

South Van Ness Industrial District Historic Survey, Fresno, California



*Rosenberg Packing House, 7 November 1918
(Photo: Pop Laval Foundation)*

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Historic Context: South Van Ness Industrial District (Fresno, California)



*Rosenberg Packing House, 7 November 1918
(Photo: Pop Laval Foundation)*

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Table of Contents

Summary	3
Project Description	3-4
Research Methods	4-5
Historical Overview	6-22
Early History and Development of Fresno	6-11
Themes and Associated Property Types:	
Railroad Development and Expansion 1872-c1900	
City Expansion and Development of Residential Subdivisions	
c1887	
Fruit Packing and Processing 1885-1963	
Armenian Town 1914-1960	
Fresno Traction Company 1927-1939	
Late 19 th and 20 th Century Commercial Development	
1885-1970	
Site Specific History.....	23-31
Architects and Contractors	32-34
Findings and Conclusions	35-44
Regulatory Context	
Eligibility to the National, State and/or Local Registers	
Project Staff Qualifications	45-47
References	48-51

Appendix: Map of Project Area and Survey Forms

Summary

The following historic context was prepared by city staff for use by the consultants (Architecture+History) for Phase 1 of the historic survey of the South Van Ness Industrial District, a project funded in part by a CLG grant through the California Office of Historic Preservation. The survey area included 228 properties of which 187 were constructed prior to 1970 and were fully evaluated on State of California DPR survey forms for their eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources and Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources. Forty-one properties were constructed post-1970 and primary forms only were prepared for these buildings. Surveys are intended to help create an inventory of potential historic resources in the survey area but are not intended to constitute a final determination as to the actual historic or cultural value of the properties. It is only the Historic Preservation Commission and the Fresno City Council, for example, who may recommend and designate a property to the Local Register of Historic Resources. At the very least, a survey represents a baseline for land use planning and potential future action.

Page | 3

Project Description

The South Van Ness Industrial Revitalization Project Area (also referred to as the South Van Ness Industrial District) encompasses 593 acres south of State Route 41 and east of State Route 99 in Fresno, California (see attached map, Appendix). The District includes the southern-most section of Fresno's historic Armenian Town, with remnant residential buildings mixed in with industrial sites and vacant parcels. South of Old Armenian Town the neighborhood is a mix of commercial buildings which reflect the area's former (and current) history of fruit packing and general industrial uses. Other historic themes for the neighborhood include the Central/Southern Pacific Railroad and SR 99 corridors and the Fresno Traction Company (street cars).

The South Van Ness Industrial District has never been systematically surveyed although 16 properties are on Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources. In spring of 2014 City staff prepared a CLG (Certified Local Government) Grant request to the State Office of Historic Preservation for matching funds for an intensive historic survey of the northern 207 acres of the project area. Following SHPO notification of the CLG grant award on June 19, 2014, City staff prepared an RFP for a consultant or consultants meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications as an architectural

historian. Nine qualified firms responded. Through an evaluation of the proposals by a City staffed review committee, Architecture+History, a San Francisco woman-owned firm, was chosen to conduct the historic survey.

One important component of the City's match for the CLG grant was to have staff prepare the historic context. Karana Hattersley-Drayton, the City's Historic Preservation Project Manager who meets the Secretary of the Interior's professional qualifications as both an architectural historian and historian, prepared a draft context in January 2015 which the consultants used for the field survey. Information from oral history interviews, as well as research provided by the consulting team ---particularly so for the section on Contractors--- was added for this final document.

Page | 4

Research Methods

Research methods for the historic context included review of primary and secondary source materials on file in the City's Historic Preservation archives as well as a review of building permits on file in the Development and Resource Management Department's Building Division. Prior survey work and historic contexts prepared by City staff (and outside consultants) were also gleaned. Of particular value were reports prepared by the City's Historic Preservation Officer, Karana Hattersley-Drayton, of Section 106 reviews of the California Products Company Site (August 2010) and the Renaissance at Santa Clara Residential Development Project (February 2011). The California Products Company (now only a site) lies within the South Van Ness Industrial District Project footprint; the Santa Clara project lies immediately to the west of the current project but included research into fruit packing and processing that is germane to this current study.

Research for this study also entailed a careful review of Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for the area from 1885 through 1948. A taped interview with one 86-year old former resident of the area's Armenian Town neighborhood as well as conversations with various property owners were helpful in understanding the social history of the area. Several historic photos were supplied by the Pop Laval Foundation, with thanks to Elizabeth Laval.

On December 16, 2014 staff (Karana Hattersley-Drayton and Assistant Director Daniel Zack) and consultants Bridget Maley and Shane Watson, held a community meeting in the project area at the (former) Murray Ice Cream Company Building (HP#249). Property owners in the project footprint were

invited, with approximately 15 in attendance. Ms. Drayton gave a brief Power Point overview of the area's history and discussed the purpose of the survey. The consultants and Assistant Director Zack answered questions.

Architecture+History staff then began to methodically review building records, Polk Directories and other primary and secondary sources of information and conduct fieldwork to document each of the resources within the project footprint (See Survey report). Bridget Maley presented the team's initial findings to the City's Historic Preservation Commission at their June 22, 2015 public hearing. The draft survey was reviewed initially at the July 27, 2015 meeting of the Commission and a final hearing is set for August 24th. Project maps were created by City staff, Edward Smith and Michael Andrade.

Page | 5



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Historical Overview

Early History and Development of Fresno

The Yokuts were the first residents of the Fresno area, with small tribes occupying the floodplains of the Big Dry Creek and Little Dry Creek (Gayton 1948:153; Latta 1997:163). Although there were no missions established in the Valley, there were small Mexican era settlements including Pueblo de las Junta, located at the confluence of the San Joaquin River and the Fresno Slough (Hoover 1990: 86). The Spanish and Mexican influence is indicated through place names such as “Fresno,” which means “ash tree” and which was first applied to the Fresno River (Hoover et al 1990:85). Following the Gold Rush of 1849, miners were drawn to the southern gold fields, and cattle ranchers and dryland farmers moved into the area. Three momentous changes occurred in the 1870s, which dramatically changed settlement patterns and history: the construction of the Central Pacific railroad, the introduction of agricultural colonies and the concomitant development of a labyrinth of canals to bring water to these colonies.

Page | 6

In 1870 the Central Pacific Railroad began its diagonal push down the San Joaquin Valley. New towns were surveyed along the corridor---several were planned by the railroad itself---and earlier villages situated away from the tracks often vanished overnight. In 1872 the railroad reached what is now Fresno. The Contract and Finance Company, a subsidiary of the Central Pacific Railroad, bought 4,480 acres in a desolate area where Dry Creek drained into the plains. Surveyor Edward H. Mix laid out the new town in blocks 320 feet by 400 feet, with 20 foot alleys, lots 25 x 150 feet fronting on 80-foot wide streets parallel to and on both sides of the tracks (Clough 1984:121). The gridiron plan was filed in 1873 and was remarkably rigid, broken only by the space reserved for a future courthouse and the broad swaths through the center of town for the tracks, depot and yards (Reps 1979:187).

*Looking northeast
towards Fresno
Street and St.
John's
Church, 1886
(Photo: Fresno
Historical Society
Archives)*



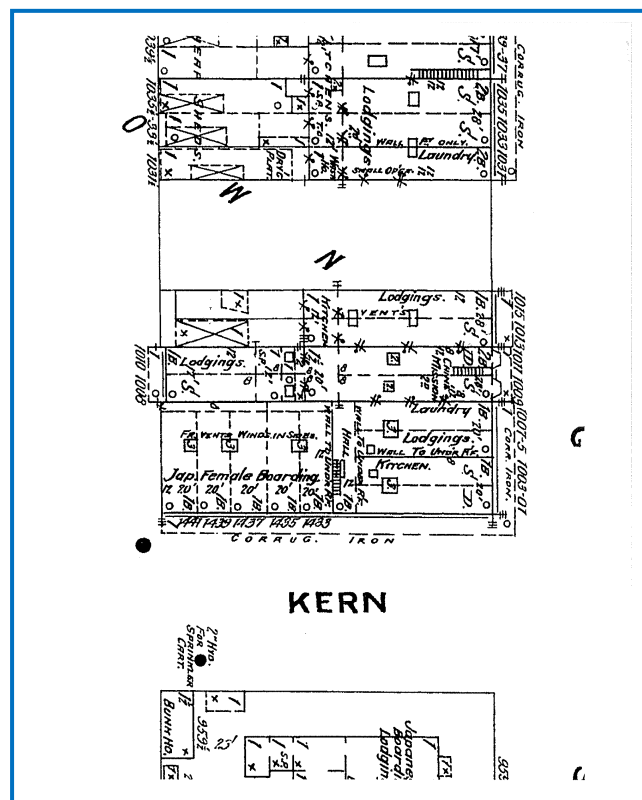
Fresno's location was uninviting at best, with barren sand plains in all directions. The nearest substantial supply of water was the San Joaquin River, 10 miles to the north (Reps 1979:187) and the Kings River further south. Fresno grew slowly but in 1874 it was able to wrestle the county seat away from the former mining town of Millerton (Hoover 1990:88). The population of Fresno in 1875 was 600, with a third of the residents Chinese who lived west of the tracks. In 1878, a new resident, R.W. Riggs described the community as "not much of a town, a handful of houses in a desert of sand" (Reps 1979:187). Fresno's population was 1,112 in 1880 and 3,464 in 1885. "Yet the town remained a collection of buildings on the prairie rather than a full-fledged city. There was no police force, sewer system or truly efficient fire department, and cattle were still roaming the dusty streets that became winter lakes" (Clough 1984:141).

The 1880s, however, were prosperous years and the desert was turned into profitable farmland with the introduction of irrigation and agricultural colonies. The model for the system that ultimately served throughout the San Joaquin Valley was the Central California Colony, established in 1875 three miles south of Fresno. The Colony was the "brainchild" of Bernard Marks, a German immigrant who approached William S. Chapman, one of the wealthiest landowners in California, with his vision of 20-acre family owned farms sharing a secured source of water. Marks saw the potential for farming in the desert-like environment of the San Joaquin Valley if irrigation could be guaranteed (Panter 1994:2). He surveyed six sections of land owned by Chapman and investor William Martin and subdivided the land into 192 20-acre parcels. Three laterals from the Kings River and Fresno Canal were extended into the tracts and water rights were sold to the prospective farmers. Twenty-three miles of roads were laid out and bordered with trees (Panter 1994; Rehart and Patterson 1988:7). Many of the earliest settlers were former miners as well as Scandinavian immigrants: Danes, Swedes and Norwegians (Rehart and Patterson 1988:8). By 1903 there were 48 separate colonies or tracts in Fresno County representing approximately 71,080 acres (Panter 1994:9). These colonies helped to break up the vast estates and initiated what agricultural historian Donald Pisani has termed "the horticultural small-farm phase" of California agriculture (Datel 1999:97).

Fresno was incorporated in 1885. With incorporation, street grades and town lot numbers were established (Clough 1984:319). In November 1887, 1,100 deeds were filed at the county courthouse and the last of the original railroad lots in Fresno were sold. By 1890 the population of Fresno was over 10,000, and land outside of the original town site was subdivided into streets and lots (Reps

1979:191). The first streetcars were introduced in 1892, and this greater mobility allowed for the construction of a variety of streetcar suburbs (Bulbulian 2001:38; Clough 1984:319). Van Ness Boulevard, for example, was developed to link Fresno and the San Joaquin River.

In the 1870s the “west” side of the Southern Pacific tracks quickly became “Chinatown,” where Chinese, as well as disreputable whites, were forced to settle. The 1898 Sanborn Map shows a remarkably dense in-fill of saloons, lodging houses, lottery and gambling parlors between G, Mariposa, F and Kern Streets. A Chinese theatre is noted on China Alley and a Joss House faced G Street (1898 Sanborn Map of Fresno).



In addition to Chinese and Scandinavian farmers, other early ethnic groups in the Fresno area included Germans from Russia, Japanese and Armenians. Volga Germans from Russia first came to Fresno in 1887, seeking work as farm laborers. By 1920 there were approximately 8,000 Volga Germans in Fresno and by 1937 at least 8 churches serving the German-speaking population (*Germantown Context*:12). Although there were only 12 Japanese in Fresno in 1890, by 1900 there were 3,000 (Bulbulian 2001:34). The first Armenians arrived in 1881 and eventually settled in an area between the Santa Fe and Southern

Pacific tracks appropriately called “Armenian Town” (*Ibid.* 37-38). African-Americans were also present early on and organized an African Methodist Church in 1882 (Clough 1984:137).

The 1887 boom in agriculture and land values brought prosperity to Fresno. In 1889 alone, buildings with an estimated value of 1 million dollars were erected along Mariposa Street in the heart of “downtown”. The Depression of 1893 had little effect on Fresno, probably due to its agricultural base. Numerous hotels and boarding houses served a diversity of patrons including the elegant three-story Hughes Hotel constructed in 1888 at I and Tulare Streets and the Tombs Hotel at J and Merced Streets. In 1890 the 115-room Pleasanton Hotel was built at I and Merced. The Fresno Depot Hotel, located at the Southern Pacific station, featured an elegant parlor, bath rooms and meals prepared for the benefit of passengers (Clough and Secrest 1984:307-313).

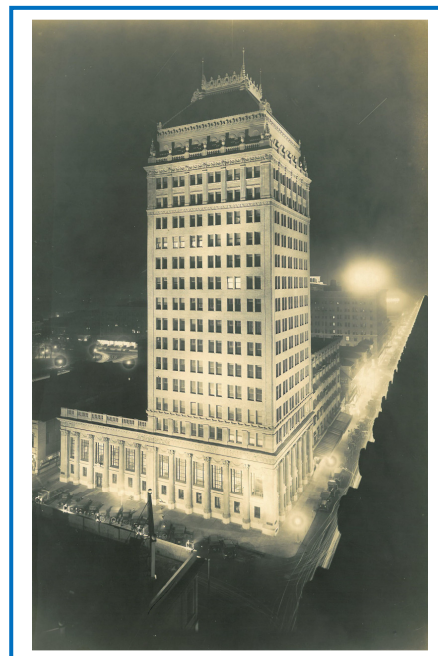
Page | 9

The architectural style of most of the hotels and business blocks was “high Victorian” with construction of brick, iron and glass with French Renaissance inspired mansard roofs, towers and gable dormer windows topped with decorative finials.

Beginning in the early 20th century the City’s downtown was completely transformed: the elegant “Victorian” style blocks and hotels were demolished or in the case of smaller buildings were eventually refaced with a “modern” storefront. What emerged was a more “rational” Classic Revival city, one influenced by the latest trends in architectural design emanating from American cities such as New York, Chicago and San Francisco as well as Paris, France (Powell 1983:2; Powell 2008:52).

The building boom in downtown Fresno was halted when the Depression hit in 1929. In the 1960s Redevelopment permanently altered the downtown landscape with the demolition of numerous buildings, including the Carnegie-financed library and original City Hall. Both of these buildings were replaced by parking lots. In 1964 six blocks of Fulton Street were closed for a pedestrian mall, designed by landscape architect, Garrett Eckbo.

Photo: *Pacific Southwest Building (Fresno Historical Society archives)*



The raisin industry developed in the 1870s, after the scorching heat of 1875 dried grapes on the vine (Hoover 1990:91). Martin Theodore Kearney who left employment with the Central California Colony and eventually became one of the wealthiest landowners in the area served as the President of the first California Raisin Growers Association from 1898 to 1904. The Sun-Maid Raisin Cooperative was founded in 1912 and became one of the most successful in America. Fresno became the principal-packing center for the raisin grape industry with numerous packinghouses in the city.

Other crops such as figs and stone fruits helped to diversify the local economy and Fresno became the market town for a large portion of the San Joaquin Valley (Reps 1979:192). The 1888 plat of Fresno, clearly used to help market the city, boasted the following:

"Fresno The Home of the Raisin Grape. The Fruit Center of California. The Apricot, Nectarine, Pomegranate, Fig, Prune, Peach, Pear, Quince, Apple, Orange, Olive, Almond and the Grape flourish equally well in this County. HERE IS THE PLACE TO MAKE MONEY where Nature is prodigal with her favors. Plenty of Land. Plenty of Water. Soil Fertile. Climate Healthful. Come to FRESNO and be satisfied." (Plat of the City of Fresno and Additions (1888) Merriam and Reed, General Land Agents.)

In the early 20th century cotton became the county's "number one money-making crop." In 1910 the University of California's Kearney Station [located at what is now Kearney Park] tested several varieties of cotton for their applicability to the area's climate and soils. Fiber shortages during World War I encouraged the growth of a local cotton industry and in March 1918 the Fresno County Board of Supervisors selected the Pima variety for local production. The first cotton gin and drying mill in the County were built in 1918 by the California Products Company on the parcel now addressed at 3000 E. Butler Avenue in Fresno (and within the project footprint). The cotton came from a thirty-acre field about 15 miles south of Fresno (Clough 1986:169,175-6).

Fresno continued to grow following World War I, and in 1930, the city had a population of 52,513. While the Great Depression brought hardship to the city, it also resulted in the construction of a series of major civic buildings in the city through Franklin Roosevelt's "alphabet soup" agencies. In addition, the complex of buildings at Fresno's Chandler Airfield/Fresno Municipal Airport was constructed in 1936-7 with funding from the Works Progress Administration.

During and after World War II, there was a severe housing shortage as thousands of homeless transients arrived in the city, looking for agricultural work. In addition, returning servicemen and their families also needed housing. The first major post-war subdivision completed was Mayfair, which included the first suburban shopping center. Manchester Center followed in 1955, with Fig Garden Village in 1956. Six blocks of the Downtown were converted to a pedestrian mall in 1964, with a design by landscape architect Garrett Eckbo. However, the suburban flight of the 1960s and the construction of the Fashion Fair shopping complex in 1969 helped lead to the decline of the Fulton Mall and the Downtown area.

Today, Fresno is home to a diverse population, which includes descendants from the city's earliest pioneers and recently arrived immigrants. For many residents, the city still functions as a small town, despite its large size. Residents value the agricultural green belt that surrounds the city, with its geometric fields of grapevines and row crops; the Classic Revival high rise buildings along the Fulton Mall; the city's ethnic diversity; and the opportunities available for improving one's quality of life.

Although slightly outside the project area this Pop Laval photograph of 1635 Monterey Street shows the condition of homes and use of back yard spaces in 1920 (Photo: Pop Laval Foundation)



Themes and Associated Property Types

The following themes have been identified as germane to the history and development of the South Van Ness Industrial District. Using these themes and their periods of significance, individual properties and districts were evaluated for their potential eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources and the Local Register of Historic Resources. A sample of represented property types for each theme is included.

Page | 12

Railroad Development and Expansion: 1872-c1900

The City of Fresno was founded in 1872 as a railroad town by the Central Pacific Railroad Company (later renamed the Southern Pacific Railroad and now the Union Pacific). In the late 19th century a second competing line, the San Francisco and San Joaquin Valley Railroad was constructed along what was then the eastern boundary of the City. The SFSJV ran its first train through Fresno on October 5, 1896. By 1898 the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe had purchased the SFSJV system and constructed additional facilities, including packing sheds and warehouses along this corridor. A Mission Revival style depot was built in 1899.

Businesses in the South Van Ness project area, particularly those catering to fruit packing, sprang up along the tracks and rail spurs such as the Southern Pacific's Pollaski and Sanger Branches that serve(d) the neighborhood.

Rear elevation of W.P. Fuller Paint Company, 2244 Los Angeles, with access to rail spur

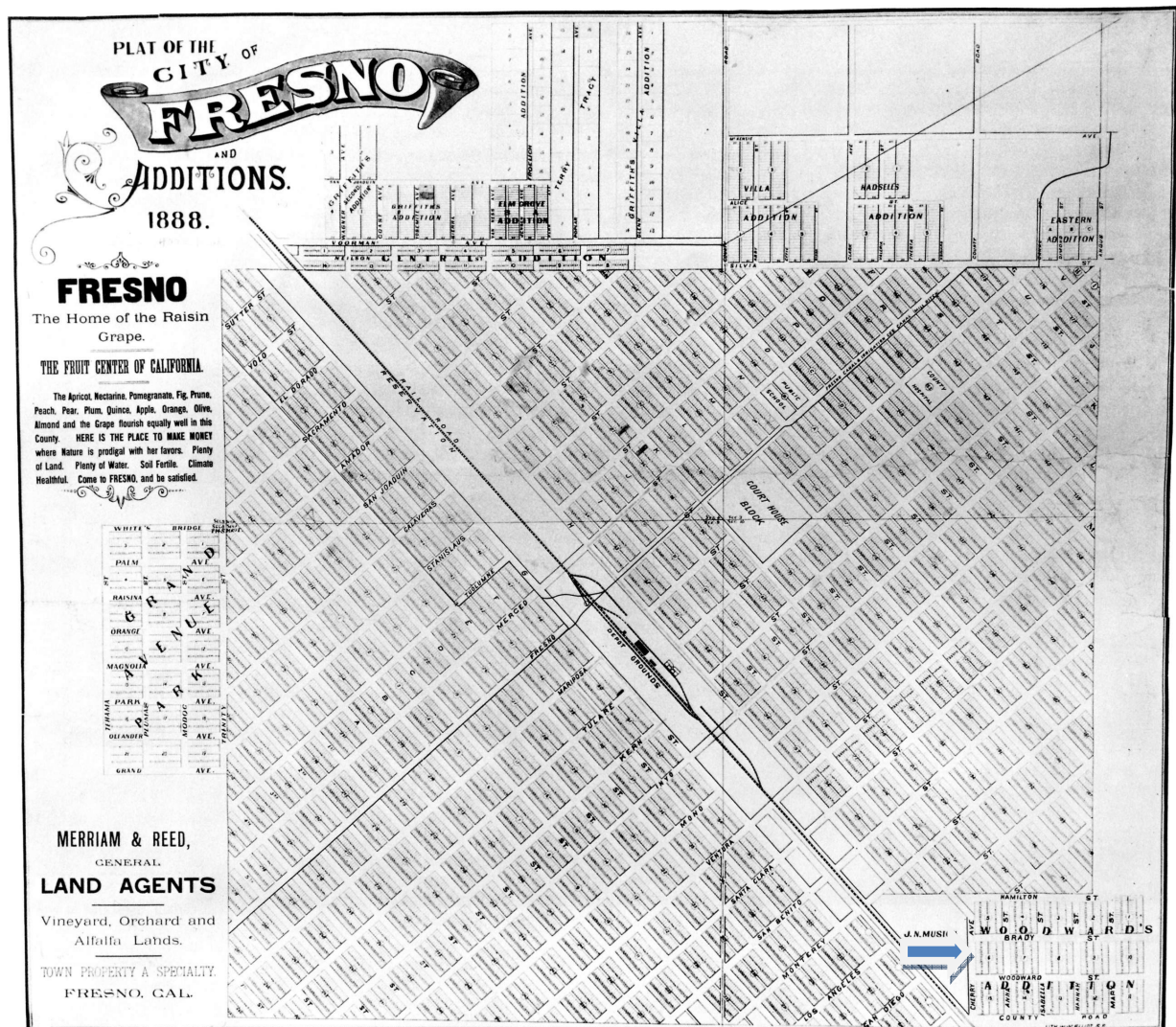


Both train depots lie outside the project area and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places as well as the Local Register of Historic Resources. Additional railroad-associated properties which may be eligible for listing include infrastructure and any purpose-built rail facilities.

City Expansion and Development of Residential Subdivisions: c1887

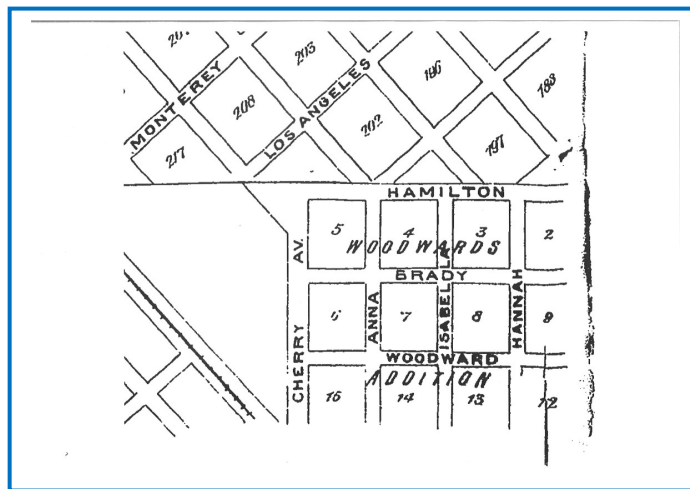
From 1880 to 1885 the population of Fresno more than tripled from 1,112 to 3,464 inhabitants (Clough 1984:141). As a consequence land speculators began to buy and subdivide land outside of Fresno's original town plan. Although the "parent grid" of the city was designed to be parallel to the diagonal of the Central Pacific rail corridor, these new tracts were surveyed to line up with the surrounding agricultural sections and laid out with streets oriented north-south and east-west. As a consequence, odd-shaped triangular lots exist where the newer grid system meets the old.

Page | 13



One of the first subdivisions added to the railroad town grid was the 15-block Woodward's Addition on the south edge of the project area. The tract is depicted on both the 1888 Plat of Fresno as well as the Sanborn Fire Insurance map for that year (and is the only subdivision noted on the Sanborn map, although outside city limits). Oscar James Woodward was born in 1849 and with his wife Anna came to Fresno in 1885. He purchased a large parcel of land on the south edge of the city, using funds acquired from investments and trade in railroad land in Illinois. In 1887 he was hired as a cashier at the First National Bank. Within a year he had been promoted to President of the bank and by 1895 he was one of the wealthiest and most prominent citizens of Fresno's business community. He helped to attract investors to Fresno through his land advertisements. Apparently his personal mantra was "Early to bed, early to rise, work like hell and advertise" (Clough and Secrest 1984:315 and Rehart 1996:184). It would be interesting to know whether he played a role in the production of the 1888 map which so clearly served to market the city. His last Fresno residence, a colonial style adobe located at 4480 North Wilson Avenue, was designed by architects Franklin and Kump.

*Woodwards
Addition,
partial
May 1888
Sanborn Map*



Any extant buildings associated with the early development of the Woodward's Addition would be eligible for listing on a historic register if they retained sufficient integrity to their period of significance.

Fruit Packing and Processing: 1885-1970

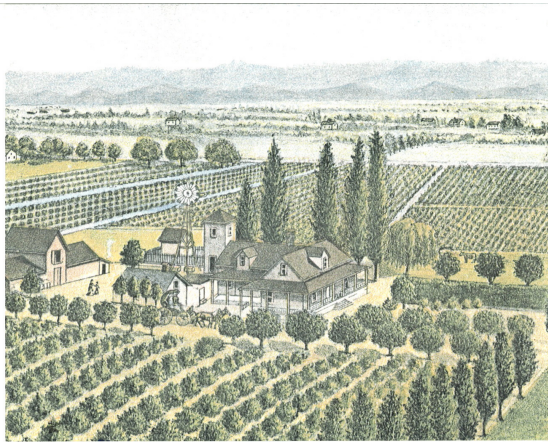
Small blue grapes grow wild along the streams and rivers of the San Joaquin Valley. But it was the Franciscan missionaries who introduced the domestic

production of grapes when they imported grape cuttings into California in the late 18th century. The first vineyard in the San Joaquin Valley was planted in Centerville in 1852 by Harvey Akers with cuttings he brought back strapped to his saddle from Mission San Gabriel (Smith 2004:662). Raisins from dried grapes were produced in the Fresno area beginning in the mid-1870s, apparently somewhat by accident. By 1889 Fresno was the center of raisin production, as captured in this 1889 essay by vineyardist Gustav Eisen:

Page | 15

“For a mile in every direction the town stretches out, the center thickly built, the outskirts with sparsely scattered houses. Adjoining these the country begins--- vineyards as far as we can trace, groups of houses shaded by trees in different tins of green, while broken rows of endless poplars traverse the verdant plains and lose themselves in the distant horizon...”

Travelling out into the country... “At every step, almost, we pass teams going in various directions, ----teams loaded with raisin boxes, teams with raisin trays, teams crowded with raisin-pickers or colonists generally, who rush to and from town to transact business connected with their one great industry.”



Eisen noted that most of the pickers in the largest vineyards were Chinese whereas in the smaller vineyards gangs of “white” men and boys did the work, with laborers coming to Fresno from throughout California to earn \$1.25 to \$1.50 a day. Local schools closed for the picking season as well, in order to allow children to take part in the work (Eisen in Clough 1984:343-4).

Gustav Eisen’s treatise of 1889, *The Raisin Industry*, mentioned 22 raisin packing establishments in Fresno County. Three of these were the largest in the State. Even with the invention of the raisin-seeding machine in 1896 a typical packing house employed more than 2,000 people a day: “Women at long tables pack the raisins in boxes, at other tables men weigh and assort raisins and take them out of the large sweat-boxes in which they left the field.” Wages were

typically three dollars a day, twice the average wage for the time (Clough 1984: 343-344).

The Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for late 19th century Fresno document the development of packing houses along the rail corridor through town. The earliest fruit packing business included on a Sanborn Map is the Fresno Fruit Packing Company which was located at the southwest corner of Mono and G Streets in 1885 (Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Fresno 1885:4). By 1898 there were numerous packing sheds and processing facilities straddling both sides of the Southern Pacific corridor between Ventura and San Benito Streets as well as along the Pollaski Branch of the railroad through the project area.

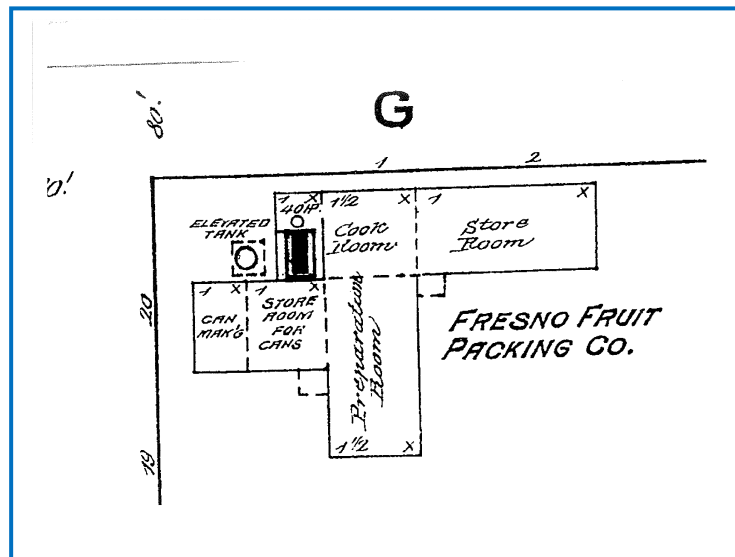
Page | 16

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Fresno, 1885:4

Lorraine Collett Peterson, 1915; model for Sun-Maid.

Armenian Immigrants Picking Grapes, Fresno County.

Photo: *the M. Theo Kearney Collection, Fresno Historical Society Archives.*



Raisin production was a difficult enterprise, with the fruit particularly vulnerable to adverse weather. The growers were also exploited in the marketplace and in 1896 the raisin industry was on the verge of collapse. In 1898 the farmers formally banded together in a cooperative as the California Raisin Growers' Association with Martin Theodore Kearney as President. By 1904 the organization had fallen apart and the Association voted itself out of business in 1905 (Clough 1986:172).

However in 1912 the growers joined forces again to establish the California Associated Raisin Company. Wylie M. Giffen was elected president and James Madison, vice-president and manager. In 1913 the California Associated Raisin Company handled 90 percent of the crop of the entire state and as a consequence in 1920 the Attorney General brought suit charging that the company violated the Sherman Anti-Trust Law by monopolizing the raisin industry. In 1921, 10,700 growers or 93 percent were members of the association. In 1922 the name of the company was changed to Sun-Maid Raisin Growers (Wallace Smith 2004: 726-731).

Lorraine Collett Peterson was a high school student who worked for the Griffin and Skelley Company part-time as a seeder and packer for \$15 a week. She accompanied several other young women to San Francisco to represent the company at the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, where the girls handed out raisins, wearing blue and white sunbonnets. Later in Fresno, Lorraine was spotted by one of the executives of the raisin cooperative wearing her mother's red bonnet. She was asked to pose for a portrait and the trademark "Girl with sunbonnet holding a tray of raisins" was created and applied to Sun-Maid raisin packages beginning in 1916 (see "The Sun-Maid Girl," "Lorraine Collett," "From Del Monte Corporation...", and "Things"; Clough 1986:172 and "Our History" Sun-Maid Corporation accessed 2011).

In 1918 the California Associated Raisin Company outgrew its facilities and opened a new processing plant at 2901 E. Hamilton (within the project footprint, City block 103). The complex was considered the finest factory building "this side of Detroit." The plant served as the home for Sun-Maid raisins for 46 years until the company relocated to Kingsburg in 1964 (Sunmaid.com accessed 1 February 2011).



In 1916 four pioneer fruit packing companies merged to become the California Packing Corporation. The companies were the California Fruit Cannery Association, Griffin and Skelley, Central California Canneries and J.K. Armsby Company. California Packing Corporation sold its products under a number of proprietary and distributive labels. The premium brand for the California Packing Corporation, however, was “Del Monte” (named for the 1880 Hotel Del Monte) and in June 1967 the company changed its name to the Del Monte Corporation (Ibid.)

Fruit processing continued to be a viable commercial concern through most of the 20th century. However, Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for the project area depict fewer facilities for fruit packing and drying over the years as many former plants turned to other commercial endeavors.

Properties associated with fruit packing which are listed on the Local Register of Historic Resources include: HP# 031 Sun Maid Raisin Growers Cooperative 2601 E. Hamilton (demolished but treated as a potential archaeological site).

Armenian Town: 1914-1960

The first Armenian settlers in Fresno were the Seropian Brothers who arrived in 1881. By 1920 there were nearly 8,000 Armenian immigrants in Fresno due to their persecution under the Ottoman Empire. During the “Armenian Genocide” (1915-1923) 1.5 million Armenians died. By 1930 Fresno Armenians accounted for 25 percent of local raisin growers and were also involved in various aspects of fruit packing (Hiigel 2008:106-107).

Armenians first settled west of the Southern Pacific tracks but around 1914 they began to move into a 64 square block area bounded by Broadway on the west, the Southern Pacific tracks on the south, O Street on the east, and Kern Street on the north (Bulbulian 2001:37). “Armenian Town” included residences, bakeries, schools and churches, including the home of one of Fresno’s leading citizens, writer William Saroyan. In the early years Armenians preferred to live on lettered streets, I Street to O as well as on Los Angeles and Monterey Streets as these were paved and relatively free of dust in summer and mud in winter. Younger families began to move out of Armenian Town following World War II and by the 1960s and 1970s the neighborhood had lost its distinct ethnic identity (Bulbulian 2001:39).

The southern section of this former ethnic enclave, from San Benito Street past Los Angeles street, is included within the project boundaries although it is important to note that the construction and significance of some properties predates their association with Armenian Town.

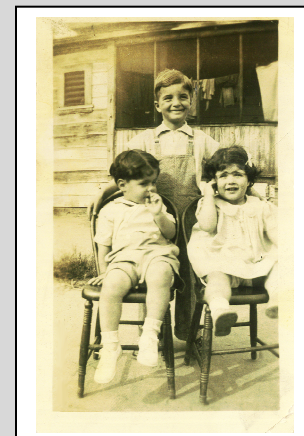
Memories from Armenian Town, 1930s:

Abe [George] Salvian was born in 1928 in Fowler and moved with his family to 239 N Street in Armenian Town circa 1933 when their farmhouse burned down. His father was from Samsun, his mother from Bolis [now Istanbul] Turkey. His father's first wife and several children were all killed in the Armenian Genocide.

The Salvian family lost everything in the Fowler fire: "I mean, we had nothin' nothing. Zero when we came to town. (...) We had apple boxes for furniture. (...) But we weren't the only ones, there was a lot of them [that were poor.]" The rent on the N Street house was \$2.50 a month. To get by the family had a large garden and raised chickens. Mr. Salvian attended Emerson School although walking to school was a challenge, with "a fight every day." They were called "Black Armenians", particularly by the Germans from Russia. Armenian Town also had its class structure, however, with homes north of Ventura the more exclusive and owned by wealthier Armenian families.

By 1937 the Salvians were able to move to a nicer 2-bedroom home located at 245 Fulton Street. There was a street light in front, "we were high class then!" Sham's Rio Grande service station was on the corner. Mr. Salvian sold sunflower seeds, peanuts and popcorn at the baseball games at California Playground. He also worked summers picking grapes and laying them on the papers to dry into raisins. He quit school after 6th grade and worked at the produce market that was located where the City Hall Annex is today: "Trucks would line up that whole block, back to back." At 14 he went to work at the Downtown Garage. He and his friends would walk to the Coney Island on Tulare Street for lunch, "and have a good meal for 25 cents: three hot dogs a nickel a piece, big Pepsi cola, 5 cents, bag of potato chips, five cents. That was a good meal."

From a taped interview with Abe [George] Salvian, 7 July 2015 by Karana Hattersley-Drayton, City of Fresno, for the South Van Ness Industrial District Historic Survey.



Several buildings in Armenian Town are on Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources including HP# 056 The Mink Home (1907) located at 344 N Street, which was the residence of a machinist for Central California Machine Works, and HP# 097 The Neverman Home (1912), 309 M Street, the residence of Rudolf C. Neverman, the assistant brewmaster for the Fresno Brewery. By 1936 Erikor Sherafian was listed as the owner of 344 N Street and Moses Terzian was the owner of 309 M Street. The following buildings are associated from their initial construction with local Armenian history, HP# 246 Sham's Rio Grande Service Station (1938) located at 205 Fulton Street and HP# 249, J.M. Menend/Murray Ice Cream Company Building (1924) located at 175 Fulton Street.



The J.M. Menend/Murray Ice Cream Co. Building is located at 175 Fulton Street, at the "Five Corners" area where Fulton, Los Angeles and South Cherry meet. A building permit was issued in 1923 to the contractor Carl D. Hosepian for a store. Apparently the building first served as a candy store but by 1929 it housed the Murray Ice Cream Company, a favorite stop for families coming and going to baseball games at the California Playground (Field).

Directly across the street is ***Sham's Rio Grande Service Station***, constructed in 1938 in a Streamline Moderne style. The station was purchased in 1941 by Ralph Shamshoian and it became a favorite hangout on Saturdays for young Armenian men. Sham's also sponsored a basketball team. The station burned badly a few years back and was faithfully restored by the current owner.

Fresno Traction Company (streetcars):1927-1939

The first horse car lines in Fresno were developed in 1887 with the purpose of promoting real estate sales on the eastern side of the City (Railroader 248:3). Electric service was initiated in October 1902 under the Fresno City Railway Company with H.A. Voorman, president. In 1903 the Railway Company was renamed the Fresno Traction Company with A.G. Wishon, Manager. By 1905 there were 15.5 miles of track in the system (Harrison in Clough 1996:248-9). In 1910 the Fresno Traction Company was sold to the Southern Pacific Railroad. The era of electric street cars was reasonably short in Fresno. The Fresno Traction Company consistently lost money and in the early 1930s, with rising costs of operation and a poor economy, the Company began to close down its lines. In 1934 the 1912 vintage center-entrance “dragon” cars were declared surplus and placed in dead storage in the car yard at First and Platt (Hamm 1979:37). The last trolley ran out Wishon Avenue on May 21st, 1939 where it met with a bus at a ceremony that marked the transition from “rails to rubber” (Clough 1986:59).

Page | 21

On September 1, 1927 the Wishon Line was extended to terminate at Fulton (formerly J Street) and Hamilton Street in the project area. Prior to 1927 this street car route originated and terminated at the S.P. Depot. Coincidentally, two cars from the Fresno Traction Company are located a block away in the South Van Ness neighborhood at 1731 S. Cherry Avenue. A Dragon type car and a Birney type streetcar were salvaged and remodeled for use as a café beginning in 1935. The Standard Diner was later renamed “Trolley Car Carole’s” and was “a hangout for the coffee and poetry crowd” (Hansen 1991:26). The diner is currently not in use and the cars are the subject of vandalism. They are listed on Fresno’s Local Register of Historic Resources, HP#099.



Late 19th and 20th Century Commercial Development: (1885-1970)

Commercial businesses in the project area developed quickly over the late 19th and early 20th centuries, aided by connections to both the Southern Pacific rail corridor (through branch lines) and by direct access to the Santa Fe Atchison Topeka line on the east. Although enterprises connected to fruit packing predominated in the earliest years, a review of Sanborn Fire Insurance maps indicates a trend towards diversification of businesses and in later years to businesses connected to transportation and automobile repair.

Page | 22

Buildings were designed in streetcar commercial, classic revival, Art Deco, Mission Revival, Mid-century Modern and vernacular commercial, the later with little stylistic articulation. Commercial buildings in the project area listed on Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources include:

- HP# 026 Fresno Brewing Company (1907) 100 M Street (National Register of Historic Places)
- HP# 060 Central Packaging Supply Company (1920) 2534 San Benito
- HP# 069 Fresno Planing Mill (1917) 1820 Monterey Street
- HP# 070 Bekins Van and Storage (1921) 301 Van Ness Avenue
- HP# 083 California Products Company Office (burned and demolished)
- HP# 084 San Joaquin Grocers Wholesale Warehouse (1913) 104 Fulton Street
- HP# 098 Old Barn (1900) 100 ¼ M Street
- HP# 100 American Self Storage Company (1918) 1844 S. Cherry
- HP# 101 Holt Lumber Company (1915) 1916 S. Cherry
- HP# 246 Sham's Rio Grande Service Station (1938)
- HP# 249 J.M. Menend/Murray Ice Cream Company Building (1924) 175 Fulton Street.



*Holt Lumber
Company Office in
2014*

Photo: Karana
Hattersley-Drayton

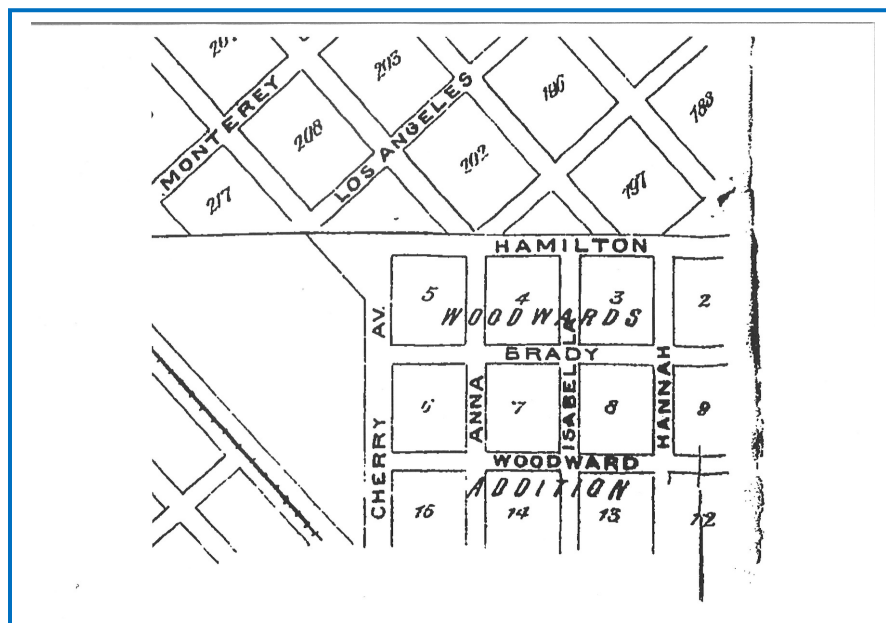
Site Specific History

An overview of the historical and architectural development of the South Van Ness Industrial District can be gleaned from several sources, including a review of the Sanborn Maps for the area. Sanborn Maps were originally created for assessing fire insurance liability in urban areas of the United States. Although the City of Fresno was founded in 1872, the first Sanborn maps were not produced for Fresno until January 1885, the year the city was incorporated. No portion of the South Van Ness Industrial District project area was included in the 1885 maps. A portion of the area including 12 blocks of the Woodward's Addition was depicted on the May 1888 Sanborn map, although no individual block maps were prepared as the area was outside the City limits. By the 1898 Sanborn Map several blocks within the project area were included and assessed.

Page | 23

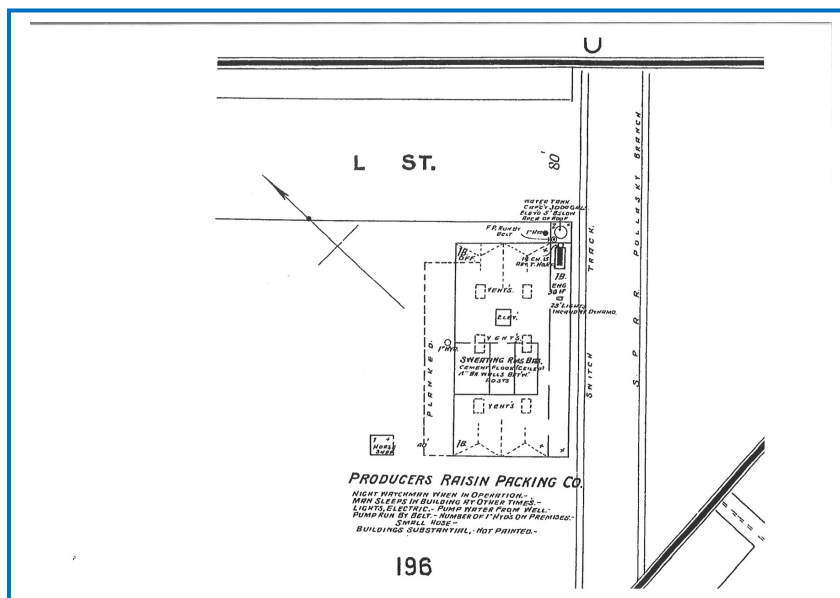
May 1888 Sanborn Map: City blocks 218 (north of Monterey) over to Block 181 are shown on the overview map as are 12 blocks of the Woodward's Addition. None of these blocks are specifically assessed, however, as they were not within the City limits. Woodward's Addition included Brady Street (later "Brady"), Hannah (later "Sarah"), Isabella (later Van Ness), Woodward and Anna (named one assumes for Woodward's wife, Anna). Hamilton was the north boundary of the Addition and Cherry Avenue was the western edge. The tract is orthogonal, thus it lines up with the agricultural sections south of the city and as a consequence odd shaped parcels were created where the Addition met the railroad grid of the original City of Fresno plat.

1888



1898 Sanborn Map: By the 1898 Sanborn all 15 blocks within the Woodward Addition were depicted and were within the city limits which ran along the east side of the Addition. However no specific maps were prepared for the 15 blocks of the subdivision. The Pollaski Branch of the Southern Pacific Railroad ran through the project area on a gentle arc following along San Diego. Another SPRR branch (identified in 1906 as the Sanger Branch) ran along the County line (now California Avenue). The San Francisco and San Joaquin Valley Railroad (soon to be appropriated by the ATSF) is east of the city limits. Maps 9 and 36 depict sparsely populated residential neighborhoods along Monterey with one story homes, outbuildings (including barns) and a few tankhouses for a domestic water supply. Producers Raisin Packing was located on block 196 on L Street, Map 43.

1898:43



1906 Sanborn Map: The City had expanded by 1906 with additional blocks south of the County Road (now California Avenue). The Sanger Branch and Pollaski branches of the SP served the growing industries throughout the area. The Santa Fe line was now apparently within the city limits and ran along “East Avenue.” Cherry Avenue by this time had been extended to intersect with Los Angeles Avenue, thus creating irregular shaped parcels at “Five Corners” (Cherry-Los Angeles and J/Fulton Streets). The Woodward Addition now had city block numbers, 1018-1032. South “O” Street was also called “Ada.”

New businesses had developed including the Hollenbeck and Bush Lumber Yard located at Monterey and H Streets and the Fresno Traction Company nearby. The residential blocks around Monterey and L still contained vacant

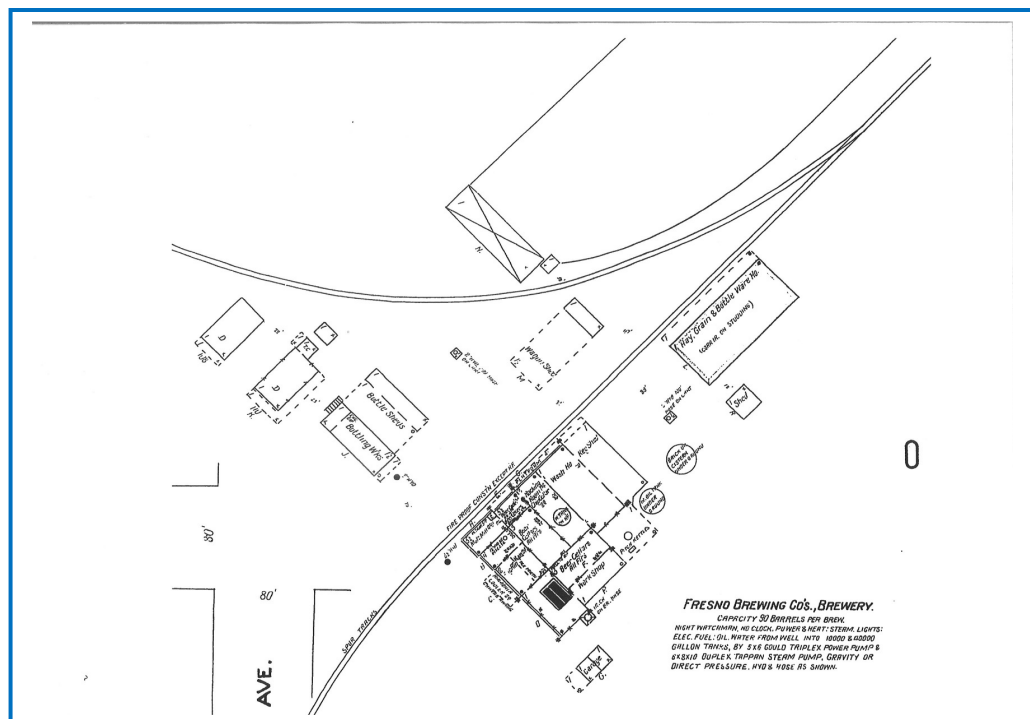
parcels; a corral was located at the northeast corner of J and Los Angeles. Eagle Packing and Storage Company had been constructed along K Street at San Diego (Block 202) with access to the Pollaski Branch. A small grocery store was depicted on the triangular parcel where Cherry intersected with Los Angeles. Woodward's Addition was now included (Maps 49 and 50) and was almost exclusively residential with some outbuildings, a few tankhouses and numerous vacant parcels. A one story dwelling on the east side of Isabella (now Van Ness/ block 1024) was described as having "hollow walls."

The blocks surrounding Monterey, L and M were residential with a few outbuildings. Block 182, Monterey to San Benito, N to O was almost completely in-filled by this time.

The Fresno Brewing Company with a capacity of 90 barrels per brew had been constructed on block 188. North of the brewery on block 1016 (south side of Butler near N) was a saloon with a large lathe arbor, tankhouse, horse shed and bowling alley, facilities undoubtedly to serve the workers at the Standard Oil Company across the street.

The California Products Company was now located on the northeast corner of Butler Avenue and South O. Directly west of this complex was the Western Packing and Seeding Company (Block 1013).

1906:68



1918 Sanborn Map: The City continued to develop with new residential subdivisions east of the project area. The south boundary of the City remained the former County Road, now renamed California Avenue. Ada Street on the east side of Woodward's was "Pearl." Isabella was now S. Van Ness Avenue. Small businesses had moved into the predominantly residential area around Monterey and J Streets including a vet, cleaners and bicycle repair shop. Auto repairing first appears on the 1918 map on block 218. Fresno Planing Mill had been located on the southeast corner of Monterey and H Streets

Page | 26

The San Joaquin Grocery was now on block 202 and the building is extant to this day. Across the back alley the Eagle Packing and Storage Company at K Street at San Diego was now T.J. Hammond Fig Packing and Storage. The Sperry Flour Company Grain Elevator had been constructed on block 201. The blocks south along Cherry Avenue (west side) included the Hollenbeck and Bush Planing Mill Company, the Dorsey Parker Company Wood and Coal Yard and a nursery.



San Joaquin Grocery, April 5, 1917 (Photo: Pop Laval Foundation)

The western half of the Woodward's Addition was increasingly becoming industrialized although many residences remained with some outbuildings and vacant parcels. Block 1030 included Cudahy Packing Company, Wielands Beer Bottling and Storage and Valley Boiler Works. The Auto Fac. Prints Company was on block 1027 with a small soda bottling firm on block 1024. People's Ice Company had been established on the southeast corner of block 1032 at Anna and California Avenue. The east half of Woodward's Addition remained residential with one block (1021) vacant and thus ripe for development.

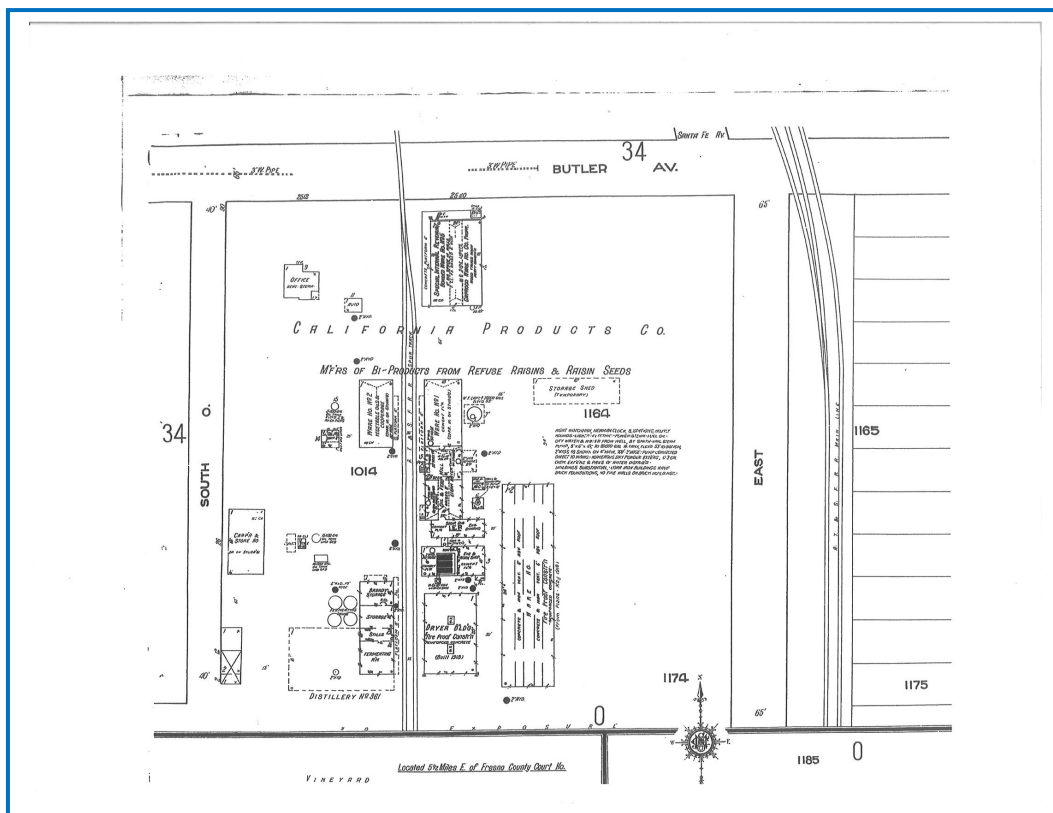
Map 24 of the 1918 Sanborn set included the blocks around Van Ness Avenue, San Benito and Monterey and depicted only small homes and a few outbuildings, with the exception of Knox Presbyterian Mission on the southwest corner of Los Angeles and M and a Merchandise warehouse on the northeast corner of L and Monterey.

A "California Park" was now located on block 197 at L and San Diego directly south of the Fresno Brewing Company, which had expanded since 1906.

California Park, also known as California Playground and California Field was one of the first four playgrounds and small parks purchased following a successful bond drive in 1910 which garnered between \$60,000 and \$80,000 dollars. The deed transfer was entered into the City's records on 8 June 1910 from the City Land Company. Abe Salvian lived in the area in the 1930s and recalls participating in a marbles tournament at the park, which had swings, a small clubhouse and at some point a wading pool. The park was one of three parks favored for adult softball tournaments, particularly after lights were installed for nighttime games (Leymel 1943).

Block 182 (between N and O, San Benito and Monterey) was strictly residential and part of Armenian Town but all blocks nearer to the ATSF railroad corridor included a variety of businesses, making use of their proximity to the tracks. New businesses since the 1906 map included J.H. Burnett's Ironworks and Foundry (block 1008) the E.Y. Foley Dried Fruit Packing Plant (1038), the San Joaquin Baking Company and the Valley Van and Storage Company (block 180), California Seeded Raisin Company and the J.K. Armsby Company Plant No. 2 Raisin Drying and Seeding (block 1011), the Fresno Fuel Company wood

and coal yard and the Swastika Lumber Company (1012). Block 181 included a large structure, the Valley Hay and Grain Company Hay Barn and the Associated Oil Company. Block 1015 was devoted to the Standard Oil Company. The Associated Warehouse Company Plant No. 25 Raisin Packing was located on block 1013. Blocks 1014 and 1164, the southwest parcel at Butler and East Avenue, was the California Products Company complex. A spur of the AT&SF ran up the middle of the site.



California Products Company History

The history of the California Products Company is sketchy at best. A November 1919 obituary in the Fresno Republican eulogized George W. Hooven and noted that he had been the head of the company for 15 years, which suggests a circa 1904 founding. Hooven “succeeded in building up the present business from small beginnings.” The deceased was also credited with being “largely instrumental in developing the cotton industry, with its by-products, in the

San Joaquin Valley” (Fresno Republican 14 November 1919). Some version of the company was in operation at least into the 1980s.

Undoubtedly the longevity of the company was due in large measure to its diversity. The 1918 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map described the California Products Company as “Manufacturers of Bi-Products From Refuse Raisins and Raisin Seeds” although by that year the plant had significantly geared up for cotton ginning and storage. One major new building noted on the 1918 Sanborn map is identified as a “Special Internal Revenue Bonded Warehouse No. 5; Caproco Warehouse Company Property.” The building was heavy construction with a wood truss roof frame and is extant (Building #3) (Sanborn 1918:102).

Page | 29

In 1922 the company (“known for years for the manufacturing of brandy”) applied to the prohibition commissioner for permission to engage in the “manufacture and distribution of industrial alcohol on a large scale...” This alcohol was to be produced from fruits and vegetables that were below grade and could not be marketed or packed (Los Angeles Times 17 December 1922). In 1923 the Company purchased 700,000 gallons of wine from Louis Rusconi, the entire 1922 vintage of the Wahtoke vineyard east of the city, to be used for alcohol for medicinal purposes (Los Angeles Times 14 July 1923). In 1929 Company management announced that it would be the first in the County to produce coconut oil and meal and peanut oil and meal, for use in lard substitutes and cattle feed (“Ten Years Ago”, 1929, n.d)

In 1937 the Company invested in several major buildings for the manufacturing of alcohol including a new fermenting building, storage space and a 4-story still of reinforced concrete with eighteen fermenting vats with a capacity of 800,000 gallons. All the buildings were constructed by Trewhitt-Shields and Fisher (Fresno Bee 5 May 1937).

*Brandy
Deposit, with
Distillery in
Background
(1937)*

Photo: 2010
by Karana
Hattersley-
Drayton



According to correspondence on file in the Historic Preservation archives, "California Products Company" was still in business in 1980. It is not known when the company ceased operations. The 11-acre parcel was assessed for its eligibility to the National, California and Local Registers in a study prepared by the City's Historic Preservation Project Manager in August 2010. None of the properties were found eligible to the National or California Registers but a few were possibly eligible to the Local Register of Historic Resources. The circa 1900 office at the complex, housed in a Queen Anne style cottage, was in fact on the Local Register of Historic Resources (HP#083) but burned the next year in an arson fire and was subsequently demolished.

1948 Sanborn Map: By 1948 State Route 99 cut through the project area on the western side, Cherry Avenue had been extended through block 203 to connect with Monterey and there was an increase in auto related businesses and far fewer residences.

Rosenberg Brothers and Company (Dried Fruit Packers) had numerous large raisin storage sheds on the south side of Cherry Avenue (blocks 212-14). On block 202 (Fulton at Los Angeles) the houses had been removed and Safeway Stores now owned the San Joaquin Grocery Warehouse. A wholesale candy and tobacco company was located on the northeast corner, at Van Ness.

Most housing was now gone from the western half of the Woodward's Addition other than on the eastern side of S. Van Ness. The Valley Ice Company (formerly the People's Ice Company) had expanded (block 1032). There were numerous vacant lots on blocks 1027, 1028 and 1029. Many small homes remained on the eastern half of the Woodward's Addition with raisin facilities and soft drink bottling on block 1020, raisin storage sheds on block 1019, Sun Maid Raisin Growers on block 1018, and Challenge Cream and Butter Association and also an Olive Factory on block 1021 (northwest corner of Hamilton and Mary).

The blocks surrounding Monterey, L and M Streets were still primarily housing. Block 186 included a wholesale beer business and numerous empty parcels.

Block 197 remained California Park. Block 188 was the Fresno Brewing Company and an ice cream factory was also located on the southwest corner. The W.P. Fuller and Company (Paint Warehouse) was located on block 187 and the north half of block 189. The south of this block was the San Joaquin Baking Company which also had facilities for truck loading on the north half of block 196.

On the northeast portion of the project area block 182 remained mostly residential. Block 180, closer to the Santa Fe tracks, included the Fresno Channel Bakers on the southern half of the block and a Montgomery Ward and Co. warehouse on the northern half. The El-Mar Packing Company, the Merzoian Packing Company and Guggenhime and Company were located along Santa Fe Avenue. The blocks immediately south included a raisin storage shed and more buildings for Guggenhime and Company. Block 1013 included Loughead Frozen Foods on O Street and the Independent Paper Stock Company on Butler. Block 1015 was the location of a Standard Oil Company complex, block 1016 General Mills and the Sperry Division Flour Warehouse.

The California Products Company on block 1014 had expanded. The super block bounded by Hamilton, Pearl and East was a huge complex of buildings and sheds owned by Sun-Maid Raisin Growers of California.

*Fresno
Brewing
Company
(1907)*

*National
Register
and Local
Register
(HP#026)*

Photo:
*Karana
Hattersley-
Drayton,
2006.*



The Fresno Brewing Company was founded in 1900 by Ernst Eilert who moved to Fresno from Humbird, Wisconsin where he owned another brewery. Eilert had been trained in European brewing techniques in Germany. The Fresno Brewing Company provided jobs for over 1,000 people at the peak of production. It closed in 1919 with Prohibition. Under the name "Eilert Products" the company later produced bottled soft drinks. Following the repeal of Prohibition in 1933 the company once again brewed beer. The brewery itself was demolished in 1955. The office and warehouse (1907) are all that remain of this once extensive 20-acre complex. The design is attributed to architect Eugene Mathewson. (National Register nomination, originally prepared by Patrick Supple)

Architects and Contractors:

The following architects and contractors have been identified as having worked in the South Van Ness Industrial District project area. Notes on several of these firms are from research provided by the survey consultants, Architecture+History:

Page | 32

Church, J.R. - The J.R. Church Construction Company operated from offices at 221 N. U Street from at least 1922 through 1940. In addition to 2735 E. Woodward Avenue, the company was responsible for a \$31,000 addition to the Fresno Sanitarium at 708 E. Street (1922), a store on G Street for Henry Bister (1919), and a \$2500 frame dwelling in the Mattewan Addition for C.W. Church (1919).

James Thomas Cowan (known as J.T. Cowan) was a native of Fresno born 15 November 1892. His father, David Cowan, had established a construction business in the city in 1885. J.T. Cowan assumed leadership in the company in 1919 and operated the business in Fresno for 50 years. His office was located at 1221 Fulton Street from 1933 through at least 1940 (Polk City directories, 1933 and 1940). Cowan worked primarily on commercial buildings and shopping centers, but also constructed homes in Fig Garden and the Sunnyside district as well as several bungalow courts. Some of his notable projects included J.B. Hill Company's warehouse on North H Street, Turpin's furniture store on Fulton Street, several residences on Van Ness Boulevard and the Brix Court Apartments at 1325-41 M Street (Walker, 340-341).

Farina Brothers. Farina Brothers Construction Company operated in Fresno in the 1940s. The company specialized in brick and stonework. Their headquarters were located at 1215 N. Palm Avenue.

Fisher and McNulty. Hugh McNulty was born in St. Louis in 1892 and lived in Fresno from infancy. He graduated from Stanford University in Mining Engineering and formed a partnership with R.P. Fisher in 1920. The company constructed numerous buildings of note including the Pantages Theatre and Twining Laboratories, the latter designed by Charles Butner (Winchell, History of Fresno County). They built the Spanish Revival/Italian Renaissance home on 3702 E. Huntington.

Harris Construction Company. Founded in 1914 by the Harris family, Harris Construction Co. is one of the longest-running businesses in the central San Joaquin Valley. The company's early projects were primarily commercial and included offices, banks, and grocery stores. The Manchester Center (1950s) and

the spiral parking garage on Van Ness Avenue (1970s) were later projects (Rodriguez, "Fresno's Harris Construction Celebrates Centennial").

The company operated from an office at 264 Palm Avenue from 1940 through at least 1960. By 1969 their offices had moved to 1505 N. Chester Avenue (Polk Fresno city directories, 1940, 1960, and 1969). The Harris family continued to own the company until 1986 when it was purchased by Richard Spencer (Rodriguez, "Fresno's Harris Construction Celebrates Centennial").

Page | 33

L.B. Pipes Co. The Lloyd Pipes Co., founded by L.B. Pipes Sr., was the Fresno-area franchised builder of Pascoe Steel Corporation pre-engineered metal buildings (*Fresno Bee*. 14 March 1965, 108). The company operated from an office at 2762 S. Elm Avenue in 1960 and 1407 N. Thesta Street in 1969 (Polk Fresno city directories, 1960, and 1969). In addition to the warehouse at 1905 S. Mary Street, the company built the grandstand at the Sacramento Fairgrounds for \$281,781, the Sierra Furniture company building in Visalia, a prefabricated grandstand for the 21st District Agricultural Fairgrounds near Madera, and a \$125,225 metal addition to the industries warehouse at the California Training Facility in Soledad (*Bakersfield Californian*. 22 December 1955, 15 and *Fresno Bee*. 26 May 1963, 110). L.B. Pipes is also the contractor noted on building permits for several bungalow courts in Fresno's Lowell and Tower neighborhoods including 931 E. Divisadero Street and 841 E. Pine Avenue. Most of these courts were designed in a Spanish Revival style.

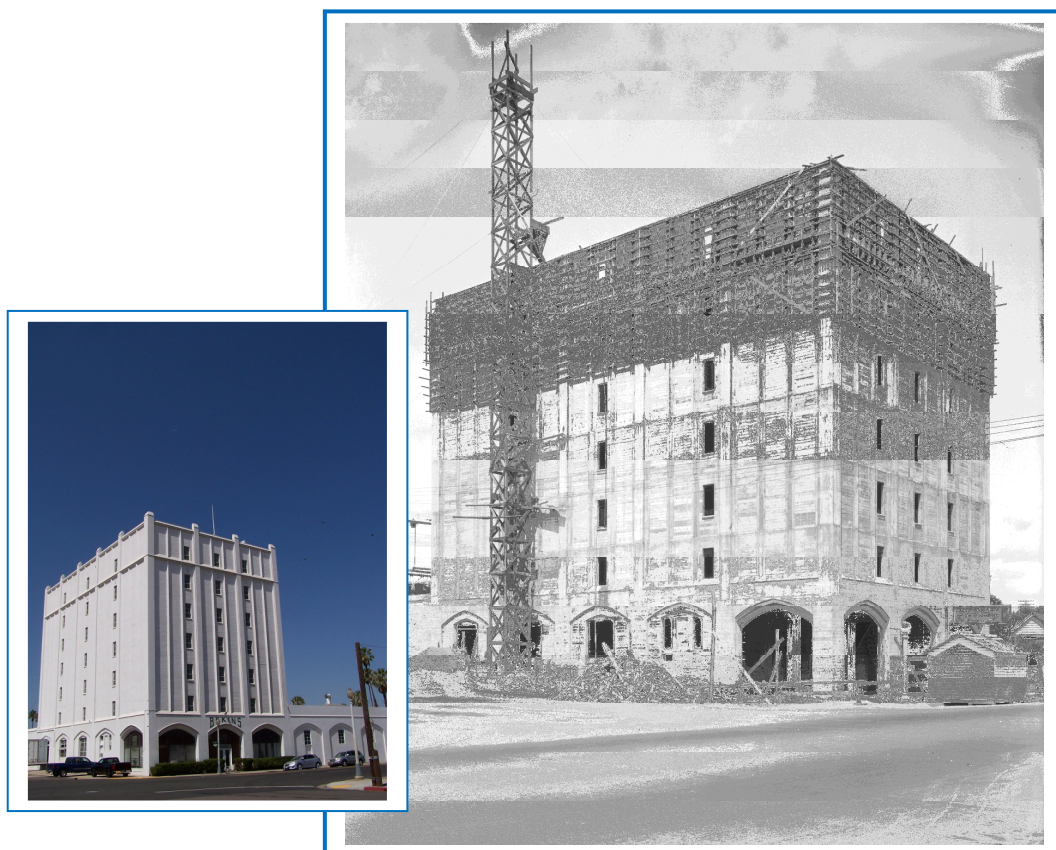
L.H. Hansen & Sons. L.H. Hansen was born in Denmark 1 August 1879. He completed his apprenticeship as a carpenter in his native country before immigrating to the United States at age 21. After living in the Midwest, Hansen settled in Fresno in 1930. L.H. Hansen & Sons operated from an office at 313 Palm Ave by 1951 through at least 1960 (Polk Fresno city directories, 1951-52 and 1960). The company was a successful contracting firm working throughout the San Joaquin Valley. They were responsible for the construction of numerous commercial and educational buildings and contracted extensively with the government during World War II. Notable projects include the old Fresno City Hall, Fresno County Jail, and a building for Fresno Photoengraving at 748-750 Fulton Street, (HP#261) (Walker, 381).

Larsen Ratto Construction Company. The Larsen-Ratto Construction Co., headed by president Robert S. Larsen, operated from an office at 1901 E. Hedges Ave. by 1960 through at least 1969 (Polk Fresno City Directories, 1960 and 1969).

Martin, Roy. Roy Martin was a local contractor who designed and built residences. His work includes the bungalows at 1827 and 1835 S. Sarah Street (built 1922), a \$16,700 residence for M. Brophy at 541 Terrace Avenue (built 1922) two apartment buildings at 805-835 Weldon Avenue for L.E. Smith for \$18,000 each, and the Tudor Revival residence at 3003 N. Van Ness Blvd. (built 1935) (*Building and Engineering News*: 16 December 1922: 28 and Powell, n.p.).

Fred Swartz was the son of A.C. Swartz who had practiced architecture in Fresno since 1890. Fred Swartz attended University of Pennsylvania where he studied, as did so many other Fresno architects, under Paul Cret. Upon his return to Fresno he joined his father's firm. Following the death in 1919 of A.C. Swartz, Fred Swartz formed a partnership with Columbus J. Ryland who had studied architecture at the University of Toulouse, France. Their local projects included the Fresno State College Library (now Fresno City College). During the Depression Swartz was a member of the Allied Architects and worked on the design of the Fresno County Hall of Records and the Fresno Memorial Auditorium (Powell 1996).

*Bekins Van and Storage 301 Van Ness Avenue under Construction, 3 June 1925
Trehitt-Shields Company (Photo: Pop Laval Foundation) and building in August
2015*



Findings and Conclusions

Regulatory Context

Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (1966 as amended) federal agencies are mandated to “take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties,” which may be affected by federally funded or federally approved undertakings. “The Section 106 process seeks to accommodate historic preservation concerns with the needs of Federal undertakings through consultation ... commencing at the early stages of project planning” (36 CFR Part 800.1). Federal agencies can delegate some responsibilities for the Section 106 process. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), for example, is authorized by law to fully delegate its Section 106 responsibilities for some programs to local governments so that the local governments “become the Federal agency.” HUD however still has ultimate authority.

Page | 35

In order to assess effects to historic properties, the resources within the project Area of Potential Effects (APE) must be evaluated for their eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places. The criteria for evaluation as provided for in *National Register Bulletin* 15 (1990:2) are as follows:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

Criterion A – that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history; or

Criterion B – that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

Criterion C – that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

Criterion D – that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The California Environmental Quality Act (1970) requires consideration of project impacts on archaeological or historical sites deemed to be “historical resources.” A substantial adverse change in the significant qualities of a historical resource is considered a significant impact. For the purposes of CEQA, a “historical resource” is a resource listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). Historical resources may include, but are not limited to:

Page | 36

A resource included in a local register of historical resources...
or identified in an historical resource survey meeting the
requirements section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code-

Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record or
manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically
significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific,
economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or
cultural annals of California. . [14 California Code of
Regulations (CCR) 15064.5(a)(3)].

The eligibility criteria for the California Register are the definitive criteria for assessing the significance of historical resources for the purposes of CEQA (Office of Historic Preservation n.d.). Generally, a resource shall be considered “historically significant” if it meets the criteria for listing on the CRHR, as defined in the Public Resources Code (PRC) below, and it has been found and/or treated eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission or the local agency:

(1) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage.

(2) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.

(3) 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.

(4) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. [PRC 5024.1(c)].

Fresno adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance in 1979 as amended in 1999 (FMC Article 16 Chapter 12). The Ordinance (as amended) established the Historic Preservation Commission and the Local Register of Historic Resources. Any building, structure, object or site may be designated as a 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 integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and 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 in prehistory of history.

Eligibility to the National, State and/or Local Registers:

The project footprint (Area of Potential Effects) included a total of 228 properties. Of the 228 properties, 187 were constructed prior to 1970 and were fully evaluated on State of California DPR survey forms for their eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources and Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources. Forty-one properties were constructed post-1970 and primary forms only were prepared for these buildings. Surveys are intended to help create an inventory of potential historic resources in the survey area but are not intended to constitute a final determination as to the actual historic or cultural value of the properties. It is only the Historic Preservation Commission and the Fresno City Council who may recommend and designate a property, as an example, to the Local Register of Historic Resources. At the very least, a survey represents a baseline for land use planning and potential future action.

The consultants, Architecture+History (in consultation with the City of Fresno's Historic Preservation Project Manager, Karana Hattersley-Drayton) concluded that there were no resources within the project area that were individually eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, nor was there a potential National Register Historic District.

The consultants and staff, following input from the City's Historic Preservation Commission at a public hearing on July 27, 2015 found that 9 resources were individually eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources. An additional 8 resources were eligible for individual listing on the City's Local Register of Historic Resources and 2 are potentially eligible for listing as Heritage Properties under the City's Historic Preservation Program:

Leo J. Meyberg Co./A.H. Meyer Company Building (1951) 2930 Butler Avenue (California Register 3, Local Register Criterion iii). The building is architecturally distinct as an example of an enframed window wall commercial building with high integrity to its period of significance.

The Western Pipe and Steel Company (1940) 2421 E. California Avenue (California/Local Register 1, i). The company was a steel fabricator with plants in the San Francisco Bay Area, Bakersfield, Taft, and Phoenix and was a key player in manufacturing and shipbuilding during World War I and II. The oldest building in this complex of eleven buildings and structures was constructed by L.H. Hansen and Sons in 1940. The property possesses historic significance within the context of industrial development in Fresno and represents the role Western Pipe and Steel Company and its successor Consolidated Steel Company played in the manufacture of materials for the U.S. military during World War II and for commercial purposes in the post-war period.

Rosenberg Brothers and Co. (1918) 1844 S. Cherry Avenue (1/I, 3/iii). Although the windows have been in-filled and there are alterations to the first floor, this 1918 building retains sufficient integrity to its period of significance. Rosenberg's was a major fruit packer and seasonable employer with importance in Fresno's commercial and social history.



People's Ice Company (1920-) 2003 S. Cherry Avenue (California Register 1/i). This complex of buildings occupies an entire block and was constructed over a period of 60 years. The nine pre-1950 buildings appear to be eligible to the California Register and the Local Register for the important role ice manufacturing and cold storage played in food processing and the transportation of food by rail.

The Anderson Paint Company 202 Fulton Street (1935) (3/iii). This Art Deco style building occupies a triangular shaped parcel where Los Angeles, Fulton and Cherry Streets meet to create "Five Corners." The building was constructed and probably designed by Fisher and McNulty, who built numerous commercial and residential buildings in the Fresno area in the 1920s and 1930s. The Anderson Paint Company Building is a rare example of art deco in the project area and in Fresno overall and retains integrity to its period of significance.



Anderson Paint Company (2015, Shayne Watson), Electric Motor Shop (2015)

The White Company Trucks Building/Electric Motor Shop 245 Fulton Street (1919/1953) (3/iii). The 1919 building on this parcel was remodeled in 1949 at which time it may have received the late art deco detailing. It retains integrity to its period of significance of 1949 and appears to be eligible as a rare example of Art Deco retro in the project area, and in Fresno.

The San Joaquin Bakery 150-160 L Street (1919) (iii) The oldest part of this complex was constructed in 1919 with additions and alterations (and repairs to fire damage) through 1959. The property retains integrity to its period of significance and is an excellent example of brick warehouses and light industrial buildings from this area.

The W.P. Fuller Paint Company 2244 Los Angeles (1922) (3/iii) is a massive masonry brick 49,603 sf two-story building of an eclectic design with both Mission Revival and Art Deco flourishes. The street elevations have a stucco finish. It served as the Fuller Paint Company store and warehouse from 1922 through the late 1960s. The building appears eligible to both the California Register and Fresno's Local Register as one of the best remaining examples of a commercial warehouse in the survey area.

Page | 40

*Fuller
Paint
Co.
January
2015
Photo:
Shayne
Watson*



The Squirt Bottling Company 152 M Street (1946) (iii). The wood and brick clad false front on this building barely conceals the Quonset Hut behind it. Quonset huts were produced by the military during World War II and became surplus following the war. The building was assembled by the Squirt Company of Fresno and was used for bottling and as a warehouse for about twenty years. The building appears eligible to the Local Register of Historic Resources as one of the best remaining examples of a Quonset Hut in the survey area and perhaps in Fresno.

The Associated Oil Company 2414 Monterey Street (c1912/1925) (3/iii). Seven buildings and one structure sit on this 2.26 acre triangular parcel. Three of the buildings/structures date to circa 1912 and at least five others from circa 1925 are also extant. The property is a rare example of an intact early industrial site within the survey area and appears eligible for both the California Register as well as the Local Register.

The United Grocers Inc. Wholesale Grocery 414 P Street (pre-1928) (3/iii).

This two-story red brick building is articulated with buff colored bricks at the cornice and in a series of pilasters. Although the building was literally cut in half (or more) by the construction of State Route 41, the remaining building has high integrity and is a classic example of an early commercial warehouse in the project area.

Page | 41



The Robert and Cora Thomas House, 1937 S. Sarah Street (1911) (i). This Craftsman bungalow is one of the oldest extant buildings within the pre-1888 Woodward's Addition. This tract is among the earliest added to Fresno's parent grid and was initially all residential. The home is named for the residents who lived on site from 1920 to around 1926 with their nine children. It appears eligible to the Local Register of Historic Resources under Criterion i.

The Radin Kamp Warehouse 304 L Street (1912) (i/iii). The two-story masonry brick building at 304 L Street was built in 1912 and served as the warehouse for the Radin-Kamp Department Store, an early mercantile in downtown Fresno. The building has recessed multi-light metal windows with brick sills and segmental brick arches and is located within the southern area of Fresno's Armenian Town. It appears to be eligible for listing on Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources for its association with an important local business and as an excellent example of an early 20th century brick warehouse.



Radin Kamp Warehouse and Foley Home (2015)

The John G. Foley Home 303 M Street (c1902) (i/iii). The consultants found that this Queen Anne style home (circa 1902) is eligible as a contributor to a potential Armenian Town Historic District. Staff and the City's Historic Preservation Commission felt that the former residence of a driver for the Fresno Brewing Company had sufficient integrity and historic value to warrant consideration for listing on the Local Register under Criteria i and iii. Queen Anne style homes are increasingly rare in Fresno and most definitely are rare in the project area. Unfortunately, a site visit in August 2015 revealed that most windows have been replaced with vinyl, although in a similar style (1/1 lights).

The J.J. Voogt Home 1835 S. Sarah Street (1922) (i). This typical Craftsman bungalow is nevertheless among the earliest and best preserved residences in the Woodward's Addition, a pre-1888 tract that is one of the first to be added to the City's railroad grid. The home also has an interesting cultural history. It was one of two homes commissioned by a Japanese American, A. Sumida. Residents over the years have included a Volga German family and at least two Mexican-American families.

Federal Pipe and Supply 1226-1274 S. Parallel Avenue (circa 1926) (iii). Several buildings are located at this site. The northern-most structure is a one story brick building painted white with a series of stepped parapets down the façade. The building represents the type of warehouses that would have been present throughout the area in material, form and use and it retains a high degree of integrity. It appears eligible to Fresno's Local Register under criterion iii.

Hass Brothers and Sturtevant Fruits 316 O Street (1923) (iii). The center building in this complex is a one-story, white-painted brick building with metal, multi-lights industrial sash windows that have been painted white. It has a central

stepped parapet. A brick building with a triangular footprint that conforms to the rail lines and the street configuration is present at the far southern end of the site. Two contracting firms of note built and/or have made alterations to this complex, Trwhitt and Shields and Fisher and McNulty. The building(s) appear eligible under criterion iii of Fresno's Local Register as a strong example of commercial warehouses in the survey area.

Potential Heritage Properties: Heritage properties are defined as resources worthy of preservation but which are not proposed for and are not designated as a Historic Resource pursuant to FMC 12-1603 (n). Property owners may use the California Historical Building Code for repairs and restoration of a Heritage Property.

The Berg Furniture Company Warehouse 2006 S. Mary Street (c1945) (iii). The Historic Preservation Commission identified this c.1945 commercial building as potentially eligible for the Local Register of Historic Resources due to its unusual use (within the city) of corrugated iron panel walls. It was first used as a furniture warehouse.

White Motor Company 1900 S. Van Ness Avenue (c1927) (Heritage Property). This one-story brick commercial building has its main entrance at the corner. Its integrity has been compromised by the replacement of the building's windows and pedestrian doors. It is a good example of an early 20th century commercial building in the project area and may qualify as a Heritage Property, under Fresno's Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Potential Historic Districts:

Architecture+History identified three thematic (thus discontinuous) historic districts potentially eligible for listing on Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources:

The South Van Ness Industrial District Streetlights. The consultants identified two specific types of streetlight designs within the project area which appear to date to the 1920s. They are significant as embodying the characteristics of the City Beautiful Movement.

The Brick Warehouse and Office Building District (with 21 potential contributors). These one and two story buildings were constructed between 1945-1960 and share similar characteristics of common bond masonry brick

construction, multi-light industrial sash or clerestory windows, decorative pilasters, bow truss or barrel roofs and concrete loading docks. Additionally, most of them were constructed by a handful of design-construction firms. The consultants have identified an important grouping of commercial buildings which contribute to the vernacular landscape of the area.

Page | 44

Old Armenian Town Historic District with 17 contributors, of which two, the Neverman Home and the Mink Home are already individually designated resources on Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources. Should an Armenian Town Historic District be contemplated in the future, it would need to include resources north of SR 41 which were outside the boundaries of this study area and contract.

Project Staff Qualifications

Karana Hattersley-Drayton, City of Fresno

Karana Hattersley-Drayton has a M.A. and completed three years of coursework towards the Ph.D. in Architectural History at U.C. Berkeley. For three years she served on the State Historical Resources Commission and has also served on the Board of Directors for the Vernacular Architecture Forum. She was the Chair for the VAF's annual conference which met in Fresno in May 2008. Ms. Hattersley-Drayton moved to Fresno in 1999 to work as an architectural historian for Caltrans District 06 and in June of 2002 was hired as the City of Fresno's Historic Preservation Project Manager. She chairs the Development and Resource Management Department's Fresno Green Team and is also the chair for the Public Art Committee. She has taught courses in California architecture and American urbanism at Sonoma State University and most recently for the OSHER Institute at Fresno State University. Areas of particular interest include the vernacular, gendered and ethnic landscapes of the San Joaquin Valley, sustainability and preservation. The 2008 publication, "Architecture, Ethnicity and Historic Landscapes of the San Joaquin Valley," for which she wrote several articles and served as Executive Editor, won a California Preservation Foundation and a 2009 Governor's Historic Preservation award.

Page | 45

Bridget Maley, architecture + history, llc

architecture + history, llc (**a + h**) is a San Francisco-based, woman-owned, small business focusing on historic preservation and urban planning. Owner Bridget Maley brings over 20 years' experience working with California municipal governments on matters involving historic resources and culturally significant environments to this project for the City of Fresno. Bridget has worked with the City of Fresno on several occasions, including serving as the project manager for the Germantown Historic Context Statement and the Chinatown Historic Resource Survey projects.

Bridget has worked throughout California with municipal governments on matters involving historic resources and culturally significant environments. She has developed strong relationships with municipal clients undertaking historic resource surveys and context statements, completing CEQA review and Section 106 compliance, conducting historical research, identifying historic districts, assessing cultural landscapes, drafting design guidelines, and completing design review.

Bridget has a Master of Arts Degree in Architectural History from the University of Virginia's School of Architecture, where she continues to be involved as a member of the Dean's Advisory Board. She has served on the board of the Society of Architectural Historians, is a former President of the City of San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, and is an active member of the preservation community. Bridget meets *the Secretary of the Interior's Standards Professional Qualifications for Architectural History and History*.

Bridget served as the project manager for the South Van Ness Industrial District Historic Resources Survey and **a + h** held the contract as the prime consultant. Bridget was assisted by long-time colleagues Shayne Watson and Jody Stock.

Shayne Watson, Watson Heritage Consulting

Shayne Watson is a well-known historic preservation professional in California, with particular expertise in LGBT history and preservation. She is the co-author of the City of San Francisco's *Citywide Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History*, completed in 2015. She has a Master's Degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Southern California.

Shayne's previous project work ranges from single building evaluations to statewide preservation planning surveys. Documentation projects include historic context statements, National Register nominations, determinations of eligibility, and historic landscape reports. Her preservation planning experience includes citywide historic resource surveys, cultural resources master plans, and compliance projects driven by CEQA and NHPA regulations.

Shayne has worked on historic resource survey and historic context statement projects for the cities of Los Angeles, Pleasanton, West Hollywood, Palm Springs and Carmel-by-the-Sea. She worked closely with Bridget Maley and Jody Stock on the City of Fresno Germantown Historic Context Statement and the Chinatown Historic Resource Survey projects. Shayne meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards* in History and Architectural History.

Jody Stock, Architectural Historian

Jody Stock is an architectural historian with a wide range of project experience. She has inventoried and surveyed historic resources throughout California and brings extensive knowledge of commercial architecture. Jody has a Master of Science in Architecture with a focus on Architectural History from the University of California, Berkeley. Her extensive experience includes the preparation of historic context statements, cultural resources surveys, historic structure reports, historic preservation plans, and design guidelines. She has worked throughout California on historic preservation projects for numerous municipal governments. Jody worked closely with Bridget Maley and Shayne Watson on the City of Fresno Germantown Historic Context Statement and the Chinatown Historic Resource Survey projects. Jody meets *the Secretary of the Interior's Standards Professional Qualifications* in History and Architectural History.

Page | 47

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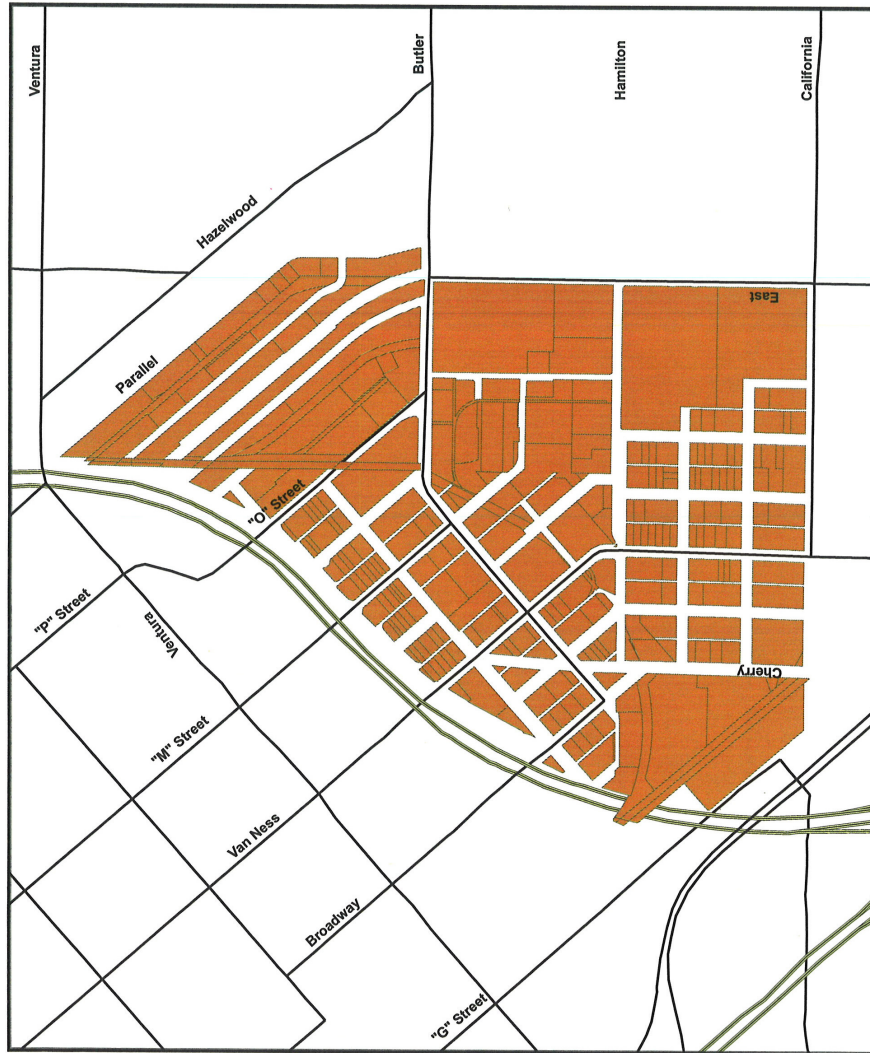
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CITY OF FRESNO

Phase I South Van Ness Industrial District

Total parcels = 306
Total acres = 207.6



Data Source:
City of Fresno
K:\ArcMap\ERDC\BID\Drawings\Prop\SouthIndustrialSurvey