by these runaways contributed to the erosion of traditional Yokuts lifeways. Cultural upheaval and marginalization of native peoples from the San Joaquin Valley came with the annexation of California by the United States and the resulting rapid increase in Euro-American populations. Because of the continued effects of colonization, there is relatively little published literature that describes them, and ethnographic descriptions obtained from aged informants are certainly incomplete. However, it is clear that some Yokuts remained in the area, as evidenced by bits of information gleaned from multiple sources. Today, Southern Valley Yokuts continue to reside in the area with reservations established at Table Mountain Rancheria in 1916 and Santa Rosa Rancheria in 1921.

Historic Overview

Post-Contact history for the state of California is generally divided into three periods: the Spanish period (1769–1822), the Mexican period (1822–1848), and the American period (1848–present).

SPANISH PERIOD (1769–1822)

Although there were brief visits by Spanish, Russian, and British explorers from 1529 to 1769, the beginning of Spanish settlement in California occurred in 1769 with a settlement at San Diego which consisted of a presidio (military fort), and the Mission San Diego de Alcalá. This was the first of 21 missions that Franciscan friars established in Alta (upper) California between 1769 and 1823. During this era, the Spanish were determined to incorporate Native Americans into the mission system, first from the surrounding coastal areas and later from the interior tribes. Native neophytes attempted to escape missions, seeking refuge with interior tribes, such as in the southern San Joaquin Valley. This led to forays into these regions by Spanish soldiers attempting to recapture the neophytes.

MEXICAN PERIOD (1822–1848)

The Mexican period began in 1822 when word of the successful revolution against the Spanish crown reached California. During the Mexican period, the granting of large tracts of land gave rise to large ranchos that became important economic and social centers. The late 1820s through the early 1830s saw the influence of the California missions wane. Following adoption of the Secularization Act of 1833, the Mexican government privatized most Franciscan lands, including holdings of the California missions. Extensive land grants in the interior were initiated in part to increase the population away from the more settled coastal areas where the Spanish had concentrated their colonization efforts. Although earlier secularization schemes had called for redistribution of lands to Native American neophytes who had been integrated into the mission system, the majority of the mission lands and livestock holdings were instead allocated by the Mexican government through several hundred land grants to private, non-Native American ranchers (Langum 1987:15–18). By 1836, this sweeping process effectively reduced the California missions to parish churches and released their vast landholdings.

During the height of the ranchos (1834–1848), landowners largely focused on the cattle industry, devoting large tracts to grazing. Hides and tallow became a foundation of the southern California economy. Trappers and explorers also journeyed westward from the eastern United States into Mexican territory. The non-Native American population of California increased during this period due to the influx of explorers, trappers, and ranchers associated with the land grants. The rising California population unfortunately contributed to the introduction and spread of diseases foreign to the Native American population, who had no associated immunities. Large numbers of native peoples in the Central Valley died of disease during the 1830s, and whole tribes along the American, Merced, Tuolumne, and Yuba Rivers were decimated (Cook 1955).

AMERICAN PERIOD (1848–PRESENT)

The Mexican-American War ended with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, ushering California into its American period. Horticulture and livestock, based primarily on cattle as the currency and staple of the rancho system, continued to dominate the southern California economy through the first decade of the Gold Rush, beginning in 1848. California became part of the United States with the Compromise of 1850, which also designated Utah and New Mexico (with present Arizona) as U.S. territories. Wagon roads and railroads constructed across California's Colorado and Mojave Deserts from the 1840s to the 1870s connected coastal California with the rest of the country. These modes of transport served to carry mail, prospectors, miners, entrepreneurs, merchants, immigrants, laborers, muleteers, settlers, and military personnel, as well as civilian and military supplies, livestock, produce, timber, and

minerals produced by desert mines, among other necessities. The construction of permanent roadways accompanied the increased use of the automobile at the turn of the twentieth century.

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

Unlike the more coastal areas of California, which Europeans began settling through the establishment of the Spanish Mission system in the second half of the eighteenth century, the Central Valley was largely devoid of European exploration and settlement until well into the nineteenth century (California High Speed Rail Authority [CAHSR] and Federal Railroad Administration [FRA] 2012a:6-1–6-2).

In 1848, the United States officially annexed California from Mexico following the Mexican-American War. That same year, gold was discovered in the Sierra Nevada foothills, which set off the California Gold Rush and the arrival of thousands of migrants to the territory. In a short period of time, areas of concentrated development were spurred between San Francisco, interlying communities, and the gold fields located throughout the Sierra Nevada foothills. Much of the Central Valley was bypassed during this period as miners made their way towards the mining camps. However, as time progressed and the fervor of the Gold Rush started to wane, many individuals examined other pursuits, including agriculture, which was becoming increasingly important as the population of California grew. Many areas of the San Joaquin Valley were surveyed and subdivided into agricultural land, which were used for cattle and sheep ranching, as well as for dry farming grains. Along with these developments came a series of small towns scattered throughout the region. These towns were often established along overland stagecoach routes, connecting the growing agricultural presence of the San Joaquin Valley with the growing regional centers, primarily Stockton, Sacramento, and San Francisco (CAHSR and FRA 2012a:6-2–6-4).

Fresno County was created in 1865 from territory carved from Mariposa County. In its initial years, the County was sparsely settled, with most early settlers continuing to focus on the better-known extractive resources—furs and gold—in the Sierra foothills. The valley floor was generally passed over by prospective settlers, who found the region’s climate and particular soil conditions challenging. Radical changes in land use were made possible in the next decade by the coming of the railroad, intensive manipulation of water supplies, and gaining a better understanding of hardpan soils. With the proliferation of newly constructed irrigation canals fanning out from the San Joaquin River, and access to markets via the Central Pacific Railroad, the Herndon region (just 3 miles northwest of the project area) became a profitable wheat-growing region (*Pacific Rural Press* 1888:466).

In 1872, the Southern Pacific Railroad (SPRR) extended through the San Joaquin Valley, which increased connectivity to the region and catalyzed the expansion of livestock and farming in Fresno County, which could now reach more distant markets. New towns, settlements, and agricultural colonies were constructed along and in the vicinity of the railroad alignment. This included the Town of Fresno, which was established in 1872 after it was selected as a depot site by SPRR director Leland Stanford. Fresno was designed in a grid system that extended eastward from the railroad line along present-day H Street. The Town grew to become a regional commercial center in subsequent years and was made the new County seat in 1874 (CAHSR and FRA 2012b:6-12). This, in turn, further boosted Fresno’s growth, and its population increased from 600 people in 1875 to over 3,400 in 1885, the year it formally incorporated as a City (Hattersley-Drayton et al. 2015).

The construction of water conveyance systems became more widespread in the 1880s and 1890s, supporting a greater variety of crops in the valley and greater production levels. A sizeable dairy industry also developed in Fresno County during this period. The expansion of agriculture and irrigation, overall variety of crops, and improved connectivity to the broader United States were essential to the County’s early growth (CAHSR and FRA 2012a:6-4, 6-12–6-13; Fresno County Historical Society 2022). The majority of growth was concentrated along the railroad and in the vicinity of Fresno, which continued to establish itself as the economic, transportation, and political center of the region. By 1890, Fresno’s

population reached over 10,000 residents. Streetcar lines were established starting in the early 1890s fostering the development of streetcar suburbs, expanding the City's boundaries. Migrants from all over the United States and abroad arrived in California and established enclaves in the Fresno area. Represented immigrant and migrant communities included Chinese, Japanese, Scandinavians, Germans, Armenians, African Americans, and Latinos (CAHSR and FRA 2012a:6-19).

While many of Fresno's early businesses and hotels were built in a "high Victorian" style, by the early 1900s, the downtown area was renovated with more "modern" storefronts and Classical Revival-style buildings, influenced by design trends in larger cities such as San Francisco, Chicago, and Paris. Residential neighborhoods developed during the first decades of the 1900s primarily included a variety of Revival styles and Craftsman bungalows, which were popular at the time. By 1930, Fresno had grown to over 52,000 residents; however, the "Roaring Twenties" ended with the Great Depression, resulting in little development during this period. Several institutional buildings and other improvement projects were completed in the City as part of the Works Progress Administration and Public Works Administration programs. This included park and infrastructure improvements, a fire station, buildings at Chandler Field (Fresno Municipal Airport), and major civic buildings including the Fresno City Hall, Fresno Memorial Auditorium, Fresno County Hall of Records, and a U.S. Post Office (Hattersley-Drayton 2015; Planning Resource Associates 2008:10).

During World War II, Fresno's economy stabilized, and labor shortages spurred demand for Mexican agricultural laborers. Fresno experienced a severe housing shortage during the war and in the following years because of thousands of seasonal agricultural laborers seeking work and returning servicemen who were settling down and starting families. Homeownership increased during this period; factors influencing this trend included the passage of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (also known as the GI Bill), the Housing Act of 1949, and Federal Housing Administration (FHA) mortgage programs and guidelines. Between 1940 and 1945, newly developing neighborhoods just outside the City limits grew dramatically with thousands of new residents. Also, census data shows that in the decade between 1940 and 1950, Fresno's overall population mushroomed from 60,685 to 91,669 people, which illustrates the large amount of suburbanization that occurred during this time (Planning Resource Associates 2008). Along with increased settlement came new civic buildings, highways, suburban neighborhoods, and commercial corridors. Much of the new population settled in newly developed neighborhoods, as the City sprawled into post-war suburbs, which saw increased and steady annexation of surrounding lands.

Fresno's first major post-war subdivision, Mayfair, also included the first suburban shopping center, foreshadowing the planning trend that led to the diminishing importance of the City's downtown commercial core. Other early subdivisions included Manchester Center and Fig Garden, developed in 1955 and 1956, respectively. Numerous residents left older neighborhoods for new suburban subdivisions, further exacerbating the decline of Fresno's downtown. Modernization projects were undertaken in the downtown area such as the conversion of six blocks into a pedestrian mall in 1964. However, Fashion Fair Mall, constructed in 1970, later drew customers away from the mall and downtown commercial area (Planning Resource Associates 2008).

In the post-World War II era, Fresno expanded in all directions, but principally to areas north. Post-war development included swaths of residential and commercial properties in sizeable subdivisions and infill construction, as well as new roads, highways, and civic and institutional buildings. This trend was associated with increased vehicular traffic and the loss of many of the former farmsteads, orchards, and agricultural outbuildings, along with infrastructure, such as the former Biola Branch line of the SPRR. The freeway and expansion of highways increased vehicular traffic along arterials that once were farm roads. Twentieth-century construction and the gradual urbanization characterize the changing setting of the City. Figure 4 shows urban growth through the mid-1990s expanding outwards from Fresno's original Town site. Today, Fresno has over 500,000 residents and is one of California's largest cities in California and continues to serve as a major regional center for the San Joaquin Valley.

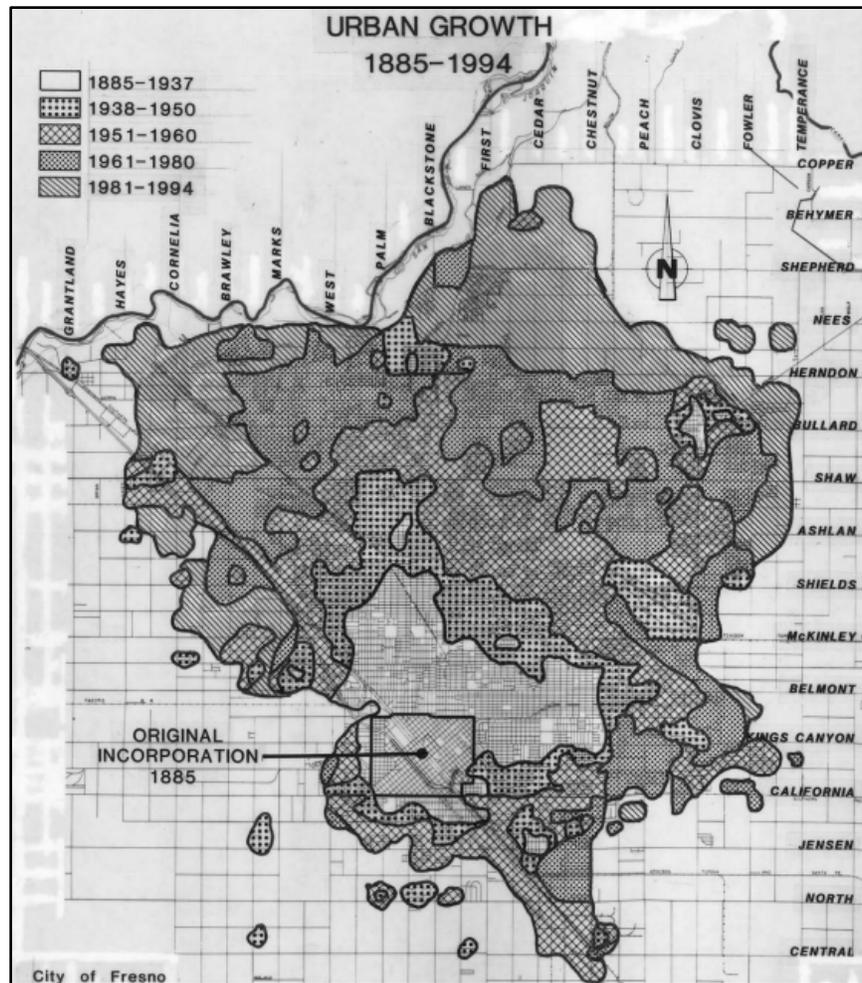


Figure 4. Map showing areas of urban growth in Fresno by decade; the City expanded primarily to the north (Planning Resource Associates 2008).

Chinatown

Like so many others, Chinese immigrants began arriving in California following the discovery of gold at Sutter’s Mill and the ensuing Gold Rush. As Chinese immigrants began settling throughout the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, and as the readily available gold deposits and mining claims were taken up, the increased competition led to the development of racist policies and practices that were largely focused on the influx of Chinese, as well as other visible ethnic groups. As part of this, many Chinese were banned from settling within the mining camps and other communities, creating their own enclaves and developments in the surrounding areas. These oppressive and restrictive trends would continue over the following decades. Following the platting of Fresno in 1872 with the arrival of the SPRR, the Town was ultimately divided into two halves with the eastern side of the railroad tracks dedicated to White settlement, and the western side restricted to other ethnic groups. This location is where Fresno’s early Chinatown would start to emerge (ARG 2006: 21–23).

By the 1880s, the Chinatown neighborhood of Fresno was established. Located west of the SPRR, the neighborhood was centered around F and G Streets, primarily between Mariposa and Tulare Streets, and featured a patchwork of narrow buildings that housed shops, lodging houses, brothels, restaurants, laundries, gambling halls, and other businesses (Figure 5). This would remain the heart of Chinatown

over the following decades as small commercial blocks were constructed (Figure 6), boxed in by an increasing number of large industrial developments that insulated the community from the surrounding expansion of Fresno (ARG 2006: 24–27). Fraternal associations, religious organizations, and schools were also founded and became prominent parts of the community, particularly by the turn of the century. Of these, the fraternal associations were some of the most important, providing important connections to the homeland while also serving as a form of community representation. Although these organizations also had a reputation for criminal activities—such as operating brothels and opium dens and practicing extortion and racketeering—they would continue to play an important role in Chinatown. As the more criminal and illicit operations decreased into the 1920s, new business, fraternal, and political organizations were formed that would continue to shape the sociocultural aspects of life within the community (ARG 2006: 40–44).

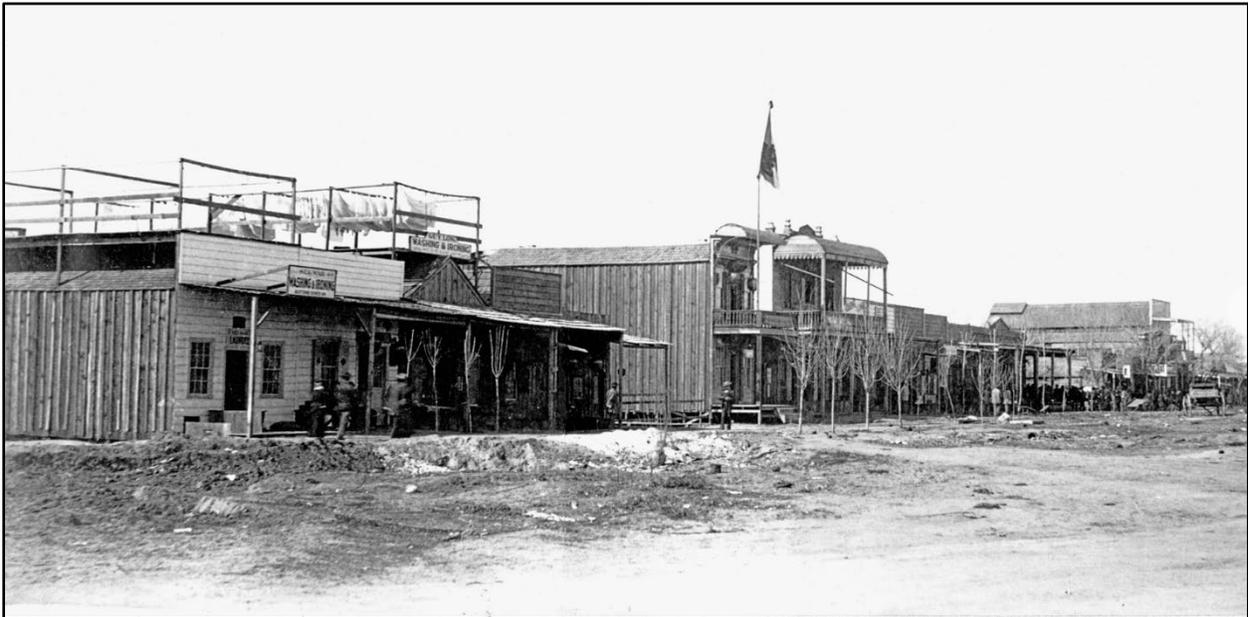


Figure 5. Fresno's Chinatown, ca.1880 (Fresno County Historical Society).

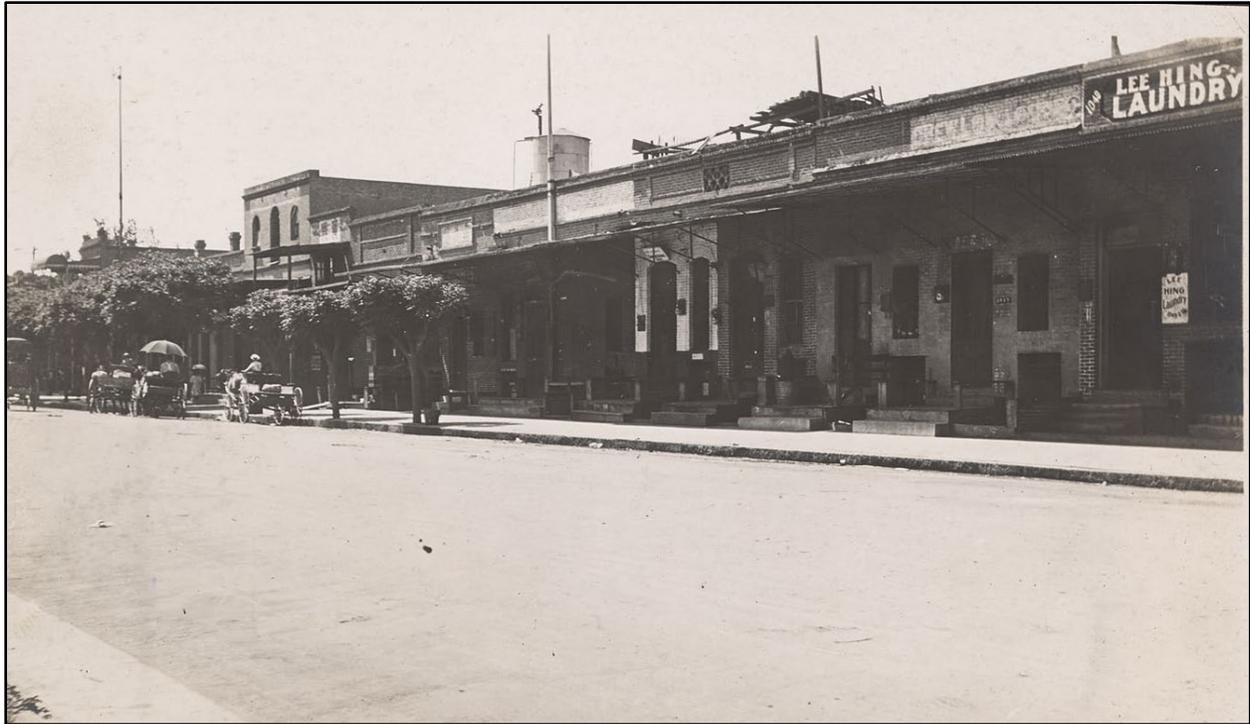


Figure 6. Fresno's Chinatown, ca.1910 (University of California, Berkeley Bancroft Library).

Due to the racially charged segregation of Fresno during its early period of development, the Chinatown neighborhood and surrounding area had long had a multicultural demographic makeup. The Chinese population was particularly notable during the nineteenth century; however, the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 stifled growth of the community by greatly restricting new immigration and keeping Chinese-American residents from securing citizenship. As a result, the population of Chinese communities throughout California and the U.S. started to decline as other ethnic groups were unburdened by the same selective legislation. As the Chinese population became stagnant and started to decrease, other populations increased. While Fresno had become home to a notable Armenian enclave, the Chinatown neighborhood had become an epicenter for a new Japanese-American community. Japanese immigrants, dealing with the same exclusions from Euro-American society, began settling in Chinatowns, such as the one found in Fresno. By the turn of the century, many of the buildings were occupied by Japanese-owned businesses and residents, which also spurred the development of Japanese-specific cultural, religious, and educational institutions. However, over time, the Japanese-American population was subject to similar restrictions over the course of the early twentieth century. Despite these restrictions, the Chinatown area would become increasingly multicultural through the 1930s as more Mexican and African American residents and business owners relocated to the neighborhood. This trend would be expedited in the 1940s following the forced relocation and internment of Japanese-Americans after the U.S. entered World War II and Executive Order 9066 was issued in February 1942 (ARG 2006: 54–55, 60–67).

During the 1940s and onward, the community became increasingly diverse with additional Greek, Italian, and Portuguese, in addition to the established Mexican and African American communities. The Chinese-American community would remain an important part of the community; however, in the post-war period, many would relocate to the suburbs while also retaining ownership of buildings. By the 1970s, the demographic shifts started decades earlier were cemented, and the areas around Chinatown were predominantly Hispanic. At the same time, Fresno was undergoing a period of urban redevelopment, which resulted in the widespread demolition of historic buildings to make way for grand new plans for the

area. However, these plans never materialized, and many of the Chinatown buildings were left as empty lots. This coincided with an exodus of businesses and residents toward the suburbs. This resulted in a period of dereliction where many of the buildings were largely vacant or catered to an increasing transient population (ARG 2006: 28–29).

While plans for the redevelopment and revitalization of Chinatown have been ongoing through the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, these plans have not materialized. Today, the remnants of Chinatown continue to struggle with these same issues, including vagrancy and squatting, which in turn have resulted in damage and alteration to many of the buildings.

BUILDING TYPE

Two-Part Commercial Block

Located in the northern half of the project site, the building addressed as 937-945 F Street is a two-part commercial block. This building type was the most common type used for small- to moderately-sized commercial buildings constructed in the United States between the 1850s and 1950s. These types of buildings typically supported different uses on the first floor versus the upper floors. (While two-part commercial blocks could have multiple floors, most found in Fresno’s Chinatown were two stories.) Architectural features emphasized the horizontal division between the two sections of the building. The ground level typically housed retail stores, restaurants, or hotel lobbies, while the second floor housed more private spaces such as offices, hotel rooms, meeting halls, or residential spaces. In a neighborhood like Chinatown which was home to a large number of laborers, a common use for two-part commercial block buildings was residential hotels (ARG 2006).

Ornamentation on building exteriors could reflect a variety of styles, with Victorian and Classical details typically used in the nineteenth century and more simplified ornament by the turn of the century. After plate glass became more affordable and more widely used in the late nineteenth century, ground floor storefronts often featured sizeable glazing. Between World War I and World War II, ornamentation reflected popular architectural styles of the period such as Art Deco in the 1920s and 1930s, and Art Moderne in the 1930s and 1940s. While Art Deco styling featured geometric forms, stylized ornamentation, and vertical elements, Art Moderne styling included a horizontal emphasis and streamlined features such as decorative banding and rounded corners. In addition, concrete block and stucco exteriors became common. In Fresno’s Chinatown, most of the two-part commercial blocks have relatively little ornamentation beyond simple brick details such as cornices, stringcourses, or stepped brick (ARG 2006).

IDENTIFICATION OF CULTURAL RESOURCES

CHRIS Records Search

On July 12, 2024, SWCA requested a records search from the CHRIS SSJVIC at California State University in Bakersfield, California, to identify known cultural resources and previous cultural resource studies within 0.25 mile of the project area. A letter from the SSJVIC summarizing the results of the records search (SSJVIC File No. 24-317) was received on July 24, 2024, and is provided in Appendix A of this report.

Previous Studies within 0.25 Mile of the Project Area

The CHRIS search identified 28 previously conducted cultural resource studies within 0.25 mile of the project area (Table 1 and Table 2). Portions of eight of these studies intersect the project area, two of which (FR-02722 and FR-02896) are multivolume reports. Intersecting studies consist of archaeological surveys, architectural surveys, ethnographic studies, and cultural and regional overviews. These surveys were conducted between 1968 and 2006 and may no longer be considered current. The results of the CHRIS records search for previous studies conducted within 0.25 mile of the project area are listed in Table 2 but have not been carried over in further discussion.

Table 1. Previous Studies within the Project Area

NWIC Report Number	Title of Study	Type of Study	Author	Year
FR-00106	<i>Class I Overview: Santa Fe Pacific Pipeline Partners, L.P. Proposed Concord to Colton Pipeline Project</i>	Other research	Self, William	1995
FR-00357	<i>Archaeological Overview and Locational Analysis of the Fresno Area</i>	Other research	Crist, Michael K. and Varner, Dudley M.	1981
FR-00641	<i>The Distribution of Aboriginal Occupational Sites in Fresno County, California</i>	Other research	Peck, Billy J.	1977
FR-01156	<i>A Proposal for an Archaeological Element in the Fresno County, General Plan</i>	Archaeological, Management/planning	Unknown	1968
FR-01162	<i>A Summary of the Present Archaeological Resources of Fresno County</i>	Other research	Stuart, David R.	1990
FR-02076	<i>Supplementary Historic Building Survey, Historic Resources Survey (Ratkovich Plan), Fresno, California</i>	Architectural/historical, Field study	Powell, John Edward and McGuire, Michael J.	1994
FR-02396	<i>Historic Architecture Survey Report for the "Bungalow" Court Project, Fresno, California</i>	Architectural/historical, Field study	Hattersley-Drayton, Karana	2004
FR-02701	<i>Chinatown Historic Resource Survey</i>	Architectural/historical, Field study	Maley, Bridget, Stock, Jody, Watson, Shayne, and MacDonald, Lauren	2006

Table 2. Previous Studies within 0.25 Mile of the Project Area

NWIC Report Number	Title of Study	Type of Study	Author	Year
FR-00135	<i>Cultural Resources Inventory Report for the Proposed Mojave Northward Expansion Project</i>	Archaeological, Field study	Hatoff, Brian, Voss, Barb, Waechter, Sharon, Benté, Vance, and Wee, Stephen	1995
FR-00927	<i>Archaeological Field Reconnaissance Report Summary for the Redevelopment Project - Fresno, California</i>	Archaeological, Field study	Wren, Donald G.	1982
FR-01640	<i>Negative Archaeological Survey Report Installation of Traffic Surveillance Stations along Interstate 5, State Route 41, and State Route 99 in Madera and Fresno Counties</i>	Archaeological, Field study	Binning, Jeanne Day	1999
FR-02002	<i>Cultural Resources Survey Report for Level 3 Long Haul Fiber Optic Project: WS04 Connection to Fresno 3R Facility, in the City of Fresno, Fresno County, California</i>	Archaeological, Field study	Mason, Roger D. and Shepard, Richard S.	2000

Cultural Resources Technical Report for the 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley Acquisition, Demolition and Construction of Housing Project, Fresno, Fresno County, California – DRAFT

NWIC Report Number	Title of Study	Type of Study	Author	Year
FR-02287	<i>Cultural Resources Final Report of Monitoring and Findings for the Qwest Network Construction Project, State of California</i>	Archaeological, Monitoring	Arrington, Cindy, Bass, Bryon, Brown, Joan, Corey, Chris, and Hunt, Kevin	2006
FR-02467	<i>Archaeological Site Sensitivity Assessment for the Former Fresno-2 Manufactured Gas Plant, Fresno, California</i>	Archaeological, Field study	Warren, Keith and Baloian, Randy	2012
FR-02696	<i>Archaeological Monitoring Report for the Fresno Large Diameter Pipeline, City and County of Fresno</i>	Archaeological, Monitoring	Garr, Joshua and Baxter, Scott	2014
FR-02722	<i>Fresno Recycled Water Distribution System Project, Phase I Cultural Resources Study, Fresno County, California</i>	Archaeological, Field study	Anderson, Katherine and Vader, Michael	2015
FR-02722	<i>Recycled Water Distribution System, Southwest Quadrant: Phase I Cultural Resources Study</i>	Archaeological, Field study	Anderson, Katherine and Vader, Michael	2017
FR-02741	<i>Cultural Resources Constraints Report and Monitoring Logs for Gas Main Tulare and G Streets Project, City and County of Fresno, California</i>	Archaeological, Field study, Monitoring	Hammerle, Esme	2014
FR-02778	<i>A Historic Properties Inventory and Documentation for the Union Pacific Railroad FRNO.CA.16 MP 205.75 Communications Tower, Fresno County, California</i>	Architectural/historical, Field study	Behan, Andrea and Moloney, Brenna	2016
FR-02802	<i>Pre-Construction Condition Assessment Report for 1713 Tulare Street (Southern Pacific Depot Building), Merced to Fresno Section of the California High Speed Train Project</i>	Architectural/historical, Evaluation	Bunse, Meta, Melvin, Steven, and Brookshear, Cheryl	2015
FR-02896	<i>Fresno Fulton Corridor Specific Plan and Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan Project</i>	Archaeological, Field study	Slawson, Dana N. and Kay, Michael	2012
FR-02896A	<i>South Van Ness Industrial District Historic Survey, Fresno, California</i>	Architectural/historical, Management/planning	Hattersley-Drayton, Karana and Stock Jody	2015
FR-00135	<i>Cultural Resources Inventory Report for the Proposed Mojave Northward Expansion Project.</i>	Archaeological, Field study	Hatoff, Brian, Voss, Barb, Waechter, Sharon, Benté, Vance, and Wee, Stephen	1995
FR-00927	<i>Archaeological Field Reconnaissance Report Summary for the Redevelopment Project - Fresno, California</i>	Archaeological, Field study	Wren, Donald G.	1982
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FR-02287	<i>Cultural Resources Final Report of Monitoring and Findings for the Qwest Network Construction Project, State of California</i>	Archaeological, Monitoring	Arrington, Cindy, Bass, Bryon, Brown, Joan, Corey, Chris, and Hunt, Kevin	2006
FR-02467A	<i>Archaeological Site Sensitivity Assessment for the Former Fresno-2 Manufactured Gas Plant, Fresno, California</i>	Archaeological, Field study	Warren, Keith and Baloian, Randy	2012

Previously Recorded Cultural Resources within 0.25 Mile of the Project Area

The CHRIS results indicated that 67 previously recorded cultural resources are located within a 0.25-mile radius of the project area. Of these, 56 are built environment resources (both buildings and structures), one is a district, two are contributors to a district, seven are archaeological resources, and two are unspecified as “other.” Four resources involve the project area, of which two are built environment properties and two are districts. Resources P-10-005862 and P-10-005874 consist of the historic-era buildings within the project area (937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley, respectively), resource P-10-004294 consists of the Fresno Nihonmachi/Fresno Chinatown District, and P-10-007206 is the buried component of the Town of Fresno district that were uncovered during construction monitoring between November 2019 and March 2020 (Table 3).

The boundaries of P-10-007206 extend from the intersection of O Street and Merced Street on the northeast, O Street and Kern Street on the southeast, to H (or Front) Street and Merced Street on the northwest, to approximately H (or Front) Street and Inyo Street on the southwest, and including the railroad station on H (Front) Street, the railroad tracks, and crossing the railroad tracks to include Fresno Chinatown, which includes the area from the tracks to Mariposa Street on the north, to F Street on the west, and Kern Street on the south. The buried features consist of discontinuous fragments of redwood water pipe (BF-SW4-1), several segments of brick road or sidewalk (BF-SW4-2), the remains of basements and a tunnel (BF-SW4-3, BF-SW4-6, BF-SW4-8), two brick wells or cisterns (BF-SW4-4), and four refuse scatters (S-SWR-1, S-SW4-2, S-SW4-5, and S-SW4-7). The elements of this district date between 1872 and 1900, and PaleoWest recommended the district eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D (Lawson et al. 2020).

Table 4 and Table 5 list the previously recorded built environment and archaeological resources identified within a 0.25-mile radius of the project site. One resource is adjacent to the project area: P-10-004270, the former Bank of America/Bank of Italy building at 947-949 F Street.

Table 3. Built Resources and Districts within the Project Area

Primary No. Designation	Resource Type	Description	Recorder and Year	Eligibility Status/ Status Code	Relationship to Project Area
P-10-004294	District	Fresno Nihonmachi - Fresno Chinatown	I.A. Waugh, Ethnic Minority Cultural Resources Survey, 1979	Unspecified	Includes Project Area
P-10-005862	Building	937-945 F Street; Peacock Department Store Building	J. Stock and L. MacDonald, ARG, 2006	5D3 – Appears to be a contributor to a district that appears eligible for local listing or designation	Within Project Area
P-10-005874	Building	942 Fagan Alley	J. Stock and L. MacDonald, ARG, 2006	5B – Locally significant both individually and as a district contributor	Within Project Area
P-10-007206	District	Town of Fresno buried resources	N. Lawson, J. Moritz, D Oliver, PaleoWest, 2020	Recommended eligible under Criterion D	Within Project Area

Table 4. Built Resources within 0.25 Mile of the Project Area

P-Designation	Associated Report	Resource Type	Description	Eligibility Status/ Status Code	Relationship to Project Area
P-10-003930	FR-00238, FR-01770, FR-01771, FR-01772, FR-02642, FR-02726, FR-02769, FR-02847, FR-02942, FR-03037, FR-03103	Structure	Southern Pacific Railroad	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004254	Unspecified	Building	Bing Kong Tong Association Building	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004261	Unspecified	Building	Common Name: Danish Creamery; Historic Name: Okonogi Hospital Site	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004262	Unspecified	Building	Historic Name: Nihon Byoin - Hashiba Sanitarium	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004263	Unspecified	Building	Historic Name: First Mexican Baptist Church	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004268	Unspecified	Building	Chinese American Community	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004269	Unspecified	Building	Bow On Tong Association Building	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004270	Unspecified	Building	Bank of America/Bank of Italy Building	–	Adjacent
P-10-004295	Unspecified	Building	Fresno Buddhist Church	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004296	Unspecified	Building	Komoto's Department Store; Kamakawa Brothers Inc. General Merchandise and Hotel	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004338	Unspecified	Building	Peoples Furniture Showroom & Warehouse; Zellerbach Paper	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004340	Unspecified	Building	Hobbs Parsons Warehouse	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004417	Unspecified	Building	Southern Pacific Passenger Depot	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004930	Unspecified	Building	Fresno Fire Department Station No. 3; Fresno Fire Department No. 3	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004931	Unspecified	Building	Basque Hotel; E.A. Walrond Building; Hotel Adelphis	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004932	Unspecified	Building	Del Monte Plant No. 68; California Packing Corporation (Calpak)	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-004933	Unspecified	Building	Dick's Shoes; Dick Avakian Shoe Repair, David Dashjian Clothes Cleaner and the Reno Rooms	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005839	FR-02396	Building	1010-1018 E Street; 1010-1016 E Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005840	FR-02396	Building	920-922 E Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile

P-Designation	Associated Report	Resource Type	Description	Eligibility Status/ Status Code	Relationship to Project Area
P-10-005841	FR-02396	Building	818, 820, 828, 842 E Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005842	FR-02396	Building	956 China Alley	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005844	FR-02396	Building	929-937 China Alley	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005845	FR-02396	Building	1048 E Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005846	FR-02396	Building	1060 E Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005847	FR-02396	Building	804 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005848	FR-02396	Building	818-822 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005849	FR-02396	Building	824-832 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005850	FR-02396	Building	829-833 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005851	FR-02396	Building	836-840 F Street; Azteca Theatre	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005852	FR-02396	Building	837 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005853	FR-02396	Building	841 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005854	FR-02396	Building	844-846 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005855	FR-02396	Building	901-911 F Street; Nippon Building No. 1	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005856	FR-02396	Building	912 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005857	FR-02396	Building	914-920 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005858	FR-02396	Building	922-926 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005859	FR-02396	Building	927-931 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005861	FR-02396	Building	933-935 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005863	FR-02396	Building	938-954 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005865	FR-02396	Building	1010 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005866	FR-02396	Building	1027-1029 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005867	FR-02396	Building	1038 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005868	FR-02396	Building	1042 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005869	FR-02396	Building	1045 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005870	FR-02396	Building	1047 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005871	FR-02396	Building	1129 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005872	FR-02396	Building	1143 F Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005873	FR-02396	Building	911-919 Fagan Alley	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005875	FR-02396	Building	1502-1520 Tulare Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005876	FR-02396	Building	1528-1548 Tulare Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005877	FR-02396	Building	1515 Inyo Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005878	FR-02396	Building	1501-1521 Kern Street; Nippon Building No. 2	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-005881	FR-02396	Building	1441-1447 Tulare Street	–	Within 0.25 Mile
P-10-006469	FR-02696	Structure	F Street Line	–	Within 0.25 Mile

Table 5. Archaeological Resources and Districts within 0.25 Mile of the Project Area

P-Designation	Associated Report	Resource Type	Description	Eligibility Status/ Status Code	Distance to Project Area
CA-FRE-003617H	FR-02896	Site	Fresno Block 534 Site	–	Within 0.25 Mile
CA-FRE-003618H	FR-02896	Site	Fresno Chinatown Block 50	–	Within 0.25 Mile
CA-FRE-003846H	Unspecified	Site	China Alley Historic-Era Feature	–	Within 0.25 Mile
N/A	Unspecified	Other	I-SW4-02	–	Within 0.25 Mile
N/A	Unspecified	Other	I-SW4-03	–	Within 0.25 Mile
CA-FRE-003904H	Unspecified	Site	S-SW4-3	–	Within 0.25 Mile
CA-FRE-003918H	Unspecified	Site	1489-Site-AV9	–	Within 0.25 Mile
CA-FRE-003922H	Unspecified	Site	1489-Site-AV13	–	Within 0.25 Mile
CA-FRE-003958H	Unspecified	Site	1542 Tulare Street Historical Deposit	–	Within 0.25 Mile

Literature Review

Additional background research and literature review performed for this study included a review of the City’s *Chinatown Historic Resource Survey* (ARG 2006) and previous studies completed for the nearby HSR project.

Chinatown Historic Resource Survey

Completed in 2006, the *Chinatown Historic Resource Survey* studied the blocks bound by Mariposa, Inyo, E, and G Streets, which include the current project area. The purpose of the study was to create an inventory of existing historical resources within Fresno’s Chinatown and to identify properties that would be potentially eligible for listing in City’s LRHR, the CRHR and/or NRHP. The survey area was characterized primarily by one- and two-story commercial buildings, or mixed commercial and residential buildings, which dated from the late nineteenth through mid-twentieth century. Two buildings were identified that have important social or religious associations: the Bing Kong Association Building at 921 China Alley, and Bow On Tong Joss House at 930-934 F Street (the latter was destroyed by fire in 2022 [Vera 2022]). The entire survey area was evaluated as a potential district, but it was found to not retain sufficient integrity to qualify for listing in the NRHP or CRHR.

However, the study identified a smaller concentration of buildings in the vicinity of F and Kern Streets that appeared to qualify as a local Chinatown historic district, which was found eligible for the LRHR under “Criterion i” as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history. “The district is significant for its representation of the development of Fresno’s Chinatown and a new phase of growth after World War II” (ARG 2006:12). At the time it was recorded, it was noted that “Despite the modifications of some structures and vacant lots resulting from demolition, the district conveys a strong sense of time and place” (ARG 2006:12). The potential local Chinatown historic district consists of an approximately 1.5-block area with irregular boundaries, roughly between Fagan Alley and China Alley, and between Tulare and Kern Streets (Figure 7). Out of 26 properties, 17 properties were identified as contributors to the potential historic district, including the buildings in the current project area (937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley). Areas where infill or demolition compromised the historic character of the street were excluded (ARG 2006:12-14).

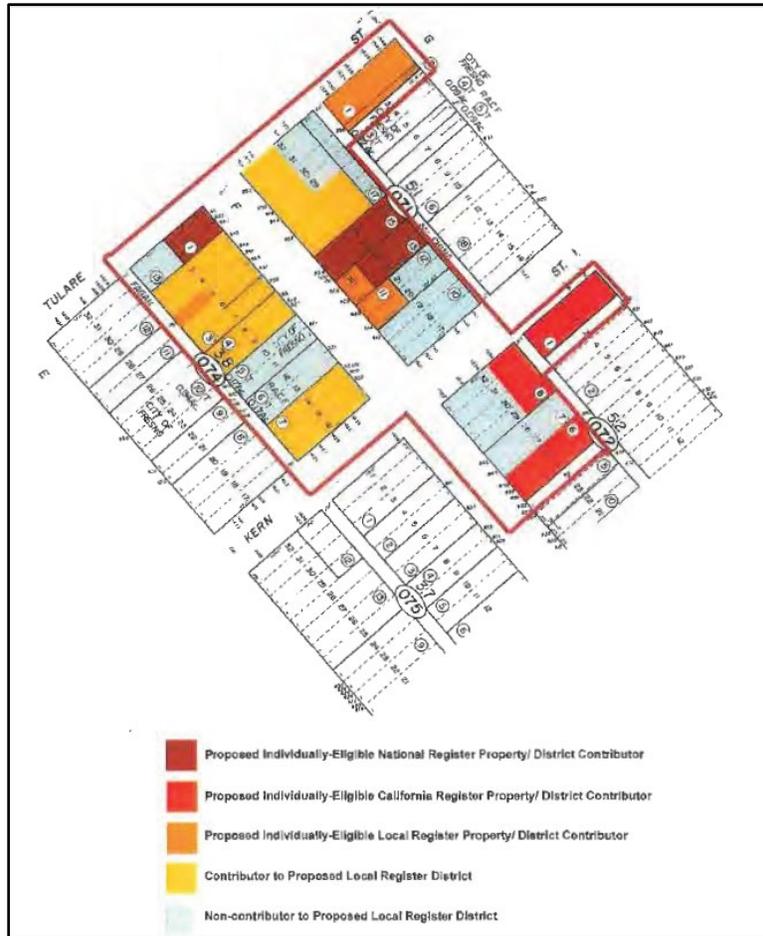


Figure 7. Map showing the proposed Fresno Chinatown Historic District (red outline). Non-contributors are light blue (ARG 2006).

California High Speed Rail Cultural Resource Studies

In preparation for the HSR project, which will eventually connect Los Angeles with San Francisco via the San Joaquin Valley, several cultural resource studies were prepared to comply with federal and state environmental regulations, including CEQA. The proposed HSR will extend through the center of Fresno, which will also feature a new station and transportation center near the historic Southern Pacific Railroad Depot, located a distance of 900 feet from the subject property. Due to this proximity, several of the HSR cultural resource documents were reviewed as part of this effort. These include:

- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration, *California High-Speed Train Technical Report, Fresno to Bakersfield Section – Historic Architectural Survey Report* (October 2011), prepared by URS Corporation, HMM Company Limited, and Arup Joint Venture;
- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration, *California High-Speed Train Fresno to Bakersfield Section – Historic Property Survey Report* (October 2011), prepared by URS Corporation, HMM Company Limited, and Arup Joint Venture; and

- California High-Speed Rail Authority and Federal Railroad Administration, *California High-Speed Train Merced to Fresno Section – Archaeological Evaluation Report, Fresno Chinatown Archaeological Sensitive Areas A & B* (January 2017).

Specific to the built environment, the subject properties at 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley are identified in the *Historic Property Survey Report*, reiterating the findings of the 2006 Chinatown Historic Resource Survey that both properties are contributors to the local Fresno Chinatown Historic District. The building at 942 Fagan Alley is also noted as being individually eligible for listing in the CRHR and LRHR. While new DPR Update forms were prepared for each property as part of the 2011 study, these focused on confirming the existing conditions as compared to the 2006 documentation; no new analysis was included. The 2006 DPR forms are included in Appendix B.

Sacred Lands File Search and Initial Native American Coordination

A search of the California NAHC SLF was requested on July 12, 2024, with the intent of identifying culturally sensitive areas and obtaining a list of Native American contacts who may have specific knowledge of the vicinity. The NAHC response was received on July 16, 2024, and provided a negative result and a list of 18 Native American tribes and individuals who may have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area. SWCA sent outreach letters via email to all Native American contacts on August 1, 2024, with hard copies following by regular mail on August 13, 2024. Examples of tribal outreach letters and details regarding tribal correspondence are presented in Appendix C.

Follow-up telephone calls were made on August 8 and 13, 2024. Native American outreach performed as part of this review does not constitute formal consultation under AB 52. Heather Airey, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer with the Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians noted that they do not typically deal with Fresno and defer to Table Mountain; Heather Airey also stated that there are no concerns on behalf of the tribe. The remainder of the telephone calls went unanswered.

Archaeological Resource Survey

SWCA archaeologist Brandon Foster conducted an intensive pedestrian survey of the project area on August 7, 2024. The survey was conducted using pedestrian transects spaced 5 meters apart. The entirety of the project area was subject to intensive pedestrian survey.

Archaeological Survey Results

The majority of the project area (Figure 8, Figure 9, and Figure 10) is covered by asphalt, except along its western edge where an approximately 1-foot-wide buffer between the asphalt and a fence line spans the length of the project area. While much of this space is populated by dead grasses, soil exposure allowed for periodic boot scrapes. Soil was also visible along portions of the southern boundary where it was open to exposure due to a broken, wooden retaining wall. Some soils were also visible at the southeastern project boundary where two Italian cypresses were growing, although the majority of this plot was obscured by weeds as well. No archaeological resources, artifacts, or features were observed within the project area.



Figure 8. Project area overview from its southwest corner facing northeast.



Figure 9. Project area overview from its northwest corner facing southeast.



Figure 10. Project area overview from its northeast corner facing southwest.

Historical Resources Survey

SWCA senior architectural historian Dan Herrick, M.H.C., conducted an intensive survey of the built environment associated with the project which is focused on the Peacock Building located at 937-945 F Street, and the commercial building at 942 Fagan Alley, in the former Chinatown neighborhood near downtown Fresno. The survey was conducted on July 22, 2024, using digital photographs to primarily document the existing conditions of 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley, as well as the surrounding context along F Street between Tulare Street to the northwest and Kern Street to the northeast, which corresponds with the core of the previously identified LRHR-eligible Chinatown Historic District; all photographs were taken by SWCA on this date unless noted otherwise. Specific to 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley, the exterior envelope of the buildings was the primary focus, capturing overall views of the buildings' exterior elevations and details of features throughout. Limited investigations of the interior spaces did occur to ascertain the conditions as well as details indicative of the building's overall construction chronology and evolution. This included taking a few representative photographs of spaces and notable details, as lighting within the interior was limited and potentially hazardous conditions were observed throughout.

The survey also included taking photographs of the surrounding streetscape and individual buildings along the 900 block faces of F Street and the surrounding vicinity around the core of the former Chinatown neighborhood. This focused on taking representative photographs of the overall street as well as individual buildings to inform a comparative analysis between the current conditions and those documented as part of the 2006 *Chinatown Historic Resource Survey* (ARG 2006). All photographs were provided to the City and are on file at SWCA's San Luis Obispo office.

Existing Conditions

937-945 F STREET

937-945 F Street consists of a two-part commercial block building that is sited in the northern half of the parcel. The building is composed of multiple sections resulting in an overall irregular footprint. The largest section of the building fronts F Street, while several additions are located at the rear (see Figure 3). Generally, the northeastern façade fronting F Street is composed of storefronts and pedestrian entries at the first story, a broad canopy, and windows and a wall-mounted sign at the second story (Figure 11). The flat roof has a parapet with a plain cornice along the façade. Wall cladding includes stucco and multi-colored stone veneer around first floor storefronts and entries.

At the time of the survey, the storefronts were covered with plywood and other materials (Figure 12 and Figure 13). Near the southeast end of the façade, there is a large aluminum-framed window that is covered by a metal security grille and is flanked by two pedestrian entries (Figure 12). One of the doors, addressed as 937 F Street, was not clearly visible due to a metal security door (Figure 12 and Figure 14). The second door is addressed as 943 F Street and consists of a flat slab door set within a notably altered frame as seen in Figure 12 and Figure 15. A third pedestrian entry is located at the northwest end of the façade; however, it appears the door has been removed and the opening covered with plywood (Figure 13). A broad metal canopy, supported by cable stays, spans across the façade and shelters the first-story entries and storefronts (Figure 11).

At the second story, the façade displays two bands of windows interrupted at center by a projecting and angled molding that frames a single multi-lite, steel-sash window (Figure 11, Figure 16, and Figure 17). The two bands of windows are framed by square molding, and there is a horizontal-slat detail between the windows (Figure 11). The windows appear to be steel-sash casement windows, some of which are missing glazing, and many are secured with plywood. Centered on the façade is an internally lit sign that reads “Peacock” in red cursive letters.



Figure 11. 937-945 F Street, northeast façade, facing south.



Figure 12. 937-945 F Street, closeup of entries and storefronts (near south end of façade).



Figure 13. 937-945 F Street, closeup of entry and storefronts (near north end of façade).



Figure 14. 937-945 F Street, closeup of altered entrance marked 937 F Street.



Figure 15. 937-945 F Street, closeup of altered entrance marked 943 F Street.



Figure 16. 937-945 F Street, closeup of central window on the second story of the facade.



Figure 17. 937-945 F Street, closeup of the band of windows on the second story of the facade.

Generally, the rear of the building (southwest elevation) displays a painted brick exterior, regularly-spaced windows and a pedestrian entry at the second story, an exterior walkway (which also serves as the flat roof level of the one-story portion of the building), a staircase leading to the ground level, and several additions (Figure 18). Set within a slightly arched opening, the windows are covered with plyboard which obscures them from view, but they appear to be multi-lite steel casement windows. The exterior second story walkway and metal staircase are lined with black metal railings. The wooden door near the center of the second story has panels below multi-lite glazing; above the door is a transom that has been enclosed.

Figure 18, Figure 19, and Figure 23 depict the one-story additions near the center and northwest ends of the building and a second-story addition at the southeast end of the building.



Figure 18. 937-945 F Street, overview of southwest (rear) elevation, facing northeast. A small portion of 942 Fagan Alley is seen at the far right.

The second-story addition at the southeast end of the building appears to be brick construction sheathed with stucco and topped by a shed roof clad with corrugated panels (Figure 19). It displays two vinyl-frame sliding windows and a pedestrian entry that opens to the exterior walkway. The door was obscured by a metal security door.

At the ground level, there is a wooden shed between this building and the adjacent building (942 Fagan Alley). The shed is sheathed with vertical wood planks and has one pedestrian door (Figure 20).

There is a long, one-story addition that spans from the northwest end to approximately the center of the rear elevation. Topped with a flat roof, its exterior displays brick and stucco sheathing. A band of windows is obscured from view because most are covered with plyboard, but security grilles are seen installed over the windows (Figure 21, Figure 22 and Figure 23). Another smaller, squarish addition projects to the southwest. It also has a flat roof with a slight overhang and exposed rafter tails on the southwest elevation (Figure 23). The northwest and southeast walls have a stepped parapet. The square windows have brick sills and are covered with plyboard.

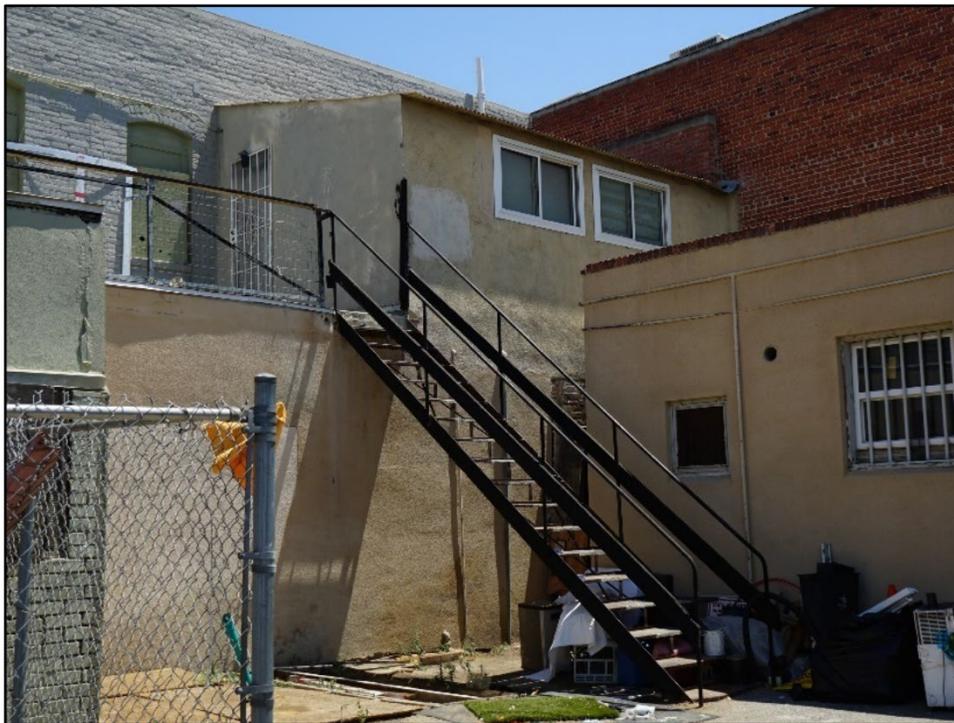


Figure 19. 937-945 F Street, closeup of addition at southeast end of the rear (southwest) elevation. A small portion of 942 Fagan Alley is seen at right.



Figure 20. Closeup of shed-like structure between the rear of 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley, facing southeast.

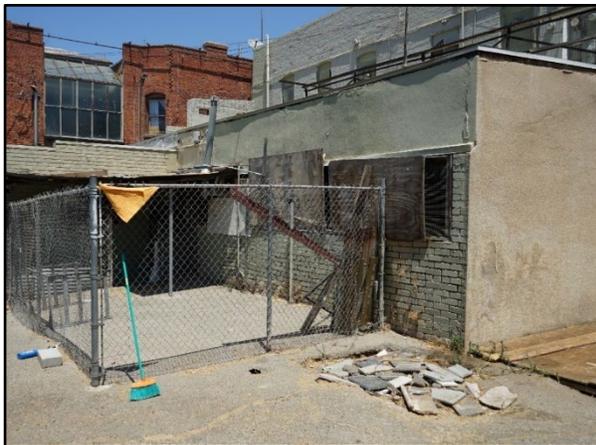


Figure 21. Closeup of one-story additions at center of the rear elevation, facing north.

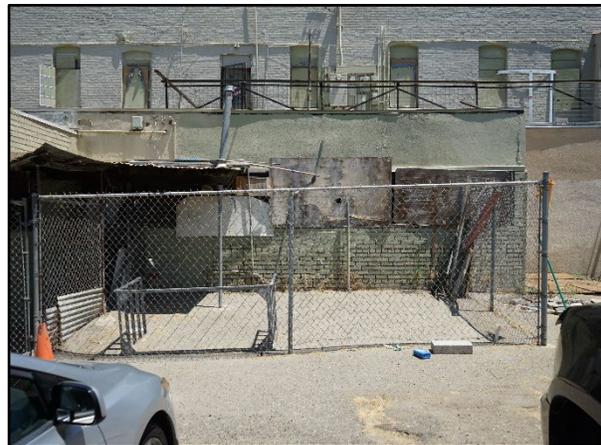


Figure 22. Closeup of long one-story addition at center of the rear elevation, facing northeast.



Figure 23. Closeup of the longer addition and squarish addition as seen from the northwest end of the rear (southwest) elevation.

942 FAGAN ALLEY

942 Fagan Alley consists of a one-story building sited at the southeastern edge of the subject property. Constructed on a concrete foundation, the building is composed of two rectangular blocks, of which the larger block fronts the alley; the smaller block is located to the rear (Figure 24 and Figure 25). The building exterior is sheathed with stucco and has a stucco-belt course on the northwest and southwest elevations (the belt course was originally brick). The building has a flat roof edged with a parapet. A row of brick lines the top of the parapet, and the inside face of the parapet also displays brick that has not been covered with stucco.



Figure 24. 942 Fagan Alley, overview of northwest elevation from the second story of 937-945 F Street, facing south.

The west elevation of the larger block displays three pedestrian doors, two of which have slightly arched openings. The third, central opening shows obvious alterations surrounding the door. In addition, a rectangular vent is located near the top of the door, from which projects a cylindrical pipe (Figure 25). None of the doors were visible due to being obscured by metal security doors. The west elevation also displays three windows that have been boarded over. They have slightly arched openings and wide sills. It is unknown if the windows are extant beneath the plyboard.

The west elevation of the smaller block displays four windows of varying sizes and styles, including sliding and single-hung vinyl-frame windows. Three of the windows have been partially infilled with wood planks and/or plyboard (Figure 25). Most, if not all, of the windows have security bars.

The southwest elevation of the larger block fronts Fagan Alley and displays two windows with slightly arched openings and wide sills (Figure 26). The southeast elevation was not clearly visible due to a fence and wall (Figure 27). Google Street View photographs dating to October 2020 indicate that there are/were at least four windows and two pedestrian doors. Alterations are similar to those described for the southwest elevation – replacement vinyl-frame windows, partial infill or boarding over of window openings, and addition of security bars. The doors were obscured by metal security doors (Google Earth 2020).

The building's north elevation was not clearly visible due to its proximity to 937-945 F Street.



Figure 25. 942 Fagan Alley, closeups of northwest elevation, facing northeast. Note the altered window and door openings.



Figure 26. 942 Fagan Alley, southwest elevation facing the alley and partial northwest elevation; view facing northeast.

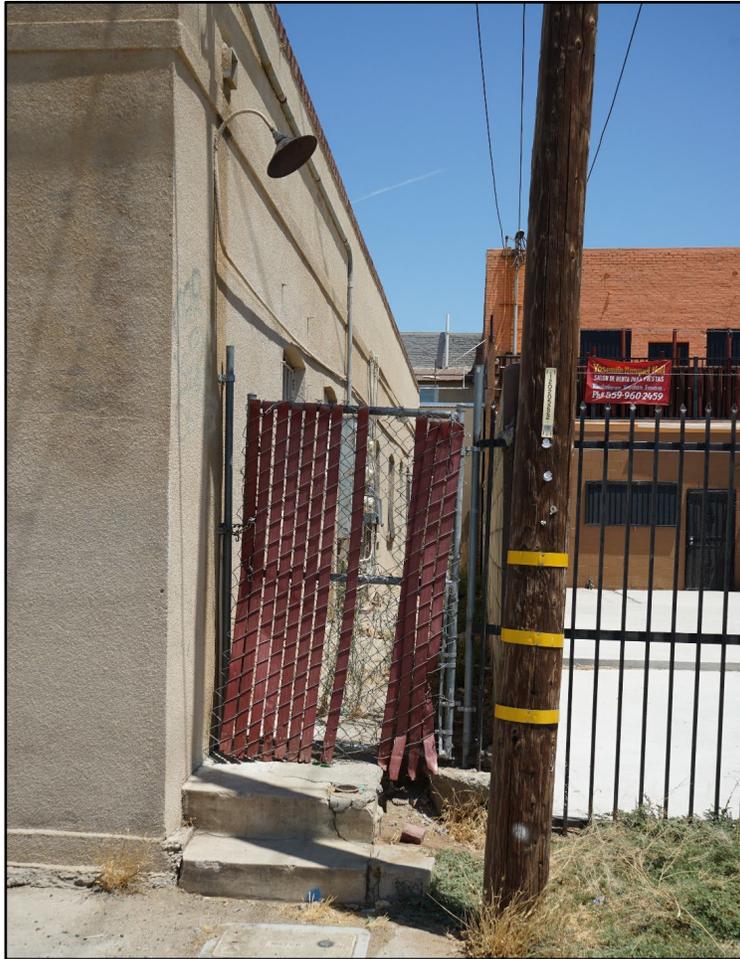


Figure 27. 942 Fagan Alley, southeast elevation; view facing northeast.

SURROUNDING CONTEXT

To illustrate the surrounding context, the photographs below provide an overview of the extant buildings along F Street between Tulare and Kern streets, and one building at the intersection of Tulare Street and China Alley. This area is characterized by one- and two-story buildings, primarily commercial use, although some supported residential use on the second floor. A variety of stylistic features are seen among the buildings, although in general, stylistic features are relatively simple (with the exception of the Bank of Italy/Bank of America building at 947-951 F Street, and the former Bow On Association building at 930-934 F Street, the latter of which was destroyed in a fire). The majority of the buildings appear to be masonry construction, but a variety of exterior cladding is seen including stucco, stone veneer, tile, and vertical metal panels. Other common features include simple cornices and horizontal belt courses; pedestrian entries (some of which are recessed or recently infilled), storefront windows with bulkheads, or large windows at the ground floor; smaller windows at the second floor; awnings above storefronts, entries, and/or windows; and signage mounted on walls. Overall, the F Street corridor between Tulare and Kern Streets has a varied character reflecting the different periods of construction and alterations, the latter of which is disrupted by more recent alterations, including fenestration replacements, storefront reconfigurations, and replacement of pre-existing signage. However, the buildings are consistently spaced to the property lines with no front setback, reflecting the original commercial nature of the street's development during the early twentieth century.

This first series of photographs, Figure 28 through Figure 35, provides an overview of the streetscape and buildings on the southwest side of F Street between Tulare and Kern Streets (including the subject property). The second series of photographs, Figure 36 through Figure 43, provides an overview of the extant buildings on the northeast side of F Street between Tulare and Kern Streets, and at the intersection of Tulare Street and China Alley. Buildings identified as non-contributors to the potential district in the 2006 Chinatown Historic Resource Survey are noted in the figure captions.



Figure 28. F Street, facing southeast from Tulare Street.



Figure 29. F Street, facing northwest from Kern Street.



Figure 30. 947-951 F Street (at the corner of Tulare), facing southwest. This building is adjacent to/northwest of the subject property.



Figure 31. The subject property at 937-945 F Street, northeast elevation, facing south.



Figure 32. 935 F Street, facing southwest. This building is adjacent and southeast of the subject property.



Figure 33. 929-931 F Street, facing southwest.



Figure 34. Parking lot southeast of 929-931 F Street, facing southwest.



Figure 35. 907-909 F Street (at the corner of Kern), facing southwest.



Figure 36. 970 F Street (at corner of Tulare), facing east.



Figure 37. 938-952 F Street, facing east.



Figure 38. 930-934 F Street, facing northeast. This building was severely damaged by fire in 2022.



Figure 39. 922-926 F Street, facing northeast.



Figure 40. 914-920 F Street, facing northeast.



Figure 41. 912 F Street, facing northeast. Non-contributing to the potential historic district.



Figure 42. 1501-1521 Kern Street (at corner of F Street), facing northeast. Non-contributing to the potential historic district.



Figure 43. 1528-1548 Tulare Street (at corner of China Alley).

Built Environment Resources within the Project Area and Vicinity

Previously Identified Resources

As previously noted in discussing the CHRIS records search results above, three built environment resources involve the project area. Resources P-10-005862 and P-10-005874 consist of the historic-era buildings within the project area (937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley, respectively), and resource P-10-004294 consists of the Fresno Nihonmachi/Fresno Chinatown area which includes the project area. One resource is adjacent to the project area: P-10-004270, the former Bank of America/Bank of Italy building at 947-949 F Street.

WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA

Chinatown Local Register Historic District

The 2006 *Chinatown Historic Resource Survey* identified a concentration of buildings in the vicinity of F and Kern streets that appeared to qualify as a local Chinatown historic district, which was found eligible for the City’s LRHR under “Criterion ”” as it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history. “The district is significant for its representation of the development of Fresno’s Chinatown and a new phase of growth after World War II” (ARG 2006:12). At the time it was recorded, it was noted that “Despite the modifications of some structures and vacant lots resulting from demolition, the district conveys a strong sense of time and place” (ARG 2006:12). The potential Chinatown historic district consists of an approximately 1.5-block area with irregular boundaries, roughly between Fagan Alley and China Alley, and between Tulare and Kern Streets. Out of 26 properties, 17 properties were identified as contributors to the potential historic district, including the buildings in the current project area (937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley); areas where infill or demolition compromised the historic character of the street were excluded (ARG 2006:12–14).

At the time of recordation in 2006, the Chinatown Historic Resources Survey noted that “...general diminished setting and overall lack of integrity...” precluded the Chinatown Historic District from qualifying as eligible for listing in the NRHP and CRHR, although the grouping of buildings along F Street likely composed a Local Historic District (ARG 2006: 11–12). However, since the original survey of the Chinatown area almost 20 years ago, the neighborhood and the individual contributing buildings have continued to undergo extensive alterations, including the demolition and complete loss of certain buildings, which have greatly affected the overall character and sense of place throughout the identified area. Although the alterations throughout the district are extensive, perhaps the most notable loss is the former Bow On Association building at 930-934 F Street. This building exhibited Chinese-inspired architectural features and was a centerpiece to the Chinatown Historic District as an important social and religious association building but was destroyed recently in a fire. The loss of this building, in particular, coupled with alterations that have occurred throughout the potential district in recent decades, has significantly changed the sense of place within the district.

While resurveying the potential Chinatown Historic District is outside the scope of this report, the alterations to the district and its individual contributors are widespread and easily identifiable, putting into question the overall potential district’s historical integrity—noted in 2006 as already being heavily altered and diminished—and its ability to qualify as a LRHR-eligible Local Historic District. Generally, the streetscape along F Street has a consistent rhythm with the general lack of setbacks, similar height, and other qualities that reflect a “main street” commercial corridor. However, the alterations throughout the individual buildings and complete loss of others, specifically prominent contributors that were essential to the character of the district, have resulted in a significantly altered character, resulting in diminished

integrity of feeling and association. While the potential Chinatown Historic District is unlikely to qualify as a historic district within the current environmental and historic preservation frameworks, there are undoubtedly cultural sensitivities and significance related to this particular area of Fresno. While this cultural significance might not be reflected in the current built environment, the overall significance of this particular area should be taken into the account regardless of the presence of cultural resources.

937-945 F Street

As outlined above, the building in the project area addressed as 937-945 F Street was identified in the 2006 *Chinatown Historic Resource Survey* as a contributor to the LRHR-eligible Chinatown Historic District. However, this assessment was conducted almost 20 years ago, and it is unclear as to whether the current condition of the building and the surrounding streetscape would continue to reflect the status identified as part of the original survey. Furthermore, the building was briefly evaluated for individual historical significance, which noted that the property had poor integrity and was unlikely to qualify as individually eligible for listing in the NRHP, CRHR, or LRHR, although an evaluation related to the individual significance criteria was not expounded upon. Therefore, the subject building at 937-945 F Street requires an updated evaluation of historical significance to determine whether it qualifies as an individual historical resource under CEQA, as well as an assessment of its standing as a contributor to the potential Chinatown Historic District, which has undergone extensive changes and alterations after its initial recordation.

942 Fagan Alley

As outlined above, the building in the project area addressed as 942 Fagan Alley was identified in the 2006 *Chinatown Historic Resource Survey* as eligible for the CRHR under “Criterion C”¹ and for the City’s LRHR under Criterion iii as the building embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type—worker housing in Chinatown. At the time of the 2006 survey, the building at 942 Fagan Alley was described as retaining “a high degree of integrity; the location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association appear to remain unchanged” (Stock and MacDonald 2006). In addition, the building was identified as a contributor to the LRHR-eligible Chinatown Historic District. However, this assessment was conducted almost 20 years ago, and it is unclear as to whether the current condition of the building and the surrounding streetscape would continue to reflect the status identified as part of the original survey. The building also appears to have undergone extensive alterations in recent years, further questioning its overall historical integrity and status as an eligible resource.

WITHIN THE PROJECT VICINITY

Due to the nature of the project and the demolition of the buildings located at 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley, the project vicinity is considered to include the immediate adjacent buildings located at 947-951 and 933-935 F Street.

947-951 F Street

The property at 947-951 F Street (also known as the Bank of Italy, Bank of America, or Industrial Bank of Fresno) is located adjacent and to the northwest of the project area (Figure 44 and Figure 45). The 2006 *Chinatown Historic Resource Survey* found the property individually eligible for the NRHP and CRHR, as well as a contributor to the potential Chinatown Local Register Historic District. In addition, the property previously had been listed on the City’s LRHR (ARG 2006:2–4). Constructed in 1908, the

¹ The documentation for 942 Fagan Alley is completed erroneously. CRHR significance criteria are identified numerically as 1 through 4, while NRHP significance criteria are lettered A through D. Although the report says CRHR Criterion C, it is believed that they intended to write CRHC Criterion 3.

building has multiple layers of historical significance, including under NRHP Criterion A/ CRHR Criterion 1 as the home of the Industrial Bank of Fresno, which was the first Japanese lending service in Fresno, and under NRHP Criterion B/ CRHR Criterion 2 for its associations with Dr. Bunkaro Okonogi, who was a prominent member of Fresno’s Japanese community. The property has an associated period of significance of 1908-1942, and it does not appear to have undergone extensive alterations since its recordation in 2006. It continues to qualify as a historic resource for the purposes of CEQA.



Figure 44. North and west elevations of 947-951 F Street, facing south.



Figure 45. East and south elevations of 947-951 F Street, facing north.

933-935 F Street

The property at 933-935 F Street is a ca.1925 two-story brick masonry commercial block building located immediately to the southeast of the subject building and project area (Figure 46). The 2006 *Chinatown Historic Resource Survey* found the property was not individually eligible for listing in the NRHP, CRHR, or LRHR due to a lack of historical significance. However, the building was noted as a potential contributor to the potential Chinatown Local Register Historic District (ARG 2006:2–4). Since its recordation in 2006, the building appears to have undergone alterations, including the replacement of the previous windows, doors, and signage (including the noted Torii gateway motif), and the modification of the fenestration openings at both the front and rear elevations. The building does not appear to retain sufficient integrity to qualify as a contributor to the potential Chinatown Local Register Historic District and no longer appears to qualify as a historical resource for the purposes of environmental review under CEQA.



Figure 46. Front (west) elevation of 933-935 F Street, facing southwest.

Resources Requiring Evaluation

937-945 F STREET

Property History

Choi Men acquired the subject property in 1907 when he purchased lots 3, 4, 5 and 6 in Block 38 from T. Mary Deane and her husband (unnamed) (*Fresno Morning Republican* 1907a). It is believed that Men was acting for the Tuck On Jan Co., and acquired a number of lots between E, F, Tulare, and Kern streets in the Chinatown area. That same year, the company undertook the construction of two buildings on F Street, one “at the corner of Tulare” and the other “nearer the center of the block” (*Fresno Morning Republican* 1907b). It is presumed one of these is the subject building at 937-945 F Street. At the time, members of the Chinese community sought to acquire property within the Chinatown area because they saw it as preferable to paying high rents to landlords and because real estate speculation was seen as potentially very profitable (*Fresno Morning Republican* 1907b).

Subsequently, H. Sargavek et al. was identified as the owner of the property (ARG 2006). It appears that Sargavek (or Sargavak) was part of a group of Armenian investors that acquired the property around 1911. Harry H. Sargavek was born in about 1865 in Armenia and immigrated to the United States as a young man in 1889. In 1910, he was working as a real estate agent in Fresno, which was an established Armenian enclave during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1910). At about this time, a group of Armenian investors went into business together to purchase real estate in Fresno’s Chinatown area. A local newspaper reported in June 1911 that,

“a number of Armenian investors...bought a total frontage on F Street between Tulare and Kern, improved property, for speculation... The property bought was owned by Choi Men a prominent Chinatown merchant, and consisted of two pieces, one with a frontage of 150 feet and the other with a frontage of 50 feet. On each place is a two-story brick building.” (*Fresno Morning Republican* 1911)

It is presumed that one of the properties mentioned in the article consists of the subject property. Sargavek left Fresno before 1920, at which time he lived in Los Angeles and worked as a fire insurance agent (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1920).

The addresses 937, 939, 941, 943 and 945 F Street have been associated with the building since at least 1918. Over the years, a variety of commercial tenants—including various types of shops and restaurants—have occupied the building’s ground floor, as well as furnished rooms/hotel rooms in the upper floor..

The Mar family seems to be the owner with the longest association with the building. In 1930, Allen C. Mar, Sr. opened a dry goods store in the building at the 945 F Street space. Mar had immigrated to the United States from China in the early 1900s and worked in the agricultural fields until he and his wife, Jessie, had the funds to open their own store. As their business grew, the couple bought more of the building. Allen and Jessie raised their family in an apartment space behind the store. In the 1950s, the family renamed the business to Peacock Department Store. The building remained in the family for many decades. In the late 1980s, Allen Mar, Jr. and his wife Ellen changed the focus of the store to specialize in men’s wear. It is unclear when the Mar family sold the property. Identified owners during the 2000s included Kei Cheong and Tu A Lam, and David and Sharon Owens (ARG 2006; Palmer 2023). As of 2023, the title of the property is under Wilson and Yolanda Wong (Palmer 2023).

Construction Chronology

Available data that was reviewed to understand the building’s construction chronology included Sanborn fire insurance maps, City building records, aerial photographs, and the previous documentation prepared in 2006 as part of the Chinatown Historic Resource Survey. City records included building permits, records of inspections and notices.

The building at 937-945 F Street was built ca. 1907. Available data indicates that repairs were completed in 1914, but details of the work are unknown. The building appears in a 1918 Sanborn map (Figure 47). By 1918, the first floor housed two retail shops, a restaurant, and a shooting gallery, while the second floor functioned as a hotel (Sanborn Map Company 1918; ARG 2006). It appears that a canopy spanned across the façade. In addition, while the majority of the building was two stories in height, there was a narrow one-story section across the rear (southwest side) of the building (see Figure 47). To the rear of the building, in the south half of the parcel, were a series of one-story rooms which are no longer extant. Previous recordation completed for the property indicates that a new front was added to the building in 1932, an 8 × 10-foot addition was constructed in 1937, and a 13 × 26-foot addition was constructed by 1938 (ARG 2006).



Figure 48. A 1937 aerial photograph shows an addition at the building's southwest corner (red arrow), a second story addition at the southeast corner (blue arrow), and the rooms to the south replaced by a building at the southeast corner of the parcel (green arrow) (UCSB Library 1937).

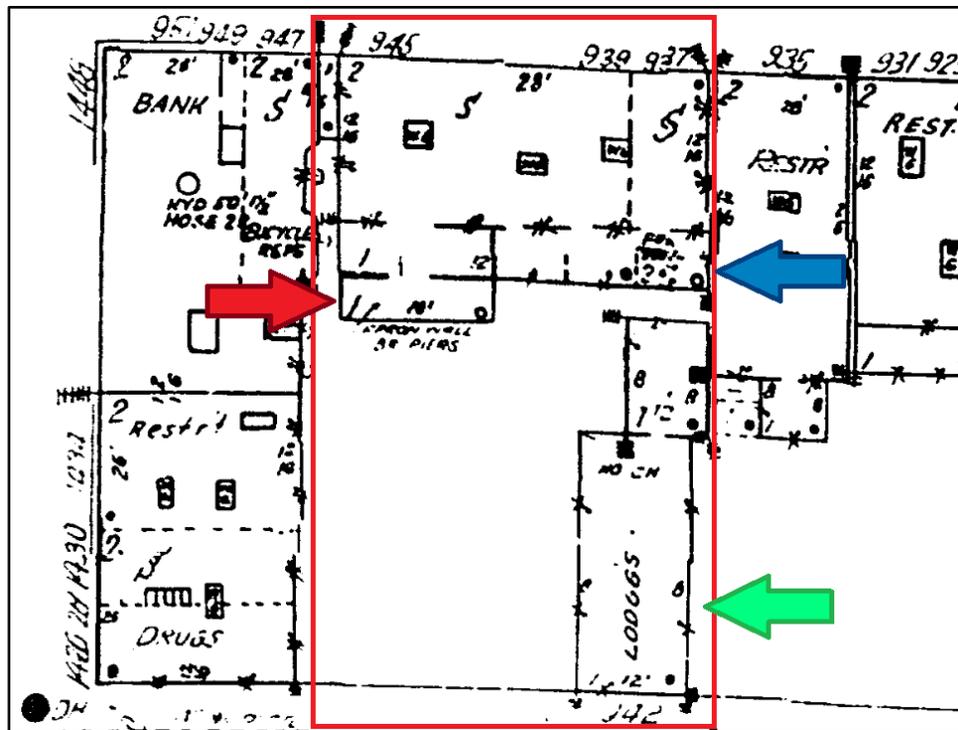


Figure 49. A 1948 Sanborn map shows additions built at the rear of 937-945 F Street (red and blue arrows) and the earlier rooms in the south half of the parcel replaced by the 942 Fagan Alley building (green arrow) (Sanborn Map Company 1948).

Previous recordation for the property indicates that the façade/storefronts were altered in 1954 and a new marquee and Peacock Department Store sign were installed in 1955 (ARG 2006). Available City building records show the aluminum marquee (canopy) and vertical sign on the front of the building in the 1960s (Figure 50). Multiple additions or ancillary buildings at the rear of the building were noted at the time, including a corrugated metal garage and several brick and wood lean-tos. Figure 51 is a site plan from ca. 1960 which depicts three new additions and/or ancillary buildings (noted by red arrows) that were constructed between 1948 and ca. 1960. City records indicate that the building had numerous code deficiencies or violations in the 1960s and was determined to be unsafe. In 1966, a building permit was obtained for \$35,000 worth of improvements/ repairs. Details of this work are unknown; however, the records indicate that the work was to address the City's Dangerous Building Ordinance (DBO).



Figure 50. A 1966 photograph shows the earlier sign projecting from the façade. The storefront window with brick bulkhead at left has since been altered to accommodate an additional entrance (Fresno Public Library).



Figure 51. A ca. 1960 site plan shows two new additions on the south side (rear) of the building and a new ancillary building in the southern half of the parcel (City of Fresno).

The earlier vertical sign that projected from the façade was removed at an unknown time, and a new illuminated letter sign was installed, centered on the façade, in 1985. Between 1966 and 2024, the façade underwent several alterations—this included the addition of a pedestrian entry at the southeast end of the façade, resizing of the adjacent storefront window, and covering of the window’s brick bulkhead with multi-color stone veneer. The previously existing pedestrian entry on the northwest side of the window was also altered such that the entry is no longer recessed, and the door abuts the sidewalk. Figure 52 and Figure 53 illustrate these alterations. It is presumed that the stone veneer presently surrounding the other storefronts was installed during this time period.



Figure 52. The storefront window and brick bulkhead at the southeast end of the building are shown above in 1966 (Fresno Public Library).



Figure 53. A 2024 photograph above shows the added door (left) and stone veneer (SWCA 2024).

In 2014, a fire damaged some of the second-floor spaces including rooms 1, 15, 16, 17, a bathroom, and a hallway. A fire damage report in City records indicated that repairs needed to be made to roof rafters and sheathing, ceiling joists, studs, sheetrock, insulation, windows, stairs, cabinets, hand and guard rails, electrical breakers, outlets, plumbing fixtures, and air handler and ducts. The fire-affected area on the exterior of the building can be seen in Google Street View photographs (Figure 54) (Google Earth 2014).



Figure 54. A Google Street View image from April 2014 shows fire damage on the second floor.

Table 6 below provides a summary of available building permit records for 937-945 F Street that are on file with the City.

Table 6. Available City Building Permits for 937-945 F Street

Date	Address	Permit #	Owner	Architect/Builder	Description of Work
1/29/1966	945 F Street	04255	Mark Allen	H. Wayne Tavi	DBO
10/7/1983	945 F Street	834485	Mark Kay & Sons	Bet-R-Roofs	Reroof
5/14/1985	945 F Street	Unknown	Unknown	Raylite Sign Co.	Pan channel illuminated letter sign on building façade
2/11/1985	945 F Street	850079	Peacock Dept. Store	Allbritten Plumbing	Gas outlets
6/4/1986	945 F Street	862355	Markay & Son Corp.	Bet-R-Roofs	Reroof
5/7/1993	945 F Street	931829	Doreen Lee	Pretzer Roofing	Reroof
3/28/2006	937 F Street	06-3597	Cheong Kei Wong	Owner	Electrical outlets and circuits (work later cancelled)
12/19/2014	943 F Street	14-12302	Cheong Kei Wong; Tu A Lam	Owner	Fire repair; outlets, light fixtures, conduits, air handler with ducts, plumbing fixtures.
2015	943 F Street	15-11554	Cheong Kei Wong; Tu A Lam	Diamond Roofing	Reroof; hot mop

Evaluation of Historical Significance

CRHR Individual Resource Evaluation

CRITERION 1

The subject building does not appear to be historically significant under Criterion 1. The subject building was initially constructed ca.1907 and has no direct associations with the founding of Fresno or the initial development of Chinatown as a Chinese-American enclave. There is no indication that any specific event occurred at the property, which operated and evolved as a typical commercial block building over the last century. With regards to the building’s overall use, the building and its multiple additions all appear to have served as a mixed-use property, housing a number of commercial functions—restaurants, retail stores, taverns, liquor stores, barber shop, etc.—and as short-term residences in the form of boarding rooms, transitional housing, and as a hotel. These functions were all typical of buildings throughout Chinatown and the surrounding area in Fresno, which has remained an eclectic working-class neighborhood since its founding. Overall, the building is reflective of these established patterns of development typical to Chinatown and the west side of Fresno and does not rise to a level of significance under this criterion.

Therefore, 937-945 F Street does not appear to qualify as historically significant under Criterion 1.

CRITERION 2

Overall, the subject building at 937-945 F Street not associated with any one specific individual, particularly in a way that would rise to a level of significance under this criterion. Since its initial construction in ca.1907 and its numerous periods of expansion, there have been multiple owners and occupants; however, research failed to identify that any of these individuals have made significant contributions to history, especially within the context of the subject building.

Therefore, 937-945 F Street does not appear to qualify as historically significant under Criterion 2.

CRITERION 3

Initially constructed ca.1907, the subject building was originally built as a brick masonry commercial block building, which was typical not only of Chinatown, but many of the commercial and mixed-use corridors throughout Fresno. Although the subject building does feature some elements reminiscent of this original commonplace property type, including brick masonry construction and arched window openings at the rear elevation, the overall building has been significantly altered with multiple additions and changes throughout the exterior and interior of the building. As a result, the building no longer reflects its original design and architecture as a brick masonry commercial block. The current design, which has some Modern details, also does not rise to a level of significance under this criterion as it does not embody or characterize any specific style such that it would qualify as significant. Similarly, the subject building does not appear to be the work of a master architect. The original architect of the building is unknown, and it was likely constructed by a contractor using the typical brick masonry construction methods utilized for vernacular commercial block buildings. Subsequent architects, including those associated with the alterations to the primary elevation, are also unknown. The general qualities of the current elevation, which also exhibit alterations throughout, are typical to post-war commercial buildings and would not constitute an example of a master architect's catalogue of work.

Therefore, 937-945 F Street does not appear to qualify as historically significant under Criterion 3.

CRITERION 4

Criterion 4 and the potential to yield significant information is primarily utilized for architectural sites or similar resources and is rarely used for historical resources. For elements of the built environment to qualify as significant under this criterion, the property usually is able to provide new information about construction methods or similar contexts. Constructed ca.1907 and altered extensively over the subsequent decades, the subject building at 937-945 F Street is a typical early twentieth century commercial block building, the construction methods, engineering, and architecture of which are thoroughly understood. As such, the subject building is highly unlikely to yield significant information.

Therefore, 937-945 does not appear to qualify as historically significant under Criterion 4.

INTEGRITY

The CRHR requires that, in addition to retaining historical significance, a historical resource must retain sufficient integrity in order to qualify as eligible for listing. As discussed above, 937-945 F Street does not appear to exhibit historical significance under any of the required CRHR criteria, rendering an assessment of historical integrity as unnecessary. Therefore, the building at 937-945 F Street does not individually appear to qualify as a historic resource.

Contributing Status to Potential Local-Register Eligible Historic District

As demonstrated previously, the potential Chinatown Historic District has undergone extensive alterations and changes since it was first identified nearly 20 years ago in 2006, such that the built environment does not appear to retain sufficient integrity to convey this significance. This is true also of 937-945 F Street, which has been significantly altered since its construction. While the major reconfiguration of the building occurred in the mid-1950s, within the post-war period of development identified as being significant to the district, the building has undergone other alterations that have continued to alter the original features relevant to this period. This is apparent at the storefronts and entrances, which have been reconfigured and include new cladding materials, loss of select windows, removal and replacement of the original signage, and a variety of other replaced materials in response to

increased deterioration. Overall, the subject building, while consistent with the general height and zero setbacks of the surrounding streetscape, does not appear to retain sufficient integrity such that it would qualify as a contributor to a potential historic district.

942 FAGAN ALLEY

Property History

The building addressed as 942 Fagan Alley is sited at the southeastern edge of the subject property, to the rear of the building addressed as 937-945 F Street. Previous recordation for 942 Fagan Alley estimates it was constructed ca. 1925 for H. Sargavak (ARG 2006). As described above, Sargavak was part of a group of investors that purchased the property in the 1910s. During the late 1920s and 1930s, City directories only described the building as “oriental.” Makai Yarmkuche (sic) and his wife owned the building by 1930, at which time renters at the building included farm laborers, a cook, and a waitress. A large number of tenants have resided in the building between the 1940s and 1970s, the majority of which were of Chinese, Japanese, and Latino descent. The building owner was identified as Walter N. Kingen in 1983 (ARG 2006). Identified owners during the 2000s included Kei Cheong and Tu A Lam, and David and Sharon Owens (ARG 2006; Palmer 2023). As of 2023, the title of the property is under Wilson and Yolanda Wong (Palmer 2023).

Construction Chronology

As previously noted, the building at 942 Fagan Alley is estimated to have been built ca. 1925. It appears that the building originally consisted of the larger rectangular portion closest to the alley (Figure 55). Subsequently, between 1937 and 1948, the building was enlarged to the northeast with the smaller, recessed portion that is closest to 937-945 F Street. Figure 56 depicts the building after it was enlarged. Although not reflected in available building permits, other alterations include the replacement of original windows with vinyl-frame sliding and single-hung windows; many windows being closed/boarded up; installation of security grilles within window openings; replacement of original doors; alteration of a door opening at the center of the northwest elevation; installation of a vertical pipe on the northwest elevation that projects past the roofline; and application of stucco over the original brick exterior including the decorative horizontal belt and the window sills. Figure 57 through Figure 60 depict these alterations.



Figure 55. A 1937 aerial photograph shows 942 Fagan Alley sited along the southeast edge of the property. It appears that the building had a basic rectangular plan. (UCSB 1937).

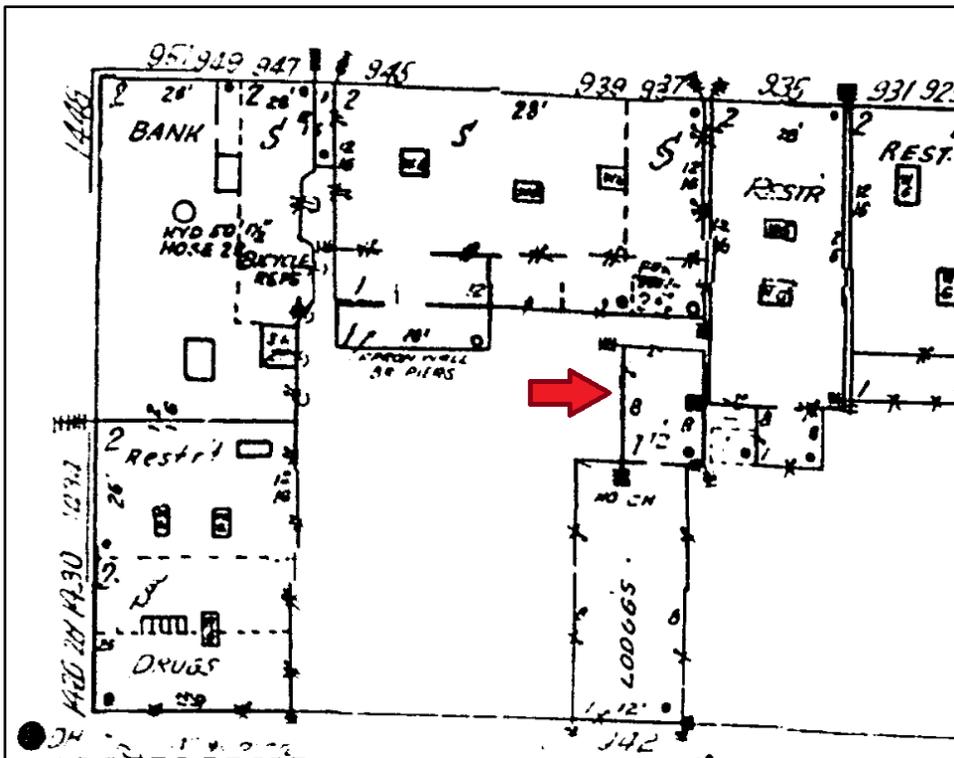


Figure 56. A 1948 Sanborn map shows 942 Fagan Alley was enlarged to the northeast with a smaller, recessed building portion (Sanborn Map Company 1948).



Figure 57. A ca. 1966 photograph shows 942 Fagan Alley’s northwest and southwest elevations (Fresno Public Library).



Figure 58. A ca. 1966 photograph shows 942 Fagan Alley’s southwest and southeast elevations (Fresno Public Library).



Figure 59. A 2024 photograph shows 942 Fagan Alley’s northwest elevation (SWCA 2024).



Figure 60. A January 2022 Google Street View photograph shows 942 Fagan Alley’s southwest and southeast elevations.

Table 7 below provides a summary of available building permit records for 942 Fagan Alley that are on file with the City.

Table 7. Available City Building Permits for 942 Fagan Alley

Date	Address	Permit #	Owner	Architect/Builder	Description of Work
12/9/1925	942 Fagan Alley	6004(?)	H. Sagavak	M. Mancogian	New apartments
12/8/1936	942 Fagan Alley	6562	(Unclear)	Day labor	Change door
9/15/1954	942 Fagan Alley	4635	Allen Mar	Donald J. Dick Inc. Plumbing & Heating	Laundry/tray fixtures
7/25/1979	942 Fagan Alley	794196	Unknown	Allbritten	Gas outlets
9/18/2008	942 Fagan Alley	08-9347	Kei Cheong Wong, Tu A Lam	Owner	Shower repair/replacement

Evaluation of Historical Significance

CRHR Individual Resource Evaluation

CRITERION 1

The subject building does not appear to be historically significant under Criterion 1. The subject building was constructed ca.1925 and has no direct association with the founding of Fresno or the Chinatown neighborhood in the community. Rather, its construction was reflective of established trends and patterns of development. While the use of the building was notable as a worker housing, particularly within the context of Chinatown as an ethnic enclave, this was a use found in buildings throughout this part of Fresno, including the immediately adjacent building at 937-945 F Street. The expansion of housing with the construction of the building at 942 Fagan Alley is consistent with the established patterns of development and does not individually rise to a level of significance under this criterion.

Therefore, 942 Fagan Alley does not appear to qualify as historically significant under Criterion 1.

CRITERION 2

Overall, the building at 942 Fagan Alley does not appear to be significantly associated with an individual such that it would rise to a level of significance under this criterion. Research into the building found that many occupants lived at the building since its original construction, although none appear to have made significant contributions to history. With regards to H. Savarak, the original owner responsible for its construction, the subject building at 942 Fagan Alley appears to be one of many buildings owned by Savarak, who was a typical businessman operating in Fresno during this period. He does not appear to rise to a level of significance under this criterion, particularly in association with the building at 942 Fagan Alley.

Therefore, 942 Fagan Alley does not appear to qualify as historically significant under Criterion 2.

CRITERION 3

The building at 942 Fagan Alley was identified in the 2006 Chinatown Historic Resources Survey as eligible under CRHR Criterion 3 as an example of worker housing in the Chinatown neighborhood. While there does appear to be significant associations, the subject building has undergone extensive alterations since this original documentation such that it no longer embodies this property type. These alterations are discussed in greater detail in the historical integrity section below, but generally the original materials, features, and finishes have all been replaced, greatly altering the overall appearance and character of the building.

Therefore, while the building at 942 Fagan Alley may have significant associations under Criterion 3 as an example of early twentieth century worker housing in Chinatown, the alterations that have occurred have significantly impaired the building's ability to embody this property type.

CRITERION 4

Criterion 4 and the potential to yield significant information is primarily utilized for architectural sites or similar resources and is rarely used for historical resources. For elements of the built environment to qualify as significant under this criterion, the property usually is able to provide new information about construction methods or similar contexts. Constructed ca.1925, the subject building at Fagan Alley is a typical early twentieth century brick masonry building, the construction methods, engineering, and architecture of which are thoroughly understood. As such, the subject building is highly unlikely to yield significant information.

Therefore, 942 Fagan Alley does not appear to qualify as historically significant under Criterion 4.

HISTORICAL INTEGRITY

The 2006 documentation of Fagan Alley notes that the building, at the time of recordation, exhibited a high degree of integrity and that much of the building was “unchanged.” However, following the recent survey and documentation efforts as part of this project, the conditions have been significantly altered throughout the building. The following integrity assessment of 942 Fagan Alley reflects those conditions observed in support this project.

Overall, the building at 942 Fagan Alley has not been moved, and therefore retains its integrity of location. Similarly, the relationship between the two buildings on the subject property, as well as the neighboring buildings support the general sense of setting, although it is notable that the surrounding area features empty lots and parking lots not consistent with the building’s original period of construction ca.1925. As such, 942 Fagan Alley retains integrity of setting, albeit diminished. Generally, the recent alterations have greatly changed the overall character of the building. As observed, the building has had fenestration openings altered and infilled, new replacement vinyl windows and composite doors installed throughout, application of a stucco finish across the original brick masonry, installation of new venting and other mechanical equipment, and the complete remodel of the interior spaces. As part of these alterations, the building no longer retains its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. This extensive change to the building’s overall character has also resulted in a loss of integrity of feeling, as it no longer conveys the sense of an early twentieth century worker housing building, which has in turn resulted in a loss of integrity of association.

Therefore, due to the extensive alterations exhibited at 942 Fagan Alley, the subject building does not retain sufficient historical integrity to qualify as individually eligible for listing in the CRHR.

Contributing Status to Potential Local-Register Eligible Historic District

Due to the alterations discussed above, the subject building at 942 Fagan Alley no longer appears to qualify as a contributor to a potential Chinatown Historic District due to a lack of historical integrity.

IMPACTS ASSESSMENT

Archaeological

Investigations into potential archaeological resources within the project area found that there were no previously identified resources. The disturbed nature of the site through its grading and various periods of development and improvements as mixed-use property suggests that the overall archaeological sensitivity for the project area is decreased, although the overall sensitivity of the surrounding Chinatown area remains high. As such, it is possible that unknown archaeological resources are extant within the project area, which have the potential to be impacted during the demolition of the buildings on the property, as well as the new construction, particularly during ground-disturbing activities. Because ground-disturbing activities would have a maximum depth of excavation up to 10 feet (for basement demolition), SWCA recommends that a qualified archaeologist present to monitor demolition and removal of the basement to identify any intact archaeological resources. Additional monitoring by a qualified archaeologist will also be required during any subsequent ground disturbing activities associated with the construction of the new housing project.

Historical Resources

947-951 F Street

The building located at 947-951 F Street, also known as the former Bank of Italy building, qualifies as a historical resource for the purposes of environmental review under CEQA. Although the project does not specifically include any scope of work related to this property, the current historic building at 947-951 F Street is immediately adjacent to the subject building, directly abutting the property line and the current building. This immediate proximity means that the demolition of 937-943 F Street has the potential to physically alter the building if the demolition activities are not conducted with the utmost care. Similarly, it is possible that vibrations from the demolition activities may also result in damage to the historical resource; however, a structural assessment of 947-951 F Street was not conducted, and the demolition scope and construction equipment are unknown at this time. Similarly, the design for the new housing building is not known, although a maximum height of 60 feet and approximately 4-stories is proposed. The height itself will be taller than the adjacent building at 947-951 F Street, which is two-stories with an elevated parapet and corner cupola. Despite this difference in height, the new housing development at the subject property will still be in scale with the overall neighborhood such that the height difference, while perceptible, will not severely detract from the character of the historic building at 947-951 F Street, particularly through the use of other design elements that could improve compatibility of the new construction. However, the design of the new construction is not yet known, and the potential for an impact to the overall setting, feeling, and other aspects of 947-951 F Street's historical character is possible. Although the project has the potential to significantly impact the building at 947-951 F Street through physical damage related to the demolition and new construction activities, as well as indirect impacts to the overall setting and its historic sense of place, these impacts can be mitigated to a **less-than-significant** level by following the recommendations outlined below.

Potential Chinatown Historic District

As discussed above, the potential Chinatown Historic District was first identified as being LRHR-eligible during the 2006 Chinatown Historic Resources Survey. At the time, the survey noted a diminishment of integrity and setting such that the district would not qualify as eligible for listing in the NRHP and CRHR. Despite this recognition in 2006, the overall district has continued to change since it was documented nearly 20 years ago. Specifically, many of the contributing resources exhibit notable and extensive alterations, and some of the most significant contributors, namely the Bow On Association building at 930-934 F Street, have been entirely lost. These changes have further degraded the overall integrity and character of the historic district such that its standing as potentially eligible for listing in the LRHR does not appear to be as true today as it was in 2006. Despite the lack of integrity within the built environment within the core of the historic Chinatown, the history of Chinatown and overall cultural sensitivities cannot be ignored as it is incredibly significant to the history of Fresno and its development.

In terms of project impacts, the demolition of the two buildings at 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley will not result in significant impacts to historical resources as defined under CEQA; however, the potential for cumulative impacts to the overall cultural importance of the Chinatown neighborhood is notable and has the potential to significantly impact the more intangible culturally significant aspects of the neighborhood.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This inventory of cultural resources included a CHRIS NWIC records search, a SLF search through the NAHC, a review of historic aerials and relevant literature, and an intensive pedestrian survey for archaeological and historical resources.

The CHRIS results indicated that 67 previously recorded cultural resources are located within a 0.25-mile radius of the project area. Four resources involve the project area, of which two are built environment properties and two are districts. Resources P-10-005862 and P-10-005874 consist of the historic-era buildings within the project area (937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley, respectively), resource P-10-004294 consists of the Fresno Nihonmachi/Fresno Chinatown District, and P-10-007206 is the buried component of the Town of Fresno district that were uncovered during construction monitoring.

The intensive archaeological resources pedestrian survey conducted on August 7, 2024, produced negative results. SWCA sent letters with a brief project description and associated maps depicting the project to the NAHC on July 12, 2024, requesting a review of its SLF. The NAHC response was received on July 16, 2024, and provided a negative result. The NAHC response also provided a list of Native American tribes and individuals who may also have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area. SWCA sent outreach letters to all provided Native American contacts via email on August 1, 2024, and via post office on August 13, 2024. Follow-up telephone calls were made on August 8 and August 13, 2024. Heather Airey, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer with the Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians noted that they do not typically deal with Fresno and defer to Table Mountain; Heather Airey also stated that there are no concerns on behalf of the tribe. The remainder of the telephone calls went unanswered. Examples of tribal outreach letters and details regarding tribal correspondence are presented in Appendix C.

Although no cultural resources were noted on the ground surface during this pedestrian survey, the possibility of encountering cultural resources during demolition remains. SWCA recommends an archaeological monitor be present on site for the demolition and removal of the basement.

The historical resource survey of the project area was conducted on July 22, 2024, which included documenting the built environment, specifically the subject buildings on the subject property, addressed as 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley, the immediate adjacent properties, and the surrounding streetscape. Subsequent research, contextual developments, and evaluations found that the subject building at 937-945 F Street does not appear to be eligible for listing in the CRHR due to a lack of historical significance. Additionally, the subject building at 942 Fagan Alley also appears to be ineligible for listing in the CRHR due to a lack of historical integrity. As such, neither building on the property qualifies as an individual historic resource for the purposes of CEQA. The CHRIS records search and review of previous documentation found that the north adjacent building to the project area, addressed as 947-951 F Street, was previously determined eligible for listing in the NRHP and CRHR, and is locally listed on the LRHR, thus qualifying as a historical resource. The immediate proximity of this resource next to the project area has the potential to result in significant impacts to the resource; however, through the execution of the following recommendations, these impacts can be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level.

With regard to the potential local Chinatown Historic District, the historical resource survey conducted as part of this study found that the existing conditions within the district have changed significantly since the original documentation was completed in 2006. As noted by ARG at the time of the original survey, the project area had diminished setting and overall historical integrity due to a series of demolitions, redevelopments, and alterations throughout the survey area. While the concentration of buildings along F Street was noted, a review of the 2006 documentation has demonstrated that the area has continued to undergo significant changes and alterations since the potential historic district was first identified.

Although a full survey and re-evaluation of the Chinatown Historic District was not within the scope of this report, the comparative changes along F Street between the 2006 and current conditions have resulted in a continued decrease in overall character, such that many of the previously identified contributors, including the particularly significant Bow On Association building at 930-934 F Street (lost to fire) and the project area–adjacent 943-945 F Street, are no longer extant or no longer retain integrity to convey a sense of place associated with the potential Chinatown Historic District.

While the built environment within the Chinatown Historic District does retain some consistent qualities, including consistent height and zero setbacks, alterations throughout the district since its recordation in 2006 are substantial; the already diminished integrity is such that the district is unlikely to continue qualifying as a locally eligible historic district. However, despite the changes to the built environment, the Chinatown neighborhood has intangible cultural significance to the development of Fresno and the Chinese-American community. While the demolition of the buildings on the subject property would not significantly impact this, cumulative impacts from continued changes and development have the potential to significantly impact the cultural character of the neighborhood. However, this can be mitigated through the development of publicly accessible interpretive materials specific to the various historic contexts the culturally sensitive Chinatown neighborhood can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level.

Therefore, through the execution of the following recommendations, the proposed demolition of the buildings at 937-945 F Street and 942 Fagan Alley, as well as the impacts from the new construction of the future housing project, can be mitigated to *less-than-significant* with the implementation of the following recommendations.

Recommendations

Historical Resources

947-951 F STREET STABILIZATION AND MONITORING

To address the potential physical and direct impacts to 947-951 F Street to a less-than-significant level, the following stabilization and monitoring recommendations have been developed:

- A) Structural Assessment and Stabilization:** To address the potential impacts to 947-951 F Street, the City shall contract a qualified structural engineer with demonstrable experience assessing historic buildings to conduct a structural assessment of the brick masonry building. This assessment shall outline any potential structural issues related to the demolition and new construction activities at the adjacent property and provide any recommendations to reduce the potential impacts related to the the project. If structural deficiencies are present, the City shall be responsible for implementing any temporary shoring or stabilization approaches during demolition of the existing buildings and the new construction.

- B) Construction Monitoring:** prior to demolition activities, the City shall utilize staff of a qualified consultant that meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards in architectural history and/or historic architecture to document the existing conditions and character-defining features at the exterior of 947-951 F Street. Site protocols for the protection of the resource shall be developed and included as part of the project specifications. This will include identifying appropriate demolition and construction approaches and specifying equipment at locations within 10 feet of the historic building, potential protection interventions (i.e. boarding up windows, temporary covering of character-defining features, etc.), vibration and conditions

monitoring throughout the course of the demolition and construction activities, and emergency protocols in the event that project results in physical damage to the historic building at 947-951 F Street. These emergency protocols will most likely include the following:

- a. Stop-work protocols after damage to the historic building is sustained;
- b. List of contacts and notification procedures;
- c. List of qualified historic preservation professionals to investigate the condition of the historic resources in the immediate aftermath of the accidental damage;
- d. Supplemental conditions assessment of the historical resource by a qualified historic architect and the structural engineer that completed the original assessment to assess the damage and immediate stabilization work; and
- e. Preparation of a treatment plan to repair the damage portion of the building.

Following the completion of the demolition and construction activities, a supplemental conditions assessment shall be conducted, which will include a comparative analysis compared to the pre-construction conditions, a summary of the monitoring efforts or any emergency stop-work incidents, and the identification of any Standards-compliant treatment to repair or restore damaged character-defining features to at least the pre-construction condition following the completion of both the demolition and construction activities.

COMPATIBLE DESIGN CRITERIA FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

To address the potential indirect impacts of the new construction on the adjacent historical resource at 947-951 F Street, the following recommendations related to the design of the housing project is proposed:

- A) Qualified Historic Preservation Consultant:** the design team selected for the new construction project should include a qualified historic preservation professional, such as a historic architect or architectural historian that meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards in their respective fields, that has demonstrable experience in success working on infill construction projects within historic settings and spaces.
- B) Compatible Design Criteria:** the overall design of the new construction should be both differentiated from the surrounding historic context and character, meaning that it should be reconstructionist or designed to appear historic in itself, while also being compatible with the historic character such that the new construction would not detract from the overall setting and sense of place for the adjacent historical resource at 947-951 F Street. This should take into consideration of utilizing appropriate scale, massing, façade articulation, fenestration placement and rhythm, and the use of materials, details, and ornamentation to enhance compatibility and differentiation between the new construction and the adjacent historical resource.
- C) Historic Preservation Commission:** at approximately the 60% stage of the conceptual and schematic design phases within the overall design process, the design team and the qualified historic preservation consultant should present the proposed design of the new construction to the City’s Historic Preservation Commission for review and comment to provide direction related to the compatible design. This will provide additional opportunities for the City’s Historic Preservation Commission, as well as the general public, to provide feedback to the design team. As outlined in the City’s requirements, the final design will also go before the Historic Preservation Commission for approval.

CHINATOWN INTERPRETIVE MATERIALS

The Chinatown Local Register Historic District has undergone significant alterations and changes since it was surveyed and identified in 2006, such that it no longer appears to retain sufficient historical integrity to physically convey its historical significance. However, the overall cultural significance of the neighborhood and the subject block along F Street is of exceptional importance to the city of Fresno and the local community. Despite the built environment of the surrounding block no longer appearing as a historic district, the intangible cultural sensitivities of the surrounding cannot be overstated. To address the cumulative impacts to the Chinatown neighborhood, it is recommended that the City should prepare publicly accessible interpretive materials to address the cultural sensitivities and reduce the cumulative impacts to Fresno's Chinatown to a less-than-significant level:

- A) **Interpretive Materials:** the City should develop publicly accessible interpretive materials to educate the general public on the historic significance of the Chinatown neighborhood. Interpretive materials shall consider a number of factors, including but not limited to the history of Chinatown, its evolution as a neighborhood, and any intangible historical themes no longer reflected in the built environment; as well as the intended audience, and the location of the display. Although traditional interpretive materials, such as signage, are typically located at or near a project is occurring, offsite interpretive displays may be appropriate in certain cases, such as buildings that are not open to the public for security or other reasons. As this is a public project administered by the City, other public locations owned and/or managed by the City within the Chinatown neighborhood are acceptable, such as the placement of signage along sidewalks of the F Street corridor. This could also include the development of digitally based interpretive materials that are hosted by the City and easily accessed by the public. Interpretive materials shall be prepared by an architectural historian or historian who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards, in coordination with the City of Fresno. Development of these interpretive materials shall involve consultation with parties that have demonstrable interest in the history of Fresno and the cultural significance of the Chinatown neighborhood, and will be subject to approval by the City's Historic Preservation Commission.

Archaeological Resources

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

While the disturbed nature of the site suggests that the overall archaeological sensitivity for the project area is decreased, the overall sensitivity of the surrounding Chinatown area remains high. As such, it is possible that intact archaeological deposits related to historic Chinatown may be present within the project area. SWCA recommends that a qualified archaeologist present to monitor demolition and removal of the basement to identify any intact archaeological resources.

INADVERTENT DISCOVERIES

In the event that unanticipated cultural resources are exposed during disturbance activities, work within 15 meters (50 feet) of the find must stop and the City must be notified immediately. Work may not resume until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the significance of the find. Disturbance activities may continue in other areas. If the discovery proves significant, additional work such as archaeological testing, data recovery, or consultation with stakeholders may be warranted.

DISCOVERY OF HUMAN REMAINS

The discovery of human remains during the course of the project is a possibility. If human remains are encountered, then the procedures outlined by the NAHC, in accordance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code and PRC Section 5097.98, would be followed. If the monitor determines that a discovery includes human remains:

1. All ground-disturbing work within the immediate vicinity (25 feet) of the find would halt.
2. The archaeologist would contact the County Coroner:

Fresno County Coroner
3333 E American Ave
Fresno, CA 93725
Phone: (559) 600-3400
Web: <https://www.fresnosheriff.org/coroner.html>

3. As a courtesy, the County Coroner would also notify the NAHC:

Native American Heritage Commission
915 Capitol Mall, Room 364
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 373-3710
Email: nahc@nahc.ca.gov

The County Coroner would have 2 working days to examine the remains after being notified in accordance with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. If the County Coroner determines that the remains are Native American and are not subject to the County Coroner's authority, the County Coroner has 24 hours to notify the NAHC of the discovery.

The NAHC would immediately designate and notify the Native American Most Likely Descendant (MLD), who will have 48 hours after being granted access to the location of the remains to inspect them and provide recommendations for the treatment of them.

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APPENDIX A

CHRIS Records Search Results (Redacted)

APPENDIX B

2006 DPR 523 Forms

APPENDIX C

Native American Coordination

