

755 E SHAW AVENUE HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION (HRE)

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA
[26032]

PREPARED FOR
CITY OF FRESNO

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I. INTRODUCTION

This Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) has been prepared at the request of the Fresno Planning Department for the property at 755 E Shaw Avenue (APN 427-030-37) in the Hoover neighborhood of Fresno, California (**Figure 1** and **Figure 2**). The parcel is an irregular "T"-shaped lot, adhering to the footprint of the subject building contained within it. The parcel is approximately 310 feet at its longest and 268 feet at its widest with an overall parcel size of 1.76 acres. The subject building is a three-story steel and reinforced concrete retail department store in the Late Modern style. Originally a Weinstock's department store (owned and operated by the Broadway-Hale Stores), it is attached at the west side to the larger Fashion Fair Mall. The subject building was constructed from 1969 to 1970. It was designed by Charles Luckman Associates and was engineered by Ayers, Cohen, and Hayakawa. The property is in a CR (Commercial Regional) zoning district.

This HRE does not evaluate the buildings located in the adjacent parcels including those to the west that comprise the larger Fashion Fair Mall: APN 427-030-27, 427-030-36, 427-030-35, 427-030-34, and it does not evaluate buildings within the adjacent parcel surrounding it at the north, east and south, APN 427-030-38.

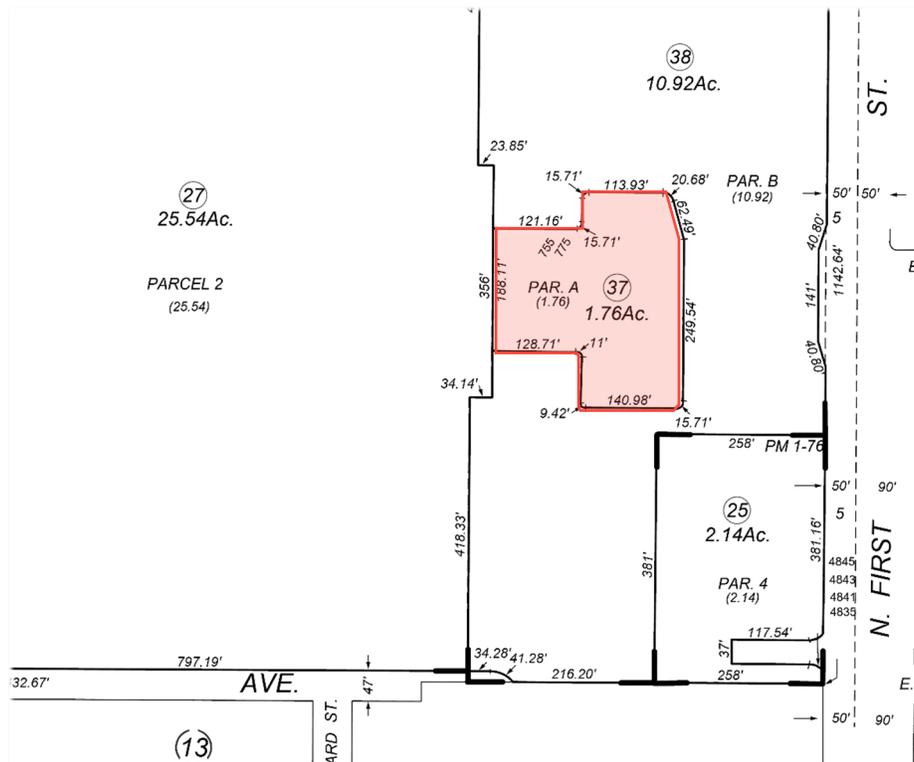


Figure 1. Parcel 427-030-47 which consists solely of the subject building is shaded red. Source: Fresno County Assessor. Edited by Page & Turnbull.

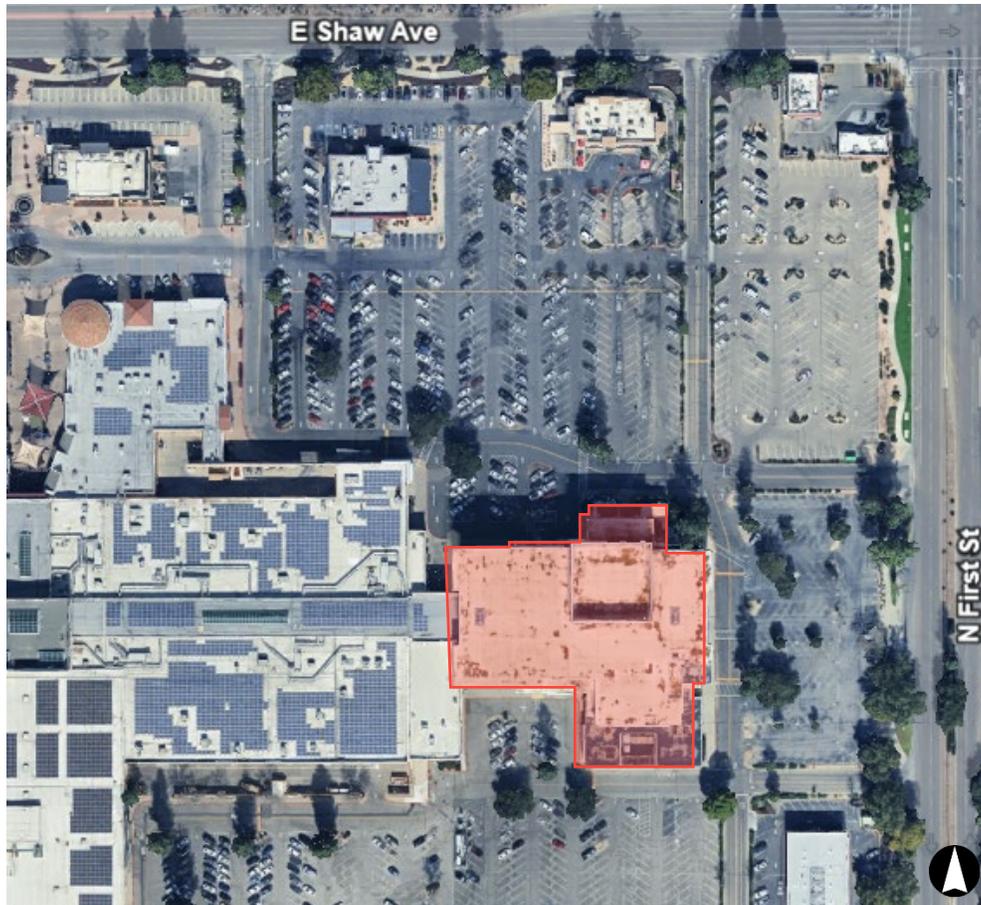


Figure 2. Satellite view of the subject property, shaded red. Source: Google Earth, 2024. Edited by Page & Turnbull.

According to the City of Fresno Historic Preservation Database, 755 E Shaw Avenue is not a designated historic resource.¹ None of the records reviewed indicate that the property has been previously evaluated for eligibility for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) as an individual property or as a contributor to an eligible district.

Methodology

This report provides a summary of the current historic status, a building description, and historic context for the individual building at 755 E Shaw Avenue, including the mid-century development of

¹ City of Fresno Historic Preservation Database, accessed February 9, 2026, <https://www.fresno.gov/planning/historic-preservation/#database>.

Fresno and Late Modernism. Page & Turnbull prepared this report using research collected at local repositories, including the Fresno County Assessor, the Fresno Department of Planning and Development, as well as various online sources including Ancestry.com, the California Digital Newspaper Collection, and Newspapers.com. Key primary sources consulted and cited in this report include Sanborn Map Company fire insurance maps, historic architectural drawings, Fresno County Assessor records, and historical newspapers.

Page & Turnbull staff conducted site visit to 755 E Shaw Avenue on February 24, 2026. All photographs within this report were taken at that time, unless otherwise noted.

Summary of Findings

Page & Turnbull found that the subject property at 755 E Shaw Avenue in Fresno does not appear to be individually eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources or the Fresno Local Register of Historic Resources under any significance criteria. A detailed evaluation of historic significance is included on pages 36-40.

Therefore, 755 E Shaw Avenue does not appear to be a historic resource for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

II. EXISTING HISTORIC STATUS

The following section examines the national, state, and local historic status currently assigned to the subject property at 755 E Shaw Avenue, Fresno, CA.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation's most comprehensive inventory of historic resources. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service and includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level.

The subject property is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places individually, or as part of a registered historic district.

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed in the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register-listed properties are automatically listed in the California Register. Properties can also be nominated to the California Register by local governments, private organizations, or citizens. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on those developed by the National Park Service for the National Register of Historic Places.

The subject property is not listed in the California Register of Historical Resources individually, or as part of a registered historic district.

California Historical Resource Status Codes

Properties listed or under review by the State of California Office of Historic Preservation are listed within the Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD) and are assigned a California Historical Resource Status Code (Status Code) of "1" to "7" to establish their historical significance in relation to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) or California Register of Historical Resources (California Register).² Properties with a Status Code of "1" or "2" are either eligible for listing in the California Register or the National Register, or are already listed in one or both of the registers. Properties assigned Status Codes of "3" or "4" appear to be eligible for listing in either

² California State Office of Historic Preservation, Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD), Fresno County, updated January 2026.

register, but normally require more research to support this rating. Properties assigned a Status Code of "5" have typically been determined to be locally significant or to have contextual importance. Properties with a Status Code of "6" are not eligible for listing in either register. Finally, a Status Code of "7" means that the resource has not been evaluated for the National Register or the California Register, or needs reevaluation.

The subject property is not currently listed in the BERD database for Fresno County with a status code. This means the property has not been formally evaluated using California Historical Resource Status codes in a report submitted to an information center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) of the California Office of Historic Preservation. The most recent update to the BERD database was in January 2026.

Fresno Local Register of Historic Resources

The City of Fresno maintains a Local Register of Historic Resources, which includes buildings, structures, objects, sites and districts that have sufficient integrity and are significant in Fresno's history. While over the years several resources have been removed from listing due to fire, demolition, or relocation outside of the City, as of January 2019 there are 274 properties individually listed in the Local Register. Thirty-one properties listed in the Local Register are also listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Twenty-eight properties are also listed as Heritage Properties. In addition to individual listings, Fresno has four designated historic districts: the Porter Tract (near Fresno City College), the Wilson Island (located within the Tower District), Huntington Boulevard (near Roosevelt High School), and the Chandler Airfield/Fresno Municipal Airport. At least twelve other districts have been recommended through surveys or community-specific plans.³

The subject property is not currently listed in the Fresno Local Register of Historic Resources, individually or as part of a district.

³ City of Fresno Historic Preservation Database, accessed February 9, 2026, <https://www.fresno.gov/planning/historic-preservation/#database>.

III. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The department store building at 755 E Shaw Avenue is three stories tall and constructed of steel and reinforced concrete with a concrete foundation. The building's plan is generally rectangular with irregular projections at the north and south façades. The building's massing can be described as irregularly stacked rectangular blocks or volumes. The geometry of the blocks creates a series of levels and planes. The faces of the volumes are clad in split face concrete block veneer and horizontal strips of smooth stucco. There are public entrances at the north, south, and west façades with a vehicle loading dock at the south façade. At the west façade, the building is attached to the larger Fashion Fair Mall. The building features a flat roof with two hipped skylights, a flagpole, and mechanical equipment. At the roof level there is an additional "block" that appears as a fourth floor or penthouse but is a parapet wall referred to as a "sign wall" in the original drawings. Lettering spelling out "Forever 21" is affixed to the wall. The building is surrounded by large surface parking lots.

Primary (North) Façade

The primary (north) façade features three stories of stacked blocks or volumes. At the roof, the sign wall slightly projects over the third floor and features a "Forever 21" dimensional letter sign. Each level has irregular geometric projections and recesses (**Figure 3** and **Figure 4**). At the east end, there is a projection at the first floor that originally featured a continuous wall of tinted windows. These windows have since been infilled with cement plaster-clad walls and an added entrance. This entrance has two sets of paired glazed doors with fixed side lites and transoms (**Figure 5** and **Figure 6**). At the west end, there is a second entrance that features a slightly projecting full-height chrome aluminum framed curtain wall with two sets of paired glazed doors (**Figure 7**). A pair of flush metal utility doors are located toward each end of the façade.



Figure 3. Diagonal view of primary (north) façade, looking southwest.



Figure 4. Diagonal view of north façade, looking southeast.



Figure 5. Detail view of first floor projection and entrance, looking south.



Figure 6. Detail view of projection entrance.



Figure 7. Detail view of west side entrance.

East Façade

Like the other façades, the east façade features three stories of stacked blocks with irregular projections and recesses. The east façade is shorter in length than the north and south façades (**Figure 8** to **Figure 10**). The entryway at this façade, which is not original, features a slightly projecting double-height chrome aluminum framed curtain wall. There are two sets of glazed paired doors offset to the north side of the curtain wall (**Figure 11**). Toward the south are two sets of flush metal utility doors. The roof sign wall, which is set back, features a "Forever 21" dimensional letter sign.



Figure 8. Overall view of east façade, looking west.



Figure 9. View of entrance, looking west.

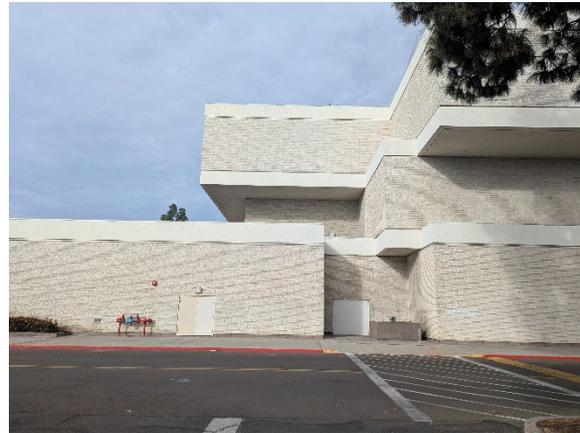


Figure 10. View of south end of east façade, looking west.



Figure 11. Detail view of entrance.



Figure 12. Detail view of concrete block veneer.

South Façade

The south façade features a single-story projecting volume at the east end of the façade. This is used as a vehicle loading dock and back-of-house storage. At the projection there are two metal roll-up vehicle doors, one wider than the other, and two hollow metal doors (**Figure 13** and **Figure 14**). At the west façade of the projection, there is a multi-lite fixed display window with an awning above (**Figure 15**). The west side of the south façade is recessed from the east projection. It features a similar full-height curtain wall entryway as the north façade and a pair of flush metal utility doors (**Figure 16** and **Figure 17**).



Figure 13. Overall view of south façade, looking north.



Figure 14. View of east projection of the south façade, looking north.



Figure 15. View of the west side of the projection at the south façade, looking east.



Figure 16. View of west side of the south façade, looking north.



Figure 17. Detail view of west side entrance.

West Façade

The west façade is where the subject building connects to the Fashion Fair Mall. There are no openings or ornamentation at the west façade (**Figure 18**).



Figure 18. View of west façade and connection to the Fashion Fair Mall to right and north façade at left, looking southeast.

Site Features

The building is surrounded by parking lots at the north, south, and east façades, which are on a separate parcel (**Figure 19**). Around the visible façades of the building there are several concrete planters that were part of the original design (**Figure 20**). For example, at the north façade there are rows of planters flanking the east entrance that are clad in the same split concrete block veneer as the building (**Figure 21** and **Figure 22**). Other planters have a simple concrete curb surround.



Figure 19. View of north side parking lot, looking southeast.



Figure 20. View of typical concrete planter, south façade, looking northwest.



Figure 21. View of planters flanking the north façade entrance.



Figure 22. Detail view of planters with clad in concrete block veneer.

Surrounding Neighborhood

The surrounding neighborhood consists of the attached Fashion Fair Mall which includes different types of retail businesses accessed from the exterior and interior. In addition to sharing a parking lot with the mall building, the subject building shares a parking lot with several surrounding one-story retail and restaurant buildings (**Figure 23** to **Figure 26**). Across E Shaw Avenue and N First Street there are gas stations and low-rise office, retail, and restaurant buildings.



Figure 23. Retail stores that are part of the Fashion Fair Mall, looking south.



Figure 24. Restaurant building to the northwest of the subject building, looking northwest.



Figure 25. Restaurant building to the north of the subject building, looking north.



Figure 26. Vacant retail building to the southeast of the subject building, looking east.

IV. HISTORIC CONTEXT

Mid-Century Growth and Shopping Centers in Fresno

Fresno County was established in 1856 from parts of Mariposa, Merced, and Tulare Counties. The City of Fresno was founded in May 1872 and it became the county seat in 1874. Supported by fertile agricultural lands and railroad transportation, Fresno emerged as the leading agricultural hub of the San Joaquin Valley. By 1910, the population had reached 24,892, and downtown Fresno experienced a building boom in the early twentieth century.

Following World War II, Fresno saw another population boom from 60,685 in 1940 to 91,669 in 1950.⁴ As stated in the *City of Fresno Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, to accommodate the influx, Fresno's builders began the process of subdividing and building tract homes on large tracts of land north of Shields Avenue as the city expanded outward. The 1950s saw significant growth in residential developments. Residential tracts developed during this period in the city and county of Fresno included Mayfair tract No. 2 (1948); Sierra Sky Park (1946); Wilshire Gardens (1948); University Terrace (1949); the University Portals neighborhood (1953); Maroa Heights (1953); and the Fig Garden Rancho and Thunderbird Heights tract developments (1956).⁵

With the population now residing further from downtown, a shift occurred in the location of shopping centers. By the late 1950s, downtown Fresno retailers faced competition from both regional and neighborhood suburban shopping centers. A neighborhood shopping center is typically the smaller of the two types with an open-air configuration featuring surface parking in front of the shops, usually anchored by a grocery store or pharmacy and within or adjacent to residential neighborhoods. Similar, but with a difference in scale, "the regional shopping center, made popular in the 1950s and 1960s, introduced a larger scale of retail development. Typically located on the urban fringe amid new suburban neighborhoods, these centers capitalized on postwar automobile ownership by drawing shoppers away from downtowns. Usually anchored by one or more department stores and surrounded by extensive surface parking, they often featured outdoor plazas with coordinated landscaping and freestanding kiosks, and were precursors to the enclosed, multi-level malls of the 1970s and 1980s.⁶

⁴ At the time, census reports excluded military personnel and Japanese. Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, (Fresno, CA: Planning Resource Associates, Inc., prepared for the City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, September 2008), 30.

⁵ Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, (Fresno, CA: Planning Resource Associates, Inc., prepared for the City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, September 2008), 62.

⁶ Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, (Fresno, CA: Planning Resource Associates, Inc., prepared for the City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, September 2008), 34.

Suburban shopping centers that were developed in Fresno during the 1950s through the early 1960s include Mayfair Shopping Center, Manchester Center and Fig Garden Village.

Mayfair Center, at First Street and McKinley Avenue, is considered Fresno's "first of the suburban shopping centers located near an intersection."⁷ Opened by 1950 and designed in a Streamline Moderne style (evident by its round three-story administration building), the neighborhood shopping center was built to serve the Mayfair housing tract.⁸

Manchester Center, at Blackstone and Shields avenues, was constructed beginning in 1953 and opened in 1955 as one of the first large shopping malls constructed in Fresno. Local architect Walter Wagner (1911-1982) and his firm, which at the time was known as Walter Wagner & Partners, Architects & Engineers, were selected to design the mall. In its original form, Manchester Center was a one-story, open-air pedestrian shopping center containing 83 different stores and 6,500 parking spaces.⁹ Wagner and his firm are known for having designed a variety of buildings in Fresno with principal commercial works around this same time also including the Sears (1956) at Manchester Center and the Rhodes Department Store shortly thereafter (1958).

Fig Garden Village, at Shaw and Palm avenues, was completed slightly later than Manchester Center (in 1956), but is considered "the first of the City's regional or neighborhood shopping centers."¹⁰ Local architect John E. Fennacy (1904-1979) designed the three main buildings that would be the core of the development and which intended to "emulate the 'village' shopping center design found in the Bay Area and Sacramento."¹¹ By fall of 1956, a grocery store and six small shops were completed. Other buildings were added one at a time. By the early 1960s, Fig Garden Village had a department store, J.M. McDonald's, and more shops that had originally been in the downtown area.¹²

⁷ Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, (Fresno, CA: Planning Resource Associates, Inc., prepared for the City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, September 2008), 67.

⁸ *Fresno Bee*, 5 February 1950.

⁹ Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, (Fresno, CA: Planning Resource Associates, Inc., prepared for the City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, September 2008), 41.

¹⁰ Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, (Fresno, CA: Planning Resource Associates, Inc., prepared for the City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, September 2008), 40 citing Charles W. Clough and William B. Secrest Jr., *Fresno County The Pioneer Years: From the Beginnings to 1900* (Panorama West Books: Fresno, CA, 1984), 215.

¹¹ Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, (Fresno, CA: Planning Resource Associates, Inc., prepared for the City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, September 2008), 40.

¹² Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, (Fresno, CA: Planning Resource Associates, Inc., prepared for the City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, September 2008), 40 citing Karana Hattersley-Drayton. "Fig Garden Village History." March 4, 2005, 1.

Despite shops leaving Fresno's downtown for the new suburban shopping centers beginning in the mid-1950s, Fresno's business leaders with City support believed downtown could remain viable provided the City adhere to the 1958 General Plan and the College Community Plan adopted in 1961 (updated in 1964 and 1965). These planning efforts sought to curb northward sprawl by, for example, designating a fourteen-square-mile area around Fresno State College for residential and neighborhood-scale commercial uses. As a result, in the 1960s, approximately 45,000 residents lived in tract housing and apartment complexes near the campus. The plans also envisioned Shaw Avenue as a boulevard lined with medical offices, professional buildings, and neighborhood shopping centers, like the new Fig Garden Village. Up until that time, regional-scale retail centers, such as Manchester Center, were intentionally confined by the city to Blackstone Avenue to manage growth and prevent unchecked sprawl.

Additional late 1950s/early 1960s planning efforts to refocus growth and bring or return residents downtown also included the development of a plan for the city's Central Business District. The 'Central Area Plan,' developed by Victor Gruen & Associates and adopted by the city in 1960, called specifically for a downtown pedestrian mall. Fresno's Fulton Mall opened in 1964.¹³ However, the plan ultimately failed "due to a lack of complete implementation. In its entirety the plan called for the development of a pedestrian mall (Fulton Mall) *and* [emphasis added] a freeway loop that was necessary to bring traffic downtown. It was believed this would lead to extensive public and private investment. However, the Fulton Mall was the only component of the plan completed."¹⁴ The ultimate lack of construction of the freeway loop "left Fresno with a downtown largely forgotten."¹⁵

Meanwhile, although a downtown freeway loop was not constructed, freeways and freeway expansions to connect the city with other local cities and the metropolitan centers of San Francisco and Los Angeles were built. As stated in the *Mid-century Modernism Historic Context* report, support for the expansion of California State Routes (Highways) 99 and 41 running north-south as well as the planned development of Highways 168 and 180 running east-west were all steps to ensure Fresno's connection to these outlying areas.¹⁶

It is not surprising that by the mid- to late 1960s, additional shopping centers were constructed along the newer commercial corridors of Shaw and Blackstone Avenues, with easier access from the

¹³ Historic Resources Group, *Downtown Fresno (Fulton Corridor) Historic Resources Survey*, (Pasadena, CA: Historic Resources Group, prepared for Moule & Polyzoides Architects and Urbanists, December 2011, Revised April 2014), 67.

¹⁴ Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, (Fresno, CA: Planning Resource Associates, Inc., prepared for the City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, September 2008), 36.

¹⁵ Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, (Fresno, CA: Planning Resource Associates, Inc., prepared for the City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, September 2008), 36.

¹⁶ Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, (Fresno, CA: Planning Resource Associates, Inc., prepared for the City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, September 2008), 37.

new highways and those underway. (The Highway 99 expansion in West Fresno was completed in 1957. Construction of Highway 41 expansions began in 1970.) In 1965, planning began for Fashion Fair Mall, a regional shopping center on Shaw Avenue between Fresno and First streets. It opened in 1969. To build this sizeable shopping center, it was necessary for the City Council to rezone the land in 1966, which under the College Community Plan, was limited to residential and light commercial uses. The original components of the shopping center comprised 725,000 square feet. They included two major department store anchors, J. C. Penney and Gottschalk's, as well as 60 additional stores.¹⁷ In 1970, Weinstock's (owned by Broadway-Hale Stores, later Carter Hawley Hale) became part of the Fashion Fair Mall, having constructed and opened its department store anchor, the subject building at 755 E Shaw Avenue, at the mall's east end.

The Fashion Fair Mall was not the last regional shopping center constructed in Fresno. Most recently in 1996, River Park Mall opened at the corner of Highway 41 and N. Blackstone Avenue and contains five anchor tenants, as well as at least 70 additional stores.

Broadway-Hale Stores

At the time of construction of the subject building in Fresno in the late 1960s, the Broadway-Hale Stores were a conglomerate of smaller retailers that had been acquired by long-standing "The Broadway," a department store descended from founder Arthur Letts' dry good stores in Los Angeles beginning in 1896. The company had stores across California and was continuing to expand its reach. The following information about Broadway-Hale Stores is excerpted from the website *Department Store Museum*:

Arthur Letts, founder of The Broadway, was born in the small town of Holdenby, Northamptonshire, England, in 1862, and went on to become one of the richest and most influential men in Southern California. Letts leased a dry goods store at the corner of Fourth Street and Broadway, then the southern end of Los Angeles' retail district. Named The Broadway Department Store, Letts' establishment prospered quickly due to its policy of fixed prices and liberal returns. An early slogan of The Broadway was "All Cars Transfer at Fourth and Broadway" because trolley lines converged at the store's corner.

The Broadway grew by acquiring smaller retailers. It purchased B.H. Dyas, which had just built a new store in Hollywood, in 1931. The store was christened The Broadway-Hollywood and was a major retail presence in "tinsel-town" during its heyday.

¹⁷ Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, (Fresno, CA: Planning Resource Associates, Inc., prepared for the City of Fresno Planning & Development Department, September 2008), 42.

Likewise, the purchase of Milliron's in 1950 and Walker's in 1956 gave The Broadway instant branches in Westchester and Long Beach. A major event in 1950 was the merger of The Broadway with Hale Brothers of San Francisco, which operated department stores in Oakland, San José and Sacramento, as well as Weinstock's in the latter city. The holding company was named Broadway-Hale Stores and went on to acquire The Emporium of San Francisco and Capwell's of Oakland, which had operated together since 1927.

In the Los Angeles area, The Broadway began branch expansion in earnest with a striking art-deco store on Pasadena's Colorado Boulevard. A similar store anchored the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza in 1947, a pioneer planned shopping center. With the help of its architects, The Broadway developed a signature look for its suburban stores, which numbered in the thirties by 1979. Earlier stores (including those in Arizona) were composed of a large mass of patterned block which used the Southern California sun to great advantage. Some, such as the Cerritos, Northridge, and Newport Beach stores were surrounded by a colonnade of thin pillars, and others, like the Carson and Phoenix Metrocenter branches were characterized by a brutalist geometric design composed of overhangs and deep recesses. The Broadway's later branches were simple compositions of warm masonry, often with rounded or chamfered corners.

[...] The Broadway's holding company was renamed Carter Hawley Hale Stores in 1972 "to reflect the contributions of its executives." The company went on an aggressive buying binge, acquiring Neiman Marcus, Bergdorf Goodman, and Canada's Holt Renfrew luxury stores. In the east, Carter-Hawley-Hale gobbled up Thalhimers of Richmond and John Wanamaker. The Broadway stores also expanded in San Diego and into Colorado as well. This strategy involved enormous debt, eroding Carter-Hawley-Hale's bottom line. The company declared bankruptcy in 1991, was downsized and reorganized into a new "Broadway Stores, Inc.," but was shortly thereafter taken over by Federated Department Stores. In the final transaction, The Broadway's historic Los Angeles area stores were converted into Macy's or Bloomingdale's by Federated, depending on location.¹⁸

¹⁸ "The Broadway," *Department Store Museum, Blogspot*, 2018, accessed February 16, 2026, <http://departmentstoremuseum.blogspot.com/search?q=the+broadway>.

Brutalism & Late Modernism Architectural Styles

The subject building has a geometric design composed of overhangs and deep recesses and is constructed of steel and reinforced concrete while its volumes are clad in split face concrete block veneer. Although Brutalism is the most similar architectural style in the *City of Fresno Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context* that describes the subject building, the broader Late Modernism is perhaps a better fit for the style of the building. Architectural context for Brutalism and Late Modernism is outlined below as is an analysis of the design of the subject building to both.

The *City of Fresno Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context* provides the following information about Brutalism:

The term “Brutalism” is derived from the French *beton brut*, which means “raw concrete.” The style was inspired by the work of architect Le Corbusier but became defined as a style with the work of English architect Peter Smithson. The style is characterized by the appearance of weight and massiveness. Buildings constructed in the Brutalist style are generally large, geometric, block-like structures. The style was meant to be expressive with concrete as the primary building material and finish by revealing the texture of wood formwork. Local examples of the Brutalist style can be found on the campus of California State University Fresno. Exemplified in such buildings as Henry Madden Library (Lew and Patnaude) and the Art School (Stevens, Zellmer & Associates).¹⁹

The following character-defining features of Brutalist Style are listed in the *Fresno Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*:

- Rough, unadorned poured concrete
- Heavy block shape
- Geometric patterns
- Prefabricated concrete panels with exposed joinery
- Repetitive patterns
- Monumental massing²⁰

Although the subject building at 755 E Shaw Avenue does exhibit heavy block shapes and geometric patterns, it lacks arguably the most important feature of a Brutalist building—the unpainted raw unadorned poured concrete. The lack of raw concrete and the use of colored concrete block veneer

¹⁹ Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, 79.

²⁰ Planning Resource Associates, *Mid-Century Modernism Historic Context*, 79.

reads more as the overarching Late Modernism design aesthetic (of which Brutalism is a subgenre). The monumental massing of the building can be attributed more to its function as an anchor department store than to an architectural style.

Communities across California have studied the development of Late Modernism, which occurred from the mid-1960s through 1980s. The following context for Late Modernism architecture is extracted from the City of Mountain View's Historic Context Statement:

Late Modernism is a broad term that encompasses the varied designs of the 1960s through 1980s within the Modern Movement when backlash against the perceived uniformity and repetitiveness of International Style architecture inspired many architects to explore other architectural forms. Some architects drew inspiration from historic architectural examples, giving way to New Formalism and eventually Postmodernism. Others pushed the modern aesthetic to new extremes through advancements in technology, engineering, and materials, leading to Brutalism, Expressionism, and High-Tech Structuralism. Still others transformed the glass-and-steel look into taut glass skin and mirror glass designs, or alternatively, incorporated organic materials and shapes for a more natural, wooded aesthetic. Late Modernism hybridized established Modern rationale and functional forms with aspects of the emerging architectural stylistic trends that would gain prominence from the 1960s through the 1980s.

Because of this interplay of varied forms within a clearly Modern vocabulary, Late Modernism is difficult to define. This is exacerbated by the number of subgenres like traditional Modernism, New Formalism, Brutalism, and Expressionism that have their own defining characteristics; some Late Modern examples feature elements of these styles in various combinations. Typically, Late Modern commercial, institutional, and government buildings were monumental in scale, had sculptural qualities within the design, including strong linear elements, pronounced structural components, and interplay of plans or volumes, and comprehensive landscape design in plantings, paving, and features to create a cohesive setting.²¹

Late Modernism design is seen in commercial properties, institutional properties, offices, research/manufacturing facilities, and residences (more often multi-family than single-

²¹ Page and Turnbull, *City of Mountain View Historic Context Statement Public Review Draft*, (San Francisco: Page & Turnbull, prepared for the City of Mountain View, May 29, 2024), pp. 208-09, electronic resource at: <https://www.mountainview.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/12028/638914480830730000>.

family).²² The following characteristic features of Late Modernism are outlined as being associated with the style by the San Francisco Planning Department in its *Modern and Postmodern Historic Context Statement*:

- Massing and materials are often visually heavier than earlier Modernism.
- Strong geometric or sculptural forms, including repeating modules or an interplay of planes and volumes, are typical of the massing.
- Flat roofs are common, but other roof forms, including shed, parabolic, and flat-on-hipped, may be used.
 - Shed roof forms framed by projecting stucco side parapets are distinctive of Late Modernism.
- Concrete, brick, metal, and concrete or synthetic panels are more common materials for commercial and institutional examples, whereas stucco, wood, and concrete are typical of residential examples.
- Structure or structural components may be pronounced.
 - Expressionist and sculptural form, including cantilevered or parabolic roofs, are most closely associated with religious architecture.²³

Examples of buildings in California that fully embody the Late Modernism style include the U.S. Federal Building at 1100 Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, designed by Charles Luckman Associates in 1969 and noted for its strong composition of both vertical and horizontal elements, the prominence of glass curtain walls with equally prominent solid elements, as well as integrated landscape features such as courtyards, planters, and benches.²⁴ The building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Sunkist Headquarters (1970) in Los Angeles, designed by A. C. Martin & Associates and also a National Register-listed property, exemplifies the Brutalist subgenre of Late Modernism, being a “symphony of concrete” with an “inverted shape bringing an airy quality to a Brutalist form.”²⁵ The Late Modern aesthetic was present in department store design as well. Although not recognized as a historic resource, the freestanding former J. W. Robinson’s department store (now Macy’s), located at Fashion Island in Newport Beach, demonstrates Late Modernism. Completed in 1967 by architect William Pereira, the design incorporates slender columns with

²² Page and Turnbull, *City of Mountain View Historic Context Statement Public Review Draft*, 209.

²³ San Francisco Planning Department, *San Francisco Modern & Postmodern Architectural Styles (1960-2000) Historic Context Statement*, (San Francisco: San Francisco Planning Department, August 21, 2024), 86-89.

²⁴ GSA, “Meet the New Historic Buildings on the Block,” accessed March 13, 2026, <https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/newsroom/former-gsa-regional-news-archive/region-9-newsroom/feature-stories/meet-the-new-historic-buildings-on-the-block-05202021>.

²⁵ LA Conservancy, “Sunkist Headquarters,” accessed March 13, 2026, <https://www.laconservancy.org/learn/historic-places/sunkist-headquarters/>

mushroom bases, cantilevered roofs, and a prominent three-story wall sculpture of wind chimes by artist Tom Van Sant.



Figure 27. U.S. Federal Building. Source: <https://www.gsa.gov/>



Figure 28. Sunkist Headquarters. Source: <https://www.laconservancy.org/learn/historic-places/sunkist-headquarters/>



Figure 29. Former J.W. Robinson's, Fashion Island, Newport Beach. Source: Google Street View.

The subject building at 755 E Shaw Avenue expresses several characteristics of Late Modern design including heavy massing, modular composition, flat roofs, concrete block veneer, strong linear elements, and an interplay of planes and geometric volumes.

Fresno and Late Modernism

In addition to the subject building at Fashion Fair Mall, Late Modernism is prevalent in various subgenre styles elsewhere in Fresno, in both commercial and institutional buildings. Unlike the subject building, which was a stock design by a national architecture firm, these buildings were designed by notable local architecture firms and architects.

The local architecture firms of Robert W. Stevens Associates and Walter Wagner & Associates (and later iterations/partnerships) designed a number of notable works of this era and style in Fresno. For example, Robert Stevens Associates, with Les Traeger (1926-2023) as project architect, designed the Brutalist Phebe Conley Art Building (1971) at Fresno State Teachers College (now California State University Fresno) (**Figure 29**).

Robert W. Stevens (1919-1989) is often referred to in Fresno as “one of the top local architects of the mid-century era,” but his mark continued through the 1970s. A number of low-rise “garden style” commercial office buildings, dating to the mid-1960s and 1970s along Shaw Avenue, are attributed to him, and are better characterized under the Late Modernism umbrella than Mid-Century Modernism. The property at 600 W Shaw Avenue (1968), for example, interplays with planes and volumes of varying materials (**Figure 30**). Stevens’ subsequent architecture firm iteration as Stevens Zellmer Architects designed the Hilton Hotel (1972, most recently a Radisson Hotel) in a Late Modern idiom with a New Formalist-influenced colonnade of stylized columnar supports (**Figure 31**).



Figure 29. Phebe Conley Art Building at Fresno State (1971). Source: Google Street View



Figure 30. 600 W Shaw Avenue (1968), one of multiple office buildings attributed to Robert W. Stevens. Source: <https://www.loopnet.com/Listing/600-W-Shaw-Ave-Fresno-CA/36742088/>



Figure 31. Former Hilton Hotel (1972). Source: Google Streetview, 2026.

Walter Wagner (1911-1982) and his Fresno firm designed the Fresno County Courthouse, completed slightly earlier in 1966. Several years later, with new partner Martin Temple (1934-2019), Wagner designed the “Spiral Parking Garage” at 801 Van Ness Avenue (**Figure 32**). The expressionist and sculptural form of the twin garages epitomize Late Modernist style.



Figure 32. Parking Garage at 801 Van Ness Avenue (1970). Source: <https://www.roadarch.com/modarch/ca4.html>

This discussion of Late Modernist buildings constructed in Fresno is not exhaustive.

Approximately 750 extant commercial buildings (including neighborhood commercial, office commercial, and general heavy commercial) were constructed in Fresno from 1965 to 1979, a period that overlaps with Late Modern architectural design. Of those, 109 buildings were constructed in 1969 and 1970, the years in which 755 E Shaw Avenue was constructed. Other examples of Late Modernism likely exist.

Charles Luckman Associates, Architecture Firm

The subject building at 755 E Shaw Avenue was designed by the firm Charles Luckman Associates (CLA), based in Los Angeles and with offices nationwide. CLA was founded by Charles Luckman (1909-1999) in 1958. Luckman is perhaps most known and remembered for his business expertise. As stated in the *Charles Luckman Papers (1908-2000)* housed at the Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, Luckman was “the boy wonder of American business in the late 1930s and 1940s, and then a leader in the field of architecture.”²⁶ Luckman’s biography that follows is summarized from the finding aid and other sources.

Born in 1909, Luckman graduated high school and went on to earn a degree in architecture from the University of Illinois in 1931. With the Great Depression limiting opportunities in the field, Luckman entered the business world, joining Colgate-Palmolive-Peet as a draftsman in the advertising

²⁶ Online Archive of California, “Luckman (Charles) Papers, 1908-2000,” accessed March 13, 2026, <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8057gfv>.

department in 1931. Luckman then transferred to sales, where he made a name for himself. He rose to sales manager for Colgate-Palmolive-Peet, which led to a subsequent position at the Pepsodent corporation, ultimately becoming vice-president of sales. In 1937, at the age of 27, his picture graced the cover of *Time* magazine as the "Boy Wonder" of corporate America.²⁷ By 1943, he was president of the company. In 1944, when Lever Brothers acquired Pepsodent for \$10 million, Luckman continued as president of Pepsodent and became a vice-president of Lever Brothers, the United States branch of the international corporation Unilever. In 1946, he was named president of Lever Brothers in the United States. As head executive of one of the country's largest corporations, and one of the youngest, he earned another cover image on *Time* that year. He resigned his position in 1950 to change careers to architecture with his former classmate and architect, William Pereira.²⁸

The Los Angeles firm of Pereira & Luckman was successful, with notable projects in the 1950s including the CBS Television City in Hollywood, the Hilton Hotel in Berlin, the Disneyland Hotel, and the "Theme Building" at Los Angeles International Airport. As recounted in Luckman's autobiography, Luckman continued his focus on the business and sales side of the partnership. In calling new clients, Luckman would explain: "The reason to select Pereira & Luckman is that we won't go over the budget you select. Pereira will be the architect and I'll be the businessman."²⁹

The partnership dissolved in 1958, and Luckman formed Charles Luckman Associates (CLA). His namesake firm also became highly successful. Charles Luckman Associates designed Boston's Prudential Center (1960-64), the Los Angeles Zoo (1966), and various federal buildings, bank towers, and hotels. The firm master-designed campuses for the University of California, Santa Barbara (including buildings such as Robertson Gymnasium, San Nicolas Hall, San Miguel Hall-East Tower, and San Rafael Hall) in 1959-65, the California Institute of Technology, and the Southern California School of Theology, and designed individual buildings for UC Riverside and UCLA.³⁰ The firm also designed the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in Houston (1962-63) and Kennedy Space Center on Merritt Island, Florida (1964-65).³¹ Perhaps the most renowned design by CLA is that of Madison Square Garden (1968), which featured the first cable-suspended roof in New York City.³² Luckman's

²⁷ LA Conservancy, "Charles Luckman," accessed March 13, 2026, <https://www.laconservancy.org/learn/architect-biographies/charles-luckman/>.

²⁸ OAC University of California, "Luckman, (Charles) Papers, 1908-2000," accessed March 13, 2026, <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8057gfv>.

²⁹ Charles Luckman, "Twice in a Lifetime: From Soap to Skyscrapers," (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 279.

³⁰ Charles Luckman Associates, Letter to Mr. Harold Nicholson, Assistant Manager of Customer Facility Division, Aetron (6 October 1960).

³¹ OAC University of California, "Luckman, (Charles) Papers, 1908-2000," accessed March 13, 2026, <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8057gfv>.

³² "Cabled Coliseum," *Architectural Forum*, Jan/Feb 1967. 81.

business acumen likely contributed to his firm's success, although in the early to mid-1960s he appears to have provided input on certain design aspects of some projects. For Madison Square Garden, Luckman stated that he "came up with the idea of constructing four glass-enclosed exterior towers, each containing ten escalators" to move masses of people in and out of sporting events.³³ He also described that his own contribution to the design of the Los Angeles Zoo was "to suggest a building in the center of the zoo with a cone-shaped roof...so that people anywhere in the zoo could see it and know immediately where they were..."³⁴ By 1968, CLA was one of the country's five largest architecture firms in the nation with offices in New York, Los Angeles, and Phoenix.

That same year, CLA opted to merge with Ogden Corporation, a diversified operating company with five major areas of capability, including real estate development. The merger led to the establishment of Ogden Development Corporation, focusing on the development and management side of projects, with CLA being an affiliate and focusing on the design. As a result, in March 1968 Luckman stepped aside as president of CLA, becoming president of Ogden Development Corporation, while his son, James Luckman, then became president. As president, the younger Luckman assumed day-to-day management and operations of the design firm, although the interrelationship between the merger firms was available through the elder's dual role as chairman of the board of CLA.³⁵ The union of the two firms lasted until 1973. Charles Luckman retired from the once-again independent CLA in 1977, and the firm was reorganized as the Luckman Partnership. Charles Luckman died in 1999 in Los Angeles.³⁶

Following his death, obituaries chronicled his career and surmised that Luckman was remembered more for his business acumen than his architectural design. In 1982, he had in fact been awarded the Henry Laurence Gantt Medal for "distinguished achievement of management," from the American Management Association, the first architect to receive the honor.³⁷ *New York Times* architectural critic Herbert Muschamp wrote of Luckman: "Modern architects prided themselves on spare, restrained designs that enabled them to exploit the esthetic potential of structure and space. But this approach was easily mimicked by others who lacked a firm grasp of the esthetic dimension. A good modern building might indeed look business-like. But to practice architecture as business did not invariably produce good buildings."³⁸

³³ Charles Luckman, "Twice in a Lifetime: From Soap to Skyscrapers," (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 341.

³⁴ Charles Luckman, "Twice in a Lifetime: From Soap to Skyscrapers," (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 353.

³⁵ "Luckman Tells All About Ogden," *AIA Journal*, Jun 1970, Vol. 53, pp. 52-53.

³⁶ OAC University of California, "Luckman, (Charles) Papers, 1908-2000," accessed March 13, 2026, <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8057gfv>.

³⁷ Los Angeles Times, "Charles Luckman, Architect, Entrepreneur," 27 January 1999, 13.

³⁸ Herbert Muschamp. "Charles Luckman, Architect Who Designed Penn Station's Replacement, Dies at 89," *The New York Times*. 28 January 1999.

V. SITE HISTORY

Site Development

The area that the subject building now occupies was originally farmland on the outskirts of Fresno. The area was part of the Wolters Colony, which was a collection of irrigated agricultural subdivisions (**Figure 33**).³⁹ The neighborhood now known as Hoover was developed as part of post-World War II suburban development (**Figure 34**). The development of the Fashion Fair Mall began in 1965 and the mall opened in 1969.⁴⁰

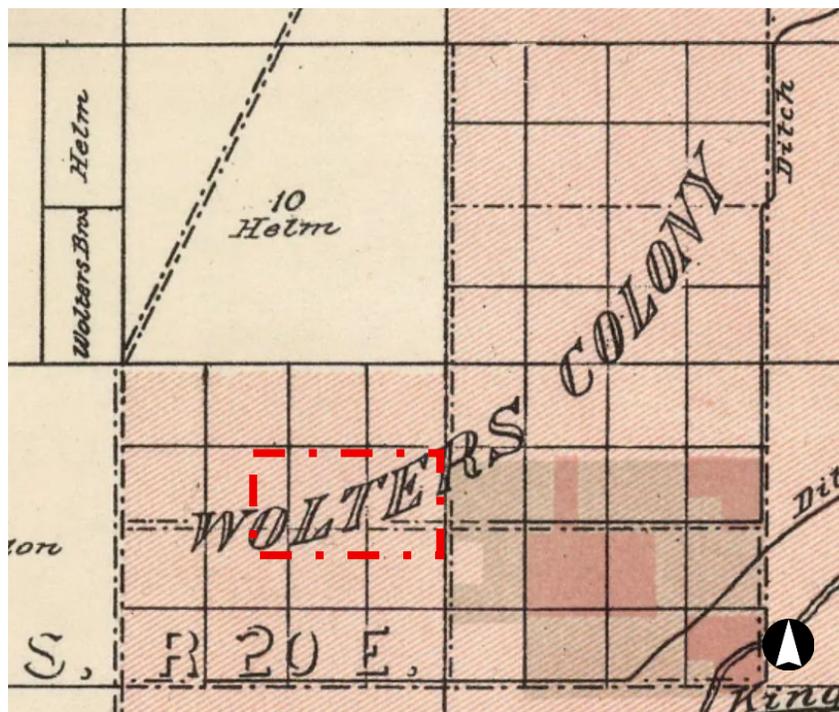


Figure 33. Fresno Detail Irrigation Map, 1885. Approximate location and boundary of Fashion Fair Mall site outlined in red. Source: David Rumsey Map Collection. Edited by Page & Turnbull.

³⁹ Virginia E. Thickens, "Pioneer Agricultural Colonies of Fresno County (Concluded)," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (June 1946): 169–77. <https://doi.org/10.2307/25155973>.

⁴⁰ For more information see Section IV: Historic Context of this report.



Figure 34. 1957 aerial photograph of the subject area. Approximate location and boundary of Fashion Fair Mall site outlined in red. Approximate location of subject property indicated by yellow outline. Flight ABI-1957. Source: Cartwright Aerial Surveys, UCSB Library, edited by Page & Turnbull.

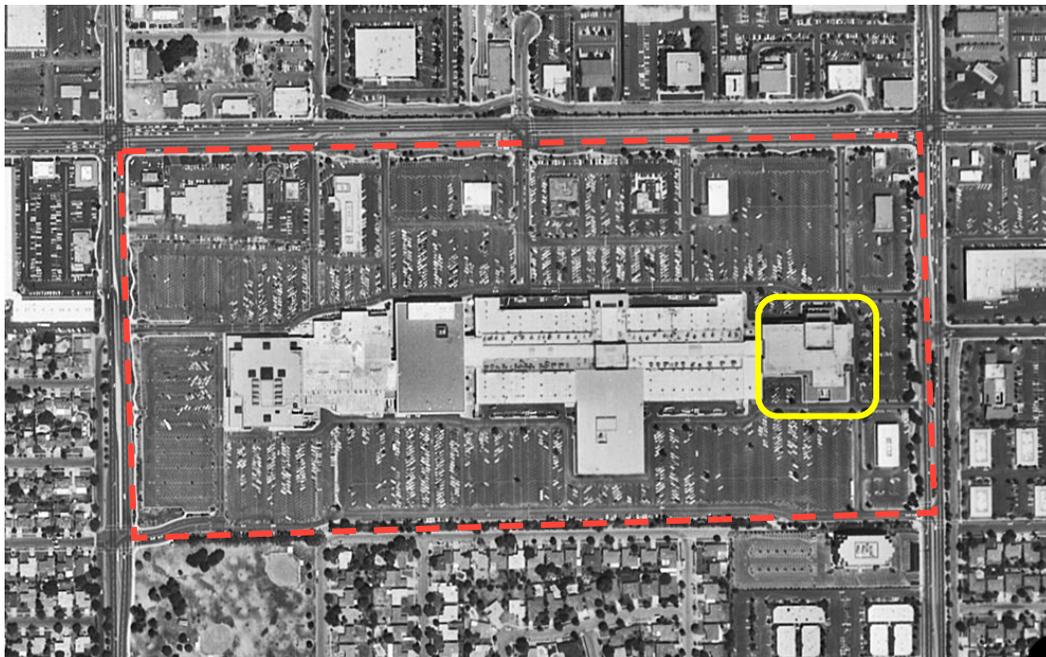


Figure 35. 1998 aerial photograph of the subject area. Approximate location and boundary of Fashion Fair Mall site outlined in red. The subject property is indicated by yellow outline. Flight CH2M-1985-CAN5-Fresno. Source: UCSB Library, edited by Page & Turnbull.

The subject building at 755 E Shaw Avenue is attached to the Fashion Fair Mall and was completed after the mall opened. Construction of the subject building began in 1969 with the new retail space opening in 1970 as a Weinstock's department store. Located at the east end of the mall, Weinstock's was considered one of the "anchor" stores along with JC Penny's and Gottschalk's. The building was designed by architecture firm Charles Luckman Associates a year after the firm's merger with Ogden Corporation and Charles Luckman's shift from president to chairman of the board.

The building's design was one of several 'stock' designs used for other Broadway-Hale Stores (the parent company of Weinstock's). As stated in the Broadway-Hale Stores context earlier, The Broadway-Hale Stores company "developed a signature look for its suburban stores, which numbered in the thirties by 1979. Earlier stores (including those in Arizona) were composed of a large mass of patterned block [...] others, like the Carson and Phoenix Metrocenter branches were characterized by a brutalist geometric design composed of overhangs and deep recesses. The Broadway[s] later branches were simple compositions of warm masonry, often with rounded or chamfered corners."⁴¹

The design of the building at 755 E Shaw Avenue reflects the "brutalist[-like] geometric design composed of overhangs and deep recesses."⁴² The development of this particular replicable building design by CLA with Broadway-Hale Stores executives was described by Charles Luckman in his autobiography. CLA had a longstanding client relationship with the Broadway-Hale Stores, designing their stores since at least 1961. By the late 1960s, according to Luckman, the store executives wanted to make a change from the rectangular box with a little exterior decoration. Luckman indicates that CLA's interior designer, who understood the differing department store sales areas' needs, was tapped for the project and a preferred interior plan was developed. Luckman said, "Don't worry how the outside of the building will look; our designers can worry about that."⁴³ Continuing the story, Luckman relayed, "Calling in our design director, I handed him the [interior] floor plan and said, 'I want you to design the exterior of a building that would house these three floors without a single change in the size of any [sales] department.'"⁴⁴

⁴¹ The Broadway," *Department Store Museum: Blogspot*, 2018, accessed March 11. 2026.

<http://departmentstoremuseum.blogspot.com/search?q=the+broadway>.

⁴² The Broadway," *Department Store Museum: Blogspot*, 2018, accessed March 11. 2026.

<http://departmentstoremuseum.blogspot.com/search?q=the+broadway>.

⁴³ Charles Luckman, "Twice in a Lifetime: From Soap to Skyscrapers," (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 363.

⁴⁴ Charles Luckman, "Twice in a Lifetime: From Soap to Skyscrapers," (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 364.

This anecdote by Luckman and his lack of direct involvement in design development of the building is corroborated by the fact that the title blocks of the original architecture drawings for the subject building indicate the Project Architect was Richard McKnew (**Figure 36**). Little biographical information was found about him, although he became an associate partner in the reorganized Luckman Partnership in 1977.⁴⁵ Additionally, no architectural journal publications appear to have included this building or design; inclusion in such as publication would indicate a design recognized at the time for its aesthetic invocation or skill, or publicized by the firm.

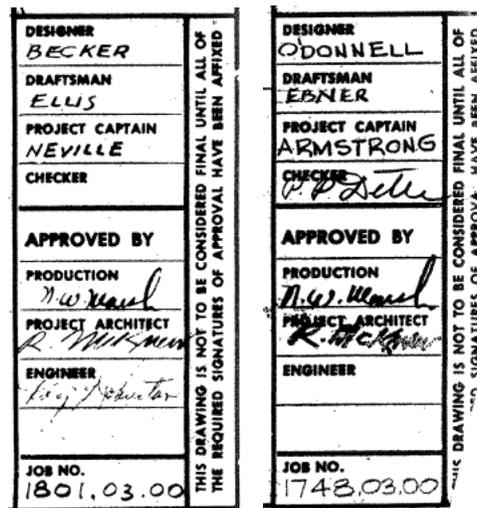


Figure 36. Title block extracts from Charles Luckman Associates architectural drawings for 'Weinstock's Department Store, Fresno Fashion Fair.'

The CLA team's resulting design for new Broadway-Hale stores, in Luckman's words, were "three floors of the building jutting in and out at various places."⁴⁶ Three stores with this precise design were built for Broadway-Hales, all of which are still standing. The design was not specific to the Weinstock's brand of Broadway-Hales, to Fashion Fair Mall, or to Fresno. Identical buildings to the Fresno location are found at The Galleria at Tyler Mall in Riverside, CA (1970, currently vacant) and at Weinstock's at Sunrise Mall in Citrus Heights, CA (1972, currently a Macy's) (**Figure 37, Figure 38, Figure 39, Figure 40, Figure 41 and Figure 42**). As a stock replicable design, the building could have been built anywhere.

Locations of The Broadway or Weinstock stores that displayed varying stock designs by CLA, which were replicated in California and the West through the 1960s and into the early 1970s, are included

⁴⁵ *The Desert Sun*, "Luckman Announces Change," 27 June 1977, A11.

⁴⁶ Charles Luckman, "Twice in a Lifetime: From Soap to Skyscrapers," (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 364.

in **Appendix A: The Broadway-Hale Stores, 1960s-1970s**. This appendix provides information on the 13 stores constructed between 1961 and the early 1970s that remain extant today.

Exterior alterations to the subject building since construction include changes to the primary (east) façade entrance. Originally, the entrance was recessed and included a plastic illuminated canopy (**Figure 43**). During renovations circa 2011 when the building was converted into a Forever 21 clothing store, a new double-height glazed entry was installed. The entryway features chrome aluminum frame and is flush with the wall. Other changes include alterations at the north façade's east projection and at secondary entrances. Originally, the east projection of the north facade featured a fully glazed wall of bronze plate glass that enclosed the Weinstock's former kitchen and dining room. At an unknown date prior to 2009, these windows were fully infilled, and the surface is currently finished with cement plaster.⁴⁷ At both the north and south façades, the entryways were altered during the Forever 21 renovation and feature similar chrome aluminum frame glaze entryways as the primary east façade. The signage at the building has changed as the various tenants of the building have changed.

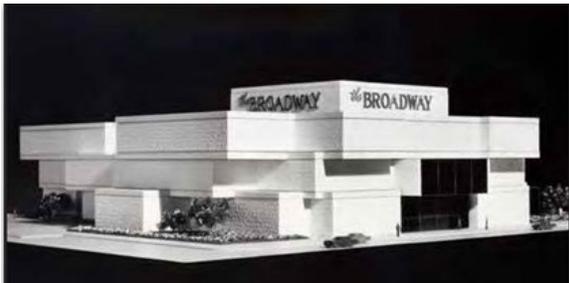


Figure 37. Architectural model of The Broadway Department Store, Tyler Mall, Riverside, California, showing the stock design used for three identical stores. Source: Jim Van Schaak via Flickr.com



Figure 38. Architectural model of The Broadway Department Store, Tyler Mall, Riverside, California, alternate view showing the stock design used for three identical stores. Source: Jim Van Schaak via Flickr.com

⁴⁷ Google Earth images show that the alterations to the projection predate the earliest Street View image of March 2009.



Figure 39. Weinstock's Citrus Heights. Source: Department Store Museum.



Figure 40. The Broadway, Tyler Mall, Riverside. Source: RXSQ via Flickr.com



Figure 41. Weinstock's Fresno (subject building), no date. Source: Center for Sacramento History.



Figure 42. Weinstock's Fresno (subject building), c.1970s. Source: Jim Van Schaak via Flickr.com



Figure 43. Original appearance of the primary (east) entryway at 755 E Shaw Avenue. Source: *The Fresno Bee*.

Ownership and Occupant History

The following tables provide a summary of the ownership and occupancy history of 755 E Shaw Avenue beginning with the year of construction, compiled from public records.

TABLE 1. OWNER HISTORY FOR 755 E SHAW AVENUE

Date(s) of Ownership	Owner
1968 – ca. 1982	Triple F Investments, LP
ca. 1982-1996	MCA Fresno Associates, LP
1996 - Present	Macerich Fresno Limited Partnership

TABLE 2. OCCUPANT HISTORY FOR 755 E SHAW AVENUE

Date(s) of Operation	Occupant(s)	Use
September 1970 - May 1996	Weinstock's	Department store
May 1996 - June 2009	Gottschalk's	Department store
March 2011 - April 2025	Forever 21	Fast-fashion retailer
April 2025 - Present	Vacant	

The building was originally constructed as a Weinstock's department store ground-leased by Broadway-Hale Stores (later Carter Hawley Hale). Weinstock's operated at the site for about 25 years and closed in 1996, following several years of financial difficulties in the 1990s that resulted in Carter Hawley Hale being sold to Federated Department Stores (now Macy's) in 1995. The Weinstock's and Broadway brands were dissolved. Many of the Weinstock and Broadway stores were converted into Macy's stores, but the subject building in Fresno became a Gottschalk's, a middle tier department store which operated for 15 years at the site.⁴⁸ Gottschalk's filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2009 and new tenant, fast-fashion retailer, Forever 21, occupied the space beginning in 2011 after an extensive two-year remodel. Initially housed on all three floors, the square footage proved too large for the market and the Forever 21 downsized a year later by taking the third floor out of service.⁴⁹ By late 2019, the second floor was mostly taken out of service, with a significant portion "roped off and empty."⁵⁰ Forever 21, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2025 and closed all U.S. stores, including the subject property. The subject building has remained vacant since April 2025.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Kelly David, "Retailing Mega-Merger: Broadway Stores' Convolved History," *Los Angeles Times*, August 15, 1995, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1995-08-15-fi-35290-story.html>.

⁴⁹ *Fresno Bee*, "Forever 21 Downsizes," 21 February 2016, F3.

⁵⁰ *Fresno Bee*, "Forever 21 Bankruptcy Raises Questions for Fresno Store," 1 October 2019, B4.

⁵¹ Vince Ybarra, "Forever 21 Store at Fashion Fair Mall in Northeast Fresno to Close," *ABC30 Fresno*, February 19, 2025, <https://abc30.com/post/forever-21-store-fashion-fair-mall-northeast-fresno-close/15928625/>.

VI. EVALUATION

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed in the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register-listed properties are automatically listed in the California Register. Properties can also be nominated to the California Register by local governments, private organizations, or citizens. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on those developed by the National Park Service for the National Register of Historic Places. In order for a property to be eligible for listing in the California Register, it must be found significant under one or more of the following criteria.

- **Criterion 1 (Events):** Resources that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
- **Criterion 2 (Persons):** Resources that are associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
- **Criterion 3 (Architecture):** Resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values.
- **Criterion 4 (Information Potential):** Resources or sites that have yielded or have the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.⁵²

Fresno Local Register of Historic Resources

The designation criteria outlined in Fresno's Historic Preservation Ordinance align with the California Register criteria described above.

⁵² California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistance Bulletin No. 7: How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of Historical Resources* (Sacramento: California Office of State Publishing, September 4, 2001), 11.

SEC. 12-1607. - DESIGNATION CRITERIA.

(a) HISTORIC RESOURCES: Any building, structure, object or site may be designated as an Historic Resource if it is found by the Commission and Council to meet the following criteria:

- (1) It has been in existence more than fifty years and it possesses aspects of integrity to convey its significance based upon location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling or association, and:
 - (i) It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
 - (ii) It is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
 - (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.
- (2) It has been in existence less than fifty years, it meets the criteria of subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section and is of exceptional importance within the appropriate historical context, local, state or national.⁵³

The following section examines the eligibility of 755 E Shaw Avenue for individual listing in the California Register and Fresno Local Register of Historic Resources.

CRITERION 1/i (EVENTS)

755 E Shaw Avenue does not appear to be significant under Criterion 1/i (Events). It is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States. The building, originally a Weinstock's department store, was completed in 1970 at the newly constructed regional shopping center, Fashion Fair Mall. Fashion Fair Mall was one of several suburban shopping centers (neighborhood and regional) developed in Fresno beginning in the 1950s. One of the earliest was Mayfair Shopping Center (1950), which was intended to service the new residential neighborhoods developing outside of the city center. Shortly thereafter, Manchester Center in 1955 and Fig Garden Village in 1956 opened along the planned commercial corridors of Shaw and Blackstone Avenues, which allowed easier access from the new highways and those underway. Downtown Fresno retailers faced competition from these regional and neighborhood suburban shopping centers, and the shopping centers began drawing retailers away from downtown beginning in the mid-1950s. The suburban shopping centers, however, were not the only contributors to the decline of downtown. The Fulton Mall, a City-planned pedestrian mall downtown, opened in 1964; however, the plan was

⁵³ Fresno Code of Ordinances, Chapter 12 – Impact Fees, Historic Resources, and Other Miscellaneous Topics, Article 16 – Historic Preservation Ordinance, Section 1607.

not fully implemented. The associated planned freeway loop necessary to bring traffic to the Fulton Mall was never built. In contrast, freeways and freeway expansions connecting the city to the other metropolitan areas provided ease of access to the new shopping centers outside of the city center, including Fashion Fair Mall, which opened in 1969. The subject building at 755 E Shaw Avenue, one of three anchor tenants of the new Fashion Fair Mall, was not individually associated with or responsible for the decline of downtown. The subject building, operating as a Weinstock's, was also not a unique type of anchor at Fashion Fair Mall, as it was one of three anchor department stores.

The Weinstock's was operated by parent company The Broadway-Hale Stores. Broadway-Hale operated some 30 stores across California and the West under multiple brand names, having been founded in Los Angeles and thence growing by acquiring smaller retailers such as Dyas, Milliron's, and Walker's in the area. Acquisitions of Hale Brothers of San Francisco and Weinstock's of Sacramento by the 1960s grew the company geographically and furthered the construction of additional new branch stores in new locations, including Fresno. The Fresno branch does not stand out as significant to the Broadway-Hale Stores. It was one of 19 new stores constructed by the company between 1961 and the early 1970s. Thirteen of the stores are extant.

This evaluation is based on historic context discussed on pages 14-18 and 28-33.

CRITERION 2 /ii(PERSONS)

755 E Shaw Avenue does not appear to be significant under Criterion 2/ii (Persons). No individuals were identified in the course of historic research in association with Broadway-Hale Stores, Weinstock's, or other entities such that the building would be associated with the lives of persons important to Fresno, California, or national history.

This evaluation is based on historic context discussed on pages 17-18 and page 34.

CRITERION 3/iii (ARCHITECTURE)

755 E Shaw Avenue does not appear to be significant under Criterion 3/iii (Architecture). It does not appear to embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, represent the work of a master architect, or possess high artistic values.

The subject building is an example of Late Modern architecture and expresses several characteristics of Late Modern design including heavy massing, modular composition, flat roofs, concrete block veneer, strong linear elements, and an interplay of planes and geometric volumes. According to published National Register of Historic Places guidance, which provides best practices for evaluation for state and local registers, for a building to be eligible as a specimen of its type or

period of construction, in this case as an example of Late Modernism, it must be “an important example (within its context) of building practices of a particular time in history.”⁵⁴ As a stock design implemented at two other locations in California between 1969 and 1972 for the same department store company, the design was not tailored to the Fashion Fair Mall site in Fresno or any local conditions. It furthermore does not appear to be a unique or important example of building practices during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Constructed of simple materials with limited differentiation and an overall lack of ornamentation, the building contrasts with other Late Modernist buildings seen in Fresno such as those of local architects Robert W. Stevens and Walter Wagner. Buildings designed by Stevens’ and Wagner’s firms better evidence the Late Modernist interplay between planes and volumes of varying materials, such as at the Phebe Conley Art Building, or the overall sculptural qualities of the style, such as at the Parking Garage at 801 Van Ness Avenue.

The subject building was designed by the well-known architectural firm Charles Luckman Associates. As stated in National Register guidance, “a property is not eligible as the work of a master... simply because it was designed by a prominent architect.”⁵⁵ Thus, the fact that the subject building was designed by a notable, national architecture firm does not automatically make it eligible. The building at 755 E Shaw Avenue does not appear to be a distinguished example of the work of CLA. The firm had a longstanding relationship with their client Broadway-Hale Stores and designed at least 18 other department stores throughout the West for the company, of which 13 remain extant. They produced varied stock designs, intended to be replicated at any location. As mentioned above, the building at 755 E Shaw Avenue is one of three identically designed new stores constructed around the same time in California for the firm, the other two being The Broadway in Riverside and Weinstock’s in Citrus Heights.

The building’s Project Architect was Richard McKnew. McKnew is not recognized as a master architect. Charles Luckman, the founder of CLA, was involved in the design aspects of some projects, but much of his focus during his architecture career, by his own admission, was as businessman. As further evidenced via his autobiography, he was not involved in the design of the subject building. Rather, at the time of the project’s development, he was focused on the client relationship, ensuring client satisfaction. The previous year, in 1968, CLA merged with Ogden Corporation, and Luckman resigned as president of CLA, becoming president of Ogden Development, an arm focused on real estate development and management side of projects.

⁵⁴ *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, p. 18, electronic resource at https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf.

⁵⁵ *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, p. 20, electronic resource at https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf.

For the several reasons outlined above, the subject building does not represent the work of a master architect such that it would be found individually significant for that association.

Lastly, the subject property does not possess high artistic values. According to National Register guidance, a property is eligible for its high artistic values if it so fully articulates a particular concept of design that it expresses its ideal and must do so more fully than other properties of its type.⁵⁶ No architectural journal publications appear to have included this building or design, which would indicate a design recognized at the time for its aesthetic invocation or skill. In comparison, the former Robinson's in Newport Beach, designed by Luckman's former partner, Joseph Pereira, more wholly reflects the Late Modernism aesthetic, including both vertical and horizontal elements of varying planes, cantilevered roofs, slender columns, and an iconic sculptural element.

Thus, the building does not appear to be individually eligible under Criterion 3/iii.

This evaluation is based on historic context discussed on pages 19-27 and pages 30-33.

CRITERION 4/iv (INFORMATION POTENTIAL)

The "potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of California" typically relates to archeological resources, rather than built resources. When California Register Criterion 4/iv (Information Potential) does relate to built resources, it is relevant for cases when the building itself is the principal source of important construction-related information. The property at 755 E Shaw Avenue does not meet the requirements of this criterion. Page & Turnbull's evaluation of this property was limited to age-eligible resources above ground and did not involve survey or evaluation of the subject property for the purposes of archaeological information.

VII. CONCLUSION

This Historic Resource Evaluation of the building at 755 E Shaw Avenue in Fresno, completed in 1970, finds that the property does not appear to be individually eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources or the Fresno Local Register of Historic Resources under any criteria. Prior to Fashion Fair Mall's opening in the late 1960s, other suburban shopping centers built to serve the newer neighborhoods outside of the city center had already been drawing retailers away from downtown. However, the new neighborhood and regional shopping centers were not the sole contributors to the decline of downtown retail, as a planned freeway loop that would bring vehicles downtown was never built. The subject building was one of three anchor department stores to one

⁵⁶National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, p. 18, electronic resource at https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf.

of several suburban shopping centers constructed between 1950 and 1970, and it is not individually associated with or responsible for downtown's decline.

Designed by Charles Luckman Associates, the building is an example of Late Modern design; however, it is a stock design applied to three identical buildings constructed for Broadway-Hale Stores and was one of at least 18 department stores designed throughout California and the West for the company. The building does not appear to be a notable example of the work of Charles Luckman Associates nor Late Modern design, and Charles Luckman himself was not directly involved in the design of the subject building.

As the property does not appear to be individually eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources or the Fresno Local Register of Historic Resources, it is therefore not a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA review.

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IX. APPENDICES

Appendix A – The Broadway-Hale Stores, 1960s-1970s

The table below shows The Broadway-Hale Stores displaying varying stock designs by Charles Luckman Associates that were developed through the 1960s and into the early 1970s by and for Broadway-Hale. The designs were replicated at various locations in California and the West. Images below include known extant examples.

Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p data-bbox="201 961 431 1100">Country Club Plaza Sacramento, CA Weinstock-Lubin (1961)</p>	 <p data-bbox="483 1562 675 1591">Figure 44. Vacant</p>

Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p data-bbox="203 856 397 961">Arden Fair Mall Sacramento, CA Hale's (1961)</p>	<p data-bbox="506 340 1222 388"><i>The</i> DEPARTMENT STORE <i>Museum</i></p>  <p data-bbox="750 856 1222 991"><i>Hale's</i> Arden Fair</p>  <p data-bbox="483 1423 678 1453">Figure 45. Macy's</p>

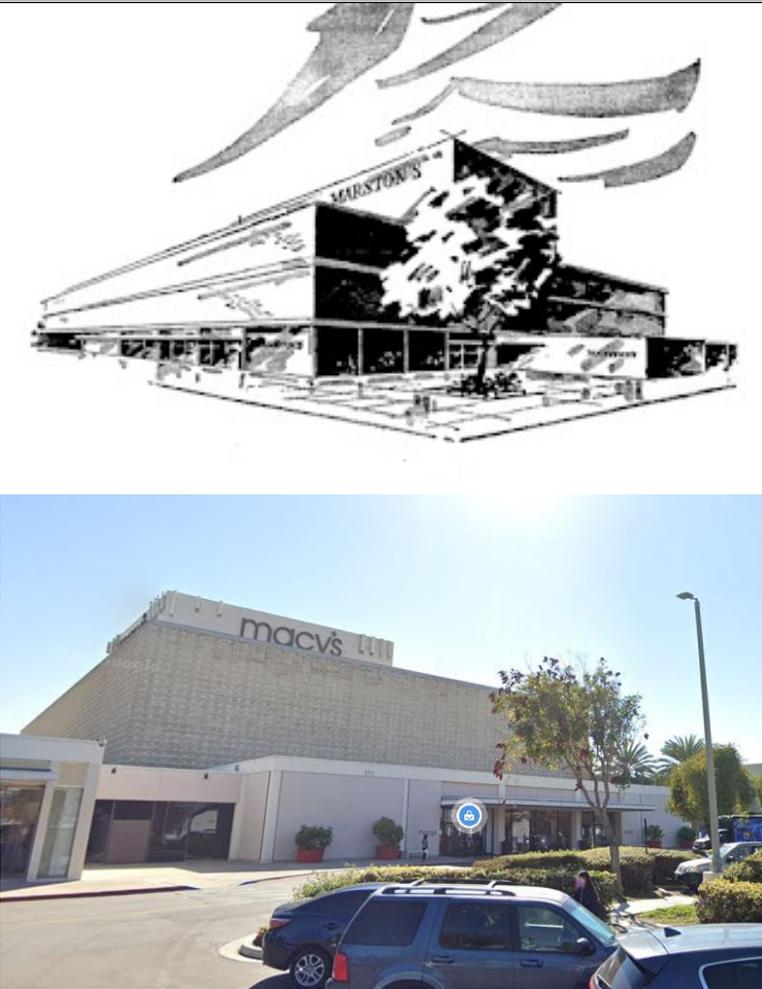
Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p>Chula Vista Center Chula Vista, CA Marston's, acquired by The Broadway (1962)</p>	 <p>The top image is a black and white architectural rendering of a large, multi-story department store. The building has a prominent sign that reads "MARSTON'S". The rendering shows the building's facade, windows, and a large tree in front. The bottom image is a color photograph of the current building, which is a large, modern structure with a sign that reads "macys". The building is surrounded by a parking lot with several cars, including a blue SUV in the foreground. There are trees and a clear blue sky in the background.</p>

Figure 46. Macy's

Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p data-bbox="203 825 440 1003">Huntington Center (now Bella Terra) Huntington Beach, CA The Broadway (1965)</p>	 <p>The top image is a black and white photograph of a large, modern department store building with a prominent sign that reads 'the BROADWAY'. Above the building, a banner reads 'The DEPARTMENT STORE Museum'. The building is surrounded by a large parking lot filled with cars. The bottom image is a color photograph of a modern Kohl's store building with a red and white facade. The building has a large 'KOHLS' sign above the entrance. There are trees and a parking lot in front of the building.</p> <p data-bbox="483 1549 665 1575">Figure 47. Kohl's</p>

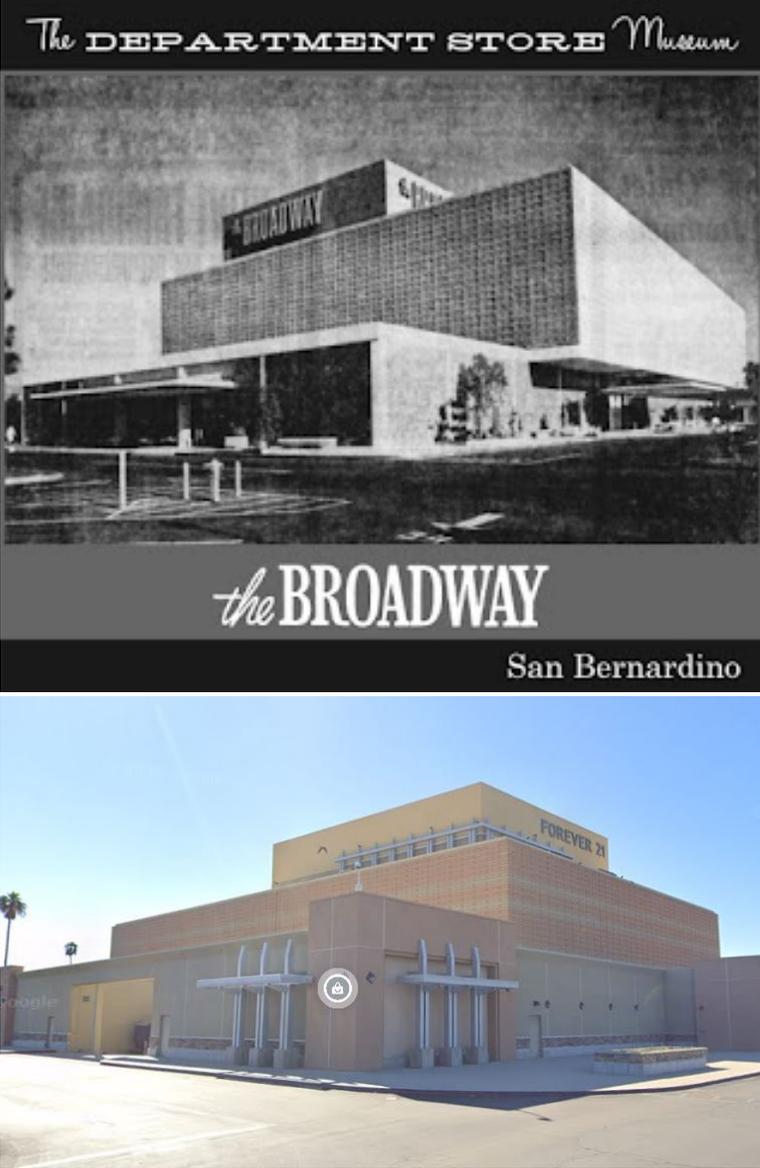
Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p data-bbox="203 856 441 961">Inland Center San Bernardino, CA The Broadway (1966)</p>	 <p>The image block contains two photographs. The top photograph is a black and white historical image of a modernist building with a grid-patterned facade. Text overlays include 'The DEPARTMENT STORE Museum' at the top and 'the BROADWAY San Bernardino' at the bottom. The bottom photograph is a color current image of the same building, now a vacant structure with a tan facade and 'FOREVER 21' signage on the upper level. A 'Google' logo and a location pin icon are visible in the bottom left of this image.</p>

Figure 48. Vacant

Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p>Biltmore Fashion Park Phoenix, AZ The Broadway (1968)</p>	<p><i>Historic Image Unavailable</i></p>  <p>Figure 49. Macy's</p>

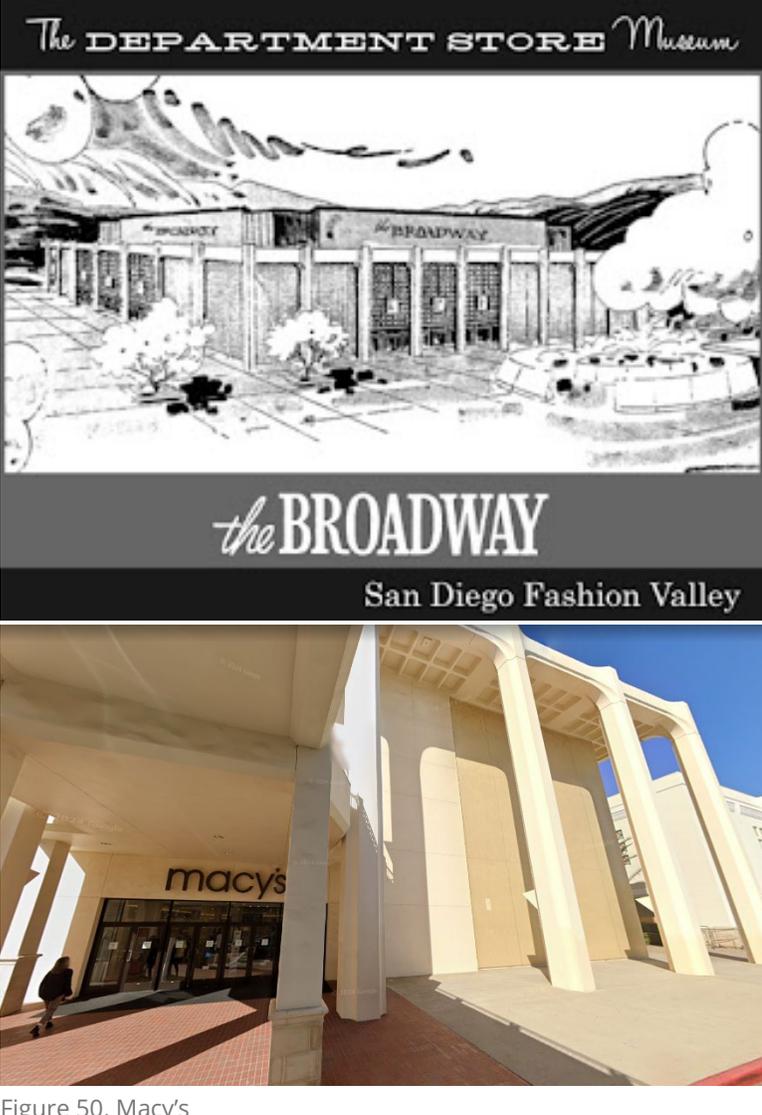
Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p>Fashion Valley Mission Valley, San Diego The Broadway (1969)</p>	 <p>The image block contains two photographs. The top photograph is a black and white architectural rendering of a large, modern building with a prominent entrance and a fountain in the foreground. The text 'The DEPARTMENT STORE Museum' is at the top, and 'the BROADWAY San Diego Fashion Valley' is at the bottom. The bottom photograph is a color photograph of the same building's entrance, showing a person walking on a brick-paved area. The 'macy's' logo is visible above the glass entrance doors.</p>

Figure 50. Macy's

Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p data-bbox="203 779 440 884">Fresno Fashion Fair Fresno, CA Weinstock's (1970)</p>	 <p data-bbox="483 1346 675 1373">Figure 51. Vacant</p>

Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p>Tyler Mall (Galleria at Tyler) Riverside, CA The Broadway (1970)</p>	 <p>Figure 52. Vacant</p>

Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p data-bbox="203 674 423 779">Sunrise Mall Citrus Heights, CA Weinstock's (1972)</p>	 <p data-bbox="483 1100 672 1129">Figure 53. Macy's</p>

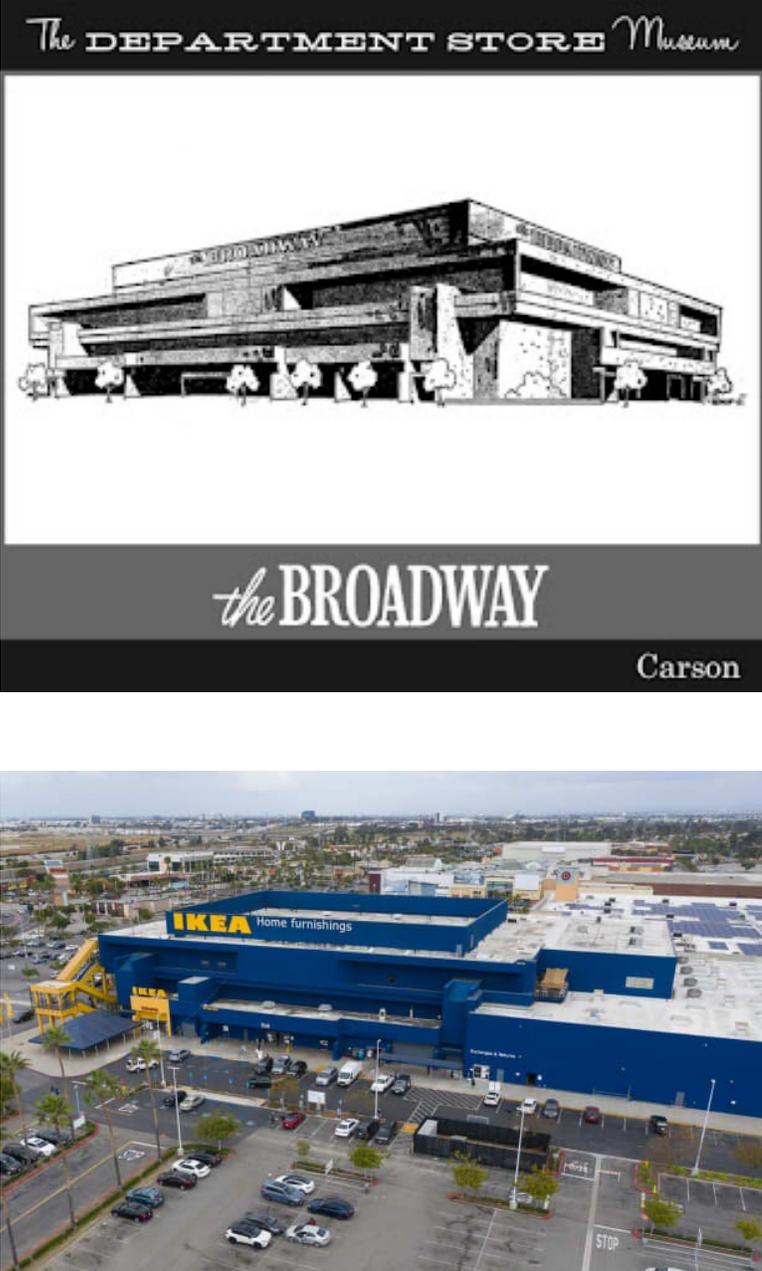
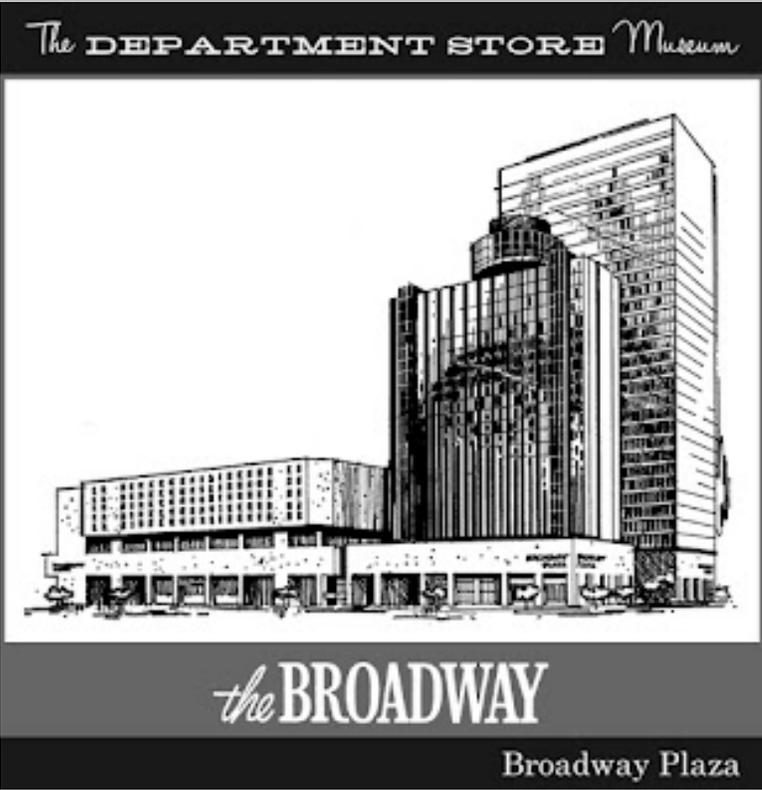
Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p>Carson Mall (now SouthBay Pavillion) Carson, CA The Broadway (1973)</p>	 <p>The top image is a black and white architectural rendering of a large, multi-story building with a prominent sign that reads "The DEPARTMENT STORE Museum". Below the rendering is a dark banner with the text "the BROADWAY" in a stylized font and "Carson" in a smaller font to the right. The bottom image is a color aerial photograph of a large, modern blue building with "IKEA Home furnishings" written on its side. The building is surrounded by a parking lot with several cars and a street with a "STOP" sign.</p>

Figure 54. Ikea

Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p data-bbox="203 890 451 1031">Broadway Plaza Downtown Los Angeles, CA The Broadway (1973)</p>	  <p data-bbox="483 1717 673 1743">Figure 55. Macy's</p>

Name/Location/Year	Historic / Current Images
<p>Park Mall Tucson, AZ The Broadway (1974)</p>	<p><i>Historic Image Unavailable</i></p>  <p>Figure 56. Vacant.</p>

Appendix B – Preparer Qualifications

This Historic Resource Evaluation was prepared by Page & Turnbull of San Francisco, California. Founded in 1973 as Charles Hall Page & Associates, Page & Turnbull is the oldest architecture and planning firm in California to focus its practice on historic preservation and historic resources. Page & Turnbull staff responsible for this report include Christina Dikas Brobst, Principal-in-charge and Project Manager; Jen Hembree, Sr. Cultural Resources Planner, and Claire Rieger, Jr. Cultural Resources Planner, primary authors, all of whom meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for Architectural History.