

Page 1 of 13

\*NRHP Status Code 3S

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Bayside Canning Company

D1. Historic Name: Bayside Canning Company D2. Common Name: Bayside Cannery

**\*D3. Detailed Description** (Discuss overall coherence of the district, its setting, visual characteristics, and minor features. List all elements of district.):

The Bayside Canning Company historic district encompasses approximately 3.74 acres and includes all the remaining buildings associated with the Bayside Canning Company, the ruins of former cannery buildings, and adjacent associated open spaces that once held additional cannery facilities. While the district boundary does not include all former cannery facility properties, it does contain those parcels that also include contributing buildings. The district is centered on the intersection of Elizabeth and Hope streets in the Alviso neighborhood of San Jose and includes the four parcels around this intersection. The four contributing features are:

1. Bayside Cannery (APN 015-01-028) (1906, additions 1929) – 1290 Hope Street
2. Union Warehouse (APN 015-01-029) (c.1858) – 1200 Hope Street
3. Chinese Cookhouse (APN 015-01-038) (c.1929) – 906 Elizabeth Street
4. Bayside Cannery Office (APN 015-01-020) (c.1925, relocated c.1929) – 907 Elizabeth Street

See Continuation Sheet.

**\*D4. Boundary Description** (Describe limits of district and attach map showing boundary and district elements.):

The Bayside Canning Company historic district is bounded on the north by Mills Street and the San Francisco Bay, on the east by the property line between 906 and 922 Elizabeth streets, on the south by the combined southern property lines of 907 Elizabeth and 1200 Hope streets, and on the west by the Guadalupe River levee. See **Map 1**.

**\*D5. Boundary Justification:**

The boundary includes the four remaining buildings associated with the Bayside Canning Company as well as all the land within those four parcels. This land once contained other supporting facilities such as additional canning buildings (some ruins are still present), workers cottages, and storage tanks. No modern intrusions are located within the district boundaries.

**D6. Significance: Theme** Agriculture/Canning and Chinese in California **Area** Santa Clara County  
**Period of Significance** 1908 - 1936 **Applicable Criteria** A/1 and C/3

(Discuss district's importance in terms of its historical context as defined by theme, period of significance, and geographic scope. Also address the integrity of the district as a whole.)

The Bayside Cannery is significant for its association with the Chew family, founders and owners of the Bayside Cannery in Alviso, California. Thomas Foon Chew, the son of the founder Sin Yin Chew, developed the cannery operations into one of the largest canneries in the county and their combined Bayside Cannery facilities in California constituted the third largest cannery operation in the United States in 1931. The cannery was the first major Chinese owned industry in Santa Clara County. Thomas Chew employed hundreds of people in his business from a variety of ethnic backgrounds; the cannery contributed substantially to the economic vitality of Santa Clara County. Besides the cannery operations in Alviso, Chew built two other canneries in the region and owned thousands of acres of farm and orchard land.

See Continuation Sheet.

**\*D7. References** (Give full citations including the names and addresses of any informants, where possible.):

*Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California*. (Sacramento: State of California Office of Historic Preservation, 1988). [https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/5views/5views3h6.htm](https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views3h6.htm).

*HABS No. CA-2686: Bayside Cannery*. (San Francisco: Department of the Interior, 1997).

*San Francisco Examiner*. "Old Town Charter of Alviso Still in Force." February 12, 1905.

See Continuation Sheet.

**\*D8. Evaluator:** Becky Urbano **Date:** May 2023

**Affiliation and Address:** ESA, 787 The Alameda, Ste. 250, San Jose, CA 95126

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Bayside Canning Company Historic District

Page 2 of 13

### D3: Detailed Description (continued)

This area retains much of the industrial character that existed during the period of significance with close proximity to the water, open and unobstructive views to Alviso Slough and San Francisco Bay, and limited modern intrusions.

One building in the district (Union Warehouse) is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Port of Alviso Historic District.

In 1995, the four district contributing features were included as part of a California Point of Historical Interest application along with 12 other buildings.<sup>1</sup> Together with the former Union Warehouse, which also was owned and used by the Bayside Cannery, this sub-group of the 1995 California Point of Interest constitutes a significant historical resource associated with prominent Chinese businessman Thomas Foon Chew. In 1997, the main Bayside Cannery building at 1290 Hope Street was subject to Historic American Building Survey (HABS) recordation. That documentation noted the significance of the complex but failed to formally evaluate it for listing at the national, state, or local level.

In 2022, the roof of the Bayside Cannery (1290 Hope Street) collapsed due to poor condition of the roof structure.

This district form intends to formally evaluate and update these prior district documentation packages to reflect current conditions as of 2023.

### D6: Significance (continued)

The Bayside Canning Company is identified in *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California* prepared by the California Office of Historic Preservation in 1988 as a significant site associated with Chinese Americans in California

## Historic Context

### The Town of Alviso

The following pre-contact historical summary is taken from the *California Point of Interest: Port of Alviso* application prepared in 1995:<sup>2</sup>

Alviso was laid out in 1849 and incorporated in 1852 by a group of American speculators who believed Alviso would become one of the most important towns in the state because of its location on the San Francisco Bay and its proximity to San Jose, the newly designated state capital. The Alviso port was the major commercial shipping depot for the entire Santa Clara Valley. Four horse teams hauled quicksilver from new Alvin and to the Port of Alviso. In 1853 the Raleigh George Adams constructed a steam flour mill, which was the largest mill in the county, process Santa Clara Valley week for growing the local population. Wharves, warehouses, hotels, taverns, doors, and residences were also built in Alviso as a local economy grew with the influx from the gold rush. In 1858, the Guadalupe River access from Alviso to the bay was enhanced by a channel through Alviso Slough.

Although the port developed as a major passenger and freight link between San Francisco and the southern bay area, it never met the expectations of the developers. Peter Burnett, California's first American governor and one of the major investors and Alviso's development, built a two-story mansion in Alviso in December 1850. Following the removal of the state capital from San Jose, Burnett realized that Alviso would not become the major seaport envisioned by its founders. In 1854, he had his house disassembled and rebuilt on N. 1<sup>st</sup> Street in San Jose.

<sup>1</sup> City of San Jose, *Application for California Point of Historical Interest: Port of Alviso*, 1995.

<sup>2</sup> *Application for California Point of Interest*, p. 45.

State of California C Natural Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Primary#  
HRI #  
Trinomial

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Bayside Canning Company Historic District

Page 3 of 13

In 1864, Alviso declined in importance as a commercial port the completion of the San Francisco-San Jose railroad offered alternatives shipping freight by steamboat to San Francisco. The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 sealed the port's doom. The importance of the Port of Alviso continue to diminish, except as a point of shipment for local produce to San Francisco. Small steamers carried produce, such as strawberries, and some passengers when they were able to compete with prevailing rail rates. The completion of the Southern Pacific narrow gauge railroad route Alviso and 1876 revived the small town's principal industries and Alviso included the Alviso flour Mills, a watch factory, Bayside cannery, through evaporators, and Shell business. Periodically, plans were made to develop reports, and in 1890, the marshlands of Alviso was optimistically surveyed as 'New Chicago at the Port of Alviso.' However, these plans never came to fruition.

By 1881, the town of Alviso had several industries that still relied on the port, even though shipping activities never reached the heights of the 1850s and 1860s. By 1890, the town had a population of 967. After the failure of the New Chicago development, the population fell to 529 by 1900.<sup>3</sup>

After the 1906 earthquake devastated San Francisco and damaged many buildings and structures, industries looked to rebuild outside of the city's boundaries. This included the Precita Canning Company owned by Sai Yin Chew. After immigrating to the United States in 1878, Chew built up a successful business in San Francisco. When it was destroyed in 1906, he moved his cannery south to Alviso.<sup>4,5</sup> Chew and his son, Thomas Foon Chew, restarted canning operations as the Bayside Canning Company, located in the former Fruit Canning Company of Alviso buildings.

Chew died on February 24, 1931 and in 1933, the cannery went into receivership. It was sold in 1936 to the Bay Shore Cannery Company. It continued to operate as a cannery under different owners through the 1960s, after which canning operations in Alviso ended.

### Canning in Santa Clara County

Fruit canning in Santa Clara County began in 1871 when Dr. James Dawson began experimenting with commercial canning techniques at his residence in San Jose.<sup>6</sup> It was a natural complement to the vast orchards that were then being planted throughout the Santa Clara Valley and around the San Francisco Bay Area. According to the *San Jose, California Historic Context Survey, Draft*:

The fruit canning and dry pack industry quickly grew to become the urban counterpart of the Valley's expanding orchard lands. Other support industries such as box, basket, and can factories were created to support this form of intensive agriculture.

The manufacturing of orchard and food processing machinery and spring equipment became important local industries. W. C. Anderson started a canning machinery factory (Anderson Prunedipping Co.) in 1890. Anderson absorbed Barngrover, Hull, & Cunningham in 1902 becoming Anderson-Barngrover Manufacturing Co. this company merged with the Bean Spray Pump Company

<sup>3</sup> HABS No. CA-2686: *Bayside Cannery*, (San Francisco: Department of the Interior, 1997), p.10.

<sup>4</sup> "Bay Side Canning Company," *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California*, 1988, [https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/5views/5views3h6.htm](https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views3h6.htm).

<sup>5</sup> The original use of the Bayside Cannery site is often reported as being the former Alviso Watch Factory. However, that building was located on State Street. The buildings that Chew purchased were part of the former Fruit Canning Company of Alviso. This earlier cannery was started in 1905 by a group of local farmers and investors and operated from a preexisting building known as the Boots warehouse. "Old Town Charter of Alviso Still in Force," *San Francisco Examiner*, February 12, 1905, p. 20.

<sup>6</sup> City of San Jose, *San Jose, California Historic Context Survey, Draft*, September 29, 2021, p. 63.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Bayside Canning Company Historic District

Page 4 of 13

in 1928 to become Food Machinery Corporation (FMC), the company that built the World War II amphibious tracked landing vehicles and ultimately during the Cold War the Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

The fruit industry thus came to dominate the lives and livelihoods of most residents in San Jose by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in both agriculture and industry. Early industrial development was located near shipping points and transportation lines...<sup>7</sup>

...The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw an explosion of industrial development associated with the local fruit dry pack and canning industry which resulted in a period of related residential growth beyond the limits of [San Jose] as World War I approached. With new immigrants flowing into the area to work in the orchards and canneries, most of the remaining undeveloped land within the original [boundaries of San Jose] filled with working class homes, and new tracts were established during the second decade in suburban areas such as Hachette Park, the Gardener District (and greater Willow Glen), East San Jose, Burbank, and Westside...<sup>8</sup>

... As suburbanization of the valleys agricultural lands gained rapid pace in the 1950s and 1960s, agricultural fieldwork shifted to the Salinas and central valleys. The canneries continued to operate into the 1970s until the cost of doing business push those that survived to that point to new industrial centers in Modesto, Loughon, Marysville, and other population centers in the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys...<sup>9</sup>

### Bayside Canning Company

The Bayside Canning Company was the second started by Sai Yin Chew. Following the 1906 earthquake, Chew moved his operations from San Francisco to the former Fruit Canning Company of Alviso buildings located in the Port of Alviso.<sup>10,11</sup> The operations began with tomatoes. By 1908, the complex consisted of a wooden, one-story cannery, two brick warehouse buildings a water tower, a small wooden box storage building, a concrete storage tank, an oil tank, and an artesian well (see **Figure 1**). Additional buildings were located south of the main complex and included a wagon house, a warehouse, an office building, and a small dwelling. In 1910, all the employees were Chinese with the exception of a Japanese foreman and laborer.<sup>12</sup>

Chew began with packing tomatoes primarily using laborious, hand packing techniques. The operation was run by steam supplied by "old, donkey-type boilers; open vats were used in processing fruits and vegetables. Hand seamers and hand soldering were used in canning the processed food."<sup>13</sup> This changed when the cannery was eventually managed by Chew's son, Thomas Foon Chew. Under his management, operations expanded and production was modernized. <sup>14</sup> He "devised a method for washing tomato boxes before their return to the fields, and he bought a tugboat

<sup>7</sup> City of San Jose, *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California*, September 29, 2021, p. 63.-65.

<sup>8</sup> *San Jose, California Historic Context Survey, Draft*, p. 72.

<sup>9</sup> *San Jose, California Historic Context Survey, Draft*, p. 83.

<sup>10</sup> *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California*.

<sup>11</sup> The original use of the Bayside Cannery site is often reported as being the former Alviso Watch Factory. However, that building was located on State Street. The buildings that Chew purchased were part of the former Fruit Canning Company of Alviso. This earlier cannery was started in 1905 by a group of local farmers and investors and operated from a preexisting building known as the Boots warehouse. "Old Town Charter of Alviso Still in Force," *San Francisco Examiner*, February 12, 1905, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup> *HABS No. CA-2686: Bayside Cannery*, p.9-10.

<sup>13</sup> *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California*.

<sup>14</sup> *HABS No. CA-2686: Bayside Cannery*, p.11.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Bayside Canning Company Historic District

Page 5 of 13

and barge to transport goods. He also bought land near Yuba City [in] Sutter County, to grow peaches, and near Dos Palos [in] Merced County, for rice.<sup>15</sup>

Under his leadership, the work force at the Bayside Canning Company came to represent a myriad group of immigrants to the area: people of Chinese, Italian, Portuguese, Japanese, Filipino, and Irish heritages.<sup>16</sup> They packed and canned various fruits and vegetables including spinach, cherries, apricots, plums, peaches, pears, tomatoes, ketchup, tomato sauce, hot sauce, fish sauce, and fruit cocktail.<sup>17</sup> Items were packed under various labels including Del Monte and Libby, McNeill & Libby, with only the highest quality products receiving the "Bayside" label.<sup>18</sup> At its peak, the Bayside Canning Company, headquartered in Alviso, was the third largest canning company in the United States, behind Del Monte and Libby, McNeill & Libby.<sup>19</sup>

Commented [JK1]: The company's name is Libby, McNeill & Libby.

Commented [JK2]: See comment above.

Products were delivered to the Alviso cannery by horses and wagons. Products coming from the San Joaquin and Sacramento River delta regions arrived by ship or train. When products were not shipped to Alviso, they went to one of Thomas Foon's other canneries in Isleton (Sacramento County, constructed 1919) or Mayfield (Santa Clara County, constructed 1924).

Chew undertook a massive building campaign in Alviso in 1929 (see **Figure 2**). The current cannery building (1290 Hope Street), office (907 Elizabeth Street), and Chinese Cookhouse (906 Elisabeth Street) date to this period. Additionally, he constructed 30 workers cottages, a warehouse, an addition to the cannery, and other unnamed projects. Unfortunately, Chew died on February 24, 1931, shortly after work was completed. In 1933, the cannery went into receivership and in 1936 it was sold to the Bay Shore Cannery Company. It continued to operate as a cannery under different owners through the 1960s.

### Sai Yin and Thomas Foon Chew

Sai Yin Chew immigrated from China to the United States in c.1878.<sup>20</sup> Chew eventually settled in San Francisco where he founded the Precita Canning Company c.1890 at Broadway and Sansome Street. The officers and board of directors of the company were all of Chinese ancestry. When the cannery and company offices were destroyed in the 1906 earthquake, Chew moved the company to Alviso and changed its name to the Bayside Canning Company.<sup>21</sup> Sai Yin Chew grew the new cannery with the help of his son, Thoman Foon Chew who was 17 when the family relocated to Alviso. It was under Thomas Foon's leadership that the Bayside Canning Company came to dominate canning operations in the region. He expanded into the Central and San Joaquin Valleys, grew some of his own crops for processing, and modernized the canning industry through his innovative processing techniques, some of which are still used by modern canneries through at least 1988.<sup>22</sup>

## Contributing Features

The district is composed of four properties that represent the heart of Bayside Canning Company in Alviso at the height of the company's success and which represent four areas of the company's operation: canning, storage, business and management, and workers' facilities.

### Canning and Packing

<sup>15</sup> *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California.*

<sup>16</sup> *HABS No. CA-2686: Bayside Cannery*, p.10.

<sup>17</sup> *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California.*

<sup>18</sup> *HABS No. CA-2686: Bayside Cannery*, p.11.

<sup>19</sup> *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California.*

<sup>20</sup> *HABS No. CA-2686: Bayside Cannery*, p.9

<sup>21</sup> *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California.*

<sup>22</sup> *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California.*

State of California C Natural Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Primary#  
HRI #  
Trinomial

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Bayside Canning Company Historic District

Page 6 of 13

Canning took place in a large complex of buildings that grew out of the original Fruit Canning Company of Alviso building. This original building was greatly expanded and modified as part of the 1929 building campaign. Canning and processing are represented by the Bayside Cannery at 1290 Hope Street (APN 015-01-028). Additionally, ruins of a warehouse and traces of the foundations of cannery additions remain on the northern and northwester portions of this same parcel and within Alviso Marina Park.

### Storage

The Bayside Canning Company had several large warehouses on multiple properties in Alviso. Some were constructed by the company while others were purchased and reappropriated for cannery use. The ruins of one warehouse are located on the same parcel as the main cannery building at 1290 Hope Street. The former Union Warehouse at 1200 Hope Street (APN 015-01-029) was purchased by Sai Yin Chew and converted to cold storage to serve the cannery. During the height of cannery operations c.1930, the footprint of the brick warehouse was expanded through a large one-story wood frame addition that surrounded it on three sides. The addition was removed c.1964.<sup>23</sup>

### Business and Management

Cannery operations were directed from a small, mission-revival style building that was originally constructed on the northwest corner of the intersection of Hope and Elizabeth streets. It is currently located at 906 Elizabeth Street (APN 015-01-020). This building is more elaborate and refined in architectural detail, fitting for a business office associated with a successful company.

### Workers' Facilities

The Bayside Canning Company employed a wide range of immigrant labor. Many workers lived elsewhere during most of the year but lived on site during peak canning times. The 1929 expansion of the cannery facilities included dozens of small workers' cottages and a combination dormitory and kitchen (907 Elizabeth Street) all located on the same parcel (APN 015-01-038). Nearly the full extent of the parcel was devoted to workers' housing. While the workforce was composed of multiple nationalities, a majority of workers were of Chinese ancestry. As a consequence, 907 Elizabeth Street is often referred to as the Chinese Cookhouse.

---

<sup>23</sup> The date of the addition's removal is estimated based on comparisons of aerial photographs taken in 1963 and 1965.

### CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Bayside Canning Company Historic District  
Page 7 of 13

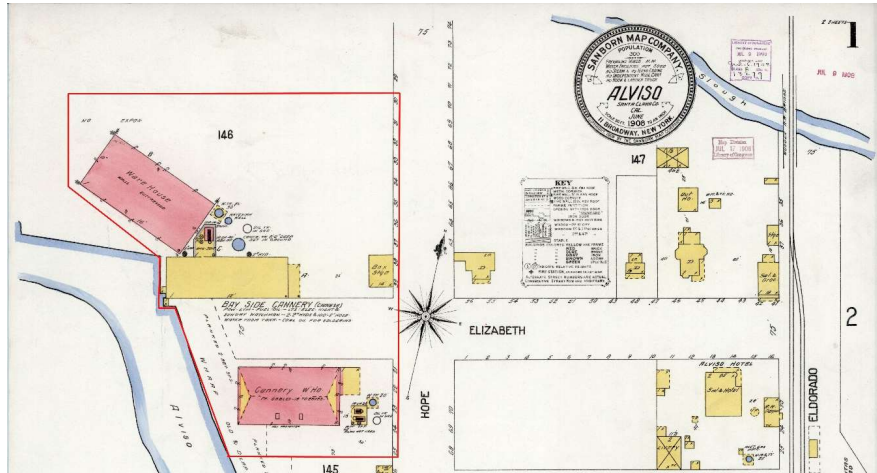


Figure 1: 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map: Alviso, California, Sheet 1. The extent of the Bayside Canning Company at that time is shown in red.

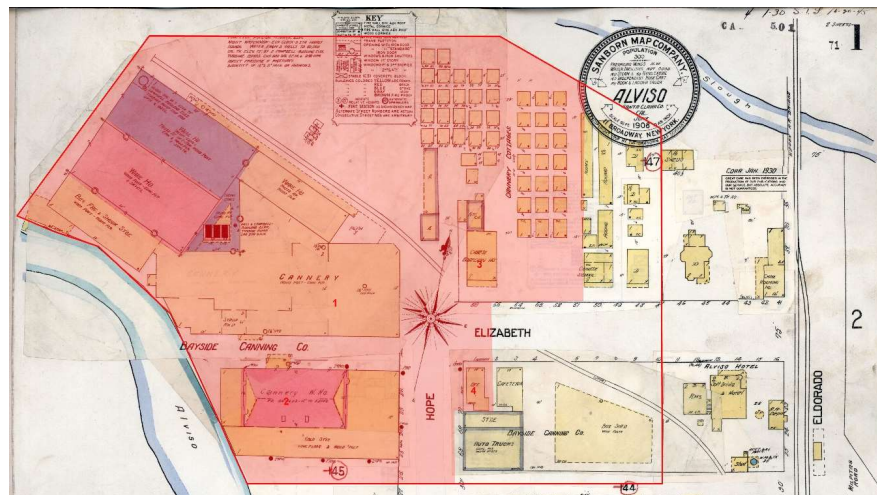


Figure 2: 1930 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map: Alviso, California, Sheet 1. The extent of the Bayside Canning Company in 1930 is outlined by the red line and includes an expansion of the cannery building and dozens of workers' cottages. All contributors are shown on this map and the historic district boundaries are approximately shown by the red shaded area.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Bayside Canning Company Historic District  
Page 8 of 13

### Regulatory Framework

As part of the Alviso Neighborhood Historic Context and Survey project, the Bayside Canning Company Historic District has been evaluated for eligibility for listing at the national, state, and local levels. The criteria used for this evaluation are described below followed by an analysis of eligibility.

#### National Register of Historic Places

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (U.S. Code Title 54, Section 306108), and its implementing regulations established the National Register of Historic Places as a comprehensive inventory of known historic resources throughout the United States. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior. It includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, archaeological, engineering, or cultural significance. A property is considered significant if it meets the criteria for listing in the National Register at Code of Federal Regulations Title 36, Section 60.4 (36 CFR 60.4), as stated below:

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 that:

- A. Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, or
- B. Are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, or
- C. 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
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register is "an authoritative listing and guide to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens in identifying the existing historical resources of the state and to indicate which resources deserve to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change" (PRC Section 5024.1(a)). Certain resources are determined by law to be automatically included in the California Register, including California properties formally determined eligible for, or listed in, the National Register.

To be eligible for the California Register, a historical resource must be significant at the federal, state, or local level under one or more of the following criteria (PRC Section 5024.1(c)):

- (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.

#### City of San Jose Historic Resources Inventory

The City of San José HRI identifies known and potential historic resources of varying significance, including individual properties and districts listed in or eligible for listing in the California and National Registers, City Landmarks, Candidate City Landmarks, City Landmark Districts (and their contributing sites/structures), and Candidate City Landmark Districts



## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Bayside Canning Company Historic District

Page 9 of 13

(and their contributing sites/structures). In addition, the HRI identifies Structures of Merit, Identified Sites/Structures, Conservation Areas, and Conservation Area Contributing Sites/Structures. HRI properties are classified into one of 16 categories, depending on how they were evaluated at the time they were added. The HRI serves as a resource for conducting environmental and project review related to demolition permits, as well as for land use and development approvals. It is not a definitive list of all historic resources in the city of San José, and it is continually updated as new information, project-related evaluations, and neighborhood surveys are completed. The purpose of the HRI is to promote awareness of community resources and to further preservation of historic resources and community character.

For clarity and simplicity, this property is evaluated under the criteria for the two major categories of historical resources in the City of San Jose: City Landmarks and Structures of Merit

### *City Landmark /Candidate City Landmark*

As presented in Municipal Code Section 13.48.020(C), designated or candidate City Landmarks and City Landmark Districts (and their contributors) are highly significant historic resources. They are designated by the City Council through a formal process as defined in the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Section 13.48.110(H)). These resources are considered historic resources under CEQA.

Eligibility of a city landmark must consider:

1. Its character, interest, or value as part of the local, regional, state, or national history, heritage for culture;
2. Its location as a site of a significant historic event;
3. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the local, regional, date, or national culture and history;
4. Its exemplification of the cultural, economic, social, or historic heritage of the city of San Jose;
5. Its portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
6. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen;
7. Its identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city of San Jose; and
8. Its embodiment of the elements of architectural or engineering design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship which represents a significant architectural innovation, or which is unique.

### *Structure of Merit*

A structure of merit is an important historic property or feature of lesser significance that does not qualify as a city landmark or for the California or National Registers. Attempts should be made for the preservation to the extent feasible under the City of San Jose 2040 General Plan goals and policies.<sup>24</sup> While there is no formal designation process for a structure of merit, it is generally understood to follow the same criteria as that for city landmarks, but with a lower threshold eligibility.

### Integrity

In addition to meeting one or more of the criteria above, a property must also retain integrity. *Integrity* is the authenticity of a historic resource's physical identity as shown by the survival of characteristics that existed during the period of significance. For a resource to be eligible for the California Register, it must also retain enough integrity to be

<sup>24</sup> "Historic Resources Inventory," *City of San Jose Planning, Building & Code Enforcement*, accessed April 28, 2023, <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/planning-building-code-enforcement/planning-division/historic-resources/historic-resources-inventory>.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Bayside Canning Company Historic District

Page 10 of 13

recognizable as a historic resource and to convey the reasons for its significance. Integrity is evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A resource that does not retain sufficient integrity to meet the National Register criteria may still be eligible for listing in the California Register or as a local resource.

The assessment of integrity is often weighted toward specific aspects traits and that weighting is depending on the reasons for historical significance. Properties significant for design (C/3) generally would have greater importance given to integrity of design, materials, and workmanship while properties significant for events or cultural associations (A/1) would have greater emphasis on feeling and association.

### Evaluation

For simplicity, the Bayside Canning Company Historic District is evaluated first within the criteria of the National and California registers. Because the criteria are nearly identical they are evaluated for both registers simultaneously. A discussion regarding City of San Jose criteria is presented after.

#### *Criterion A/1 (Events)*

The Bayside Canning Company was a major contributor to the Santa Clara Valley's dominance in fruit and vegetable canning and packing during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. As noted above, the valley supplied canned and packed produce for the entire country and was known around the world as the "Valley of the Hearts Delight" for its range of agricultural products and extent of its fruit orchards. As the third largest canning operation in the United States, the Bayside Canning Company was instrumental in establishing the area's reputation and prominence; only Del Monte and Libby were larger. The facility in Alviso was the first for the company and served as its headquarters. As such, the Bayside Canning Company Historic District is recommended eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A and on the California Register under Criterion 1 at the national level for its instrumental role in solidifying Santa Clara Valley's reputation as a fruit packing and canning center for the United States.

The Bayside Canning Company was founded by Chinese businessman Sai Yin Chew. It was expertly managed and expanded by his Chinese-American son, Thomas Foon Chew. The business is directly associated with the Chinese and Chinese American experience in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It represents a rare occurrence of a Chinese-American owned business rising to compete at the national level to become a nationally-recognized brand. Chew employed a wide range of immigrant labor; the majority of workers were of Chinese ancestry at a time when discrimination often prevented such individuals from obtaining reliable and consistent work. The historical importance of the Bayside Canning Company within the context of the Chinese American experience was noted as early as 1988 when it was selected as one of a handful of sites across California to be highlighted in the seminal publication *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California*. Based on this association with Chinese and Chinese American history in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in California, the Bayside Canning Company is recommended eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A and the California Register under Criterion 1 at the state and local levels.

The period of significance for Criteria A/1 is 1908 – 1931, representing the date the company was founded through the death of Thomas Foon Chew.

#### *Criterion B/2 (People)*

The Bayside Canning Company is associated with the productive working life of Thomas Foon Chew. Chew was a highly successful Chinese American businessman in an era when people of Chinese ancestry were subject to widespread discrimination. In spite of this, he was able to grow his father's modest canning company into the third largest in the country, expanding beyond Alviso and into the Central Valley and beyond. He not only was able to establish himself as a local business leader but also became a leader within the canning and packing industry. He

State of California C Natural Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Primary#  
HRI #  
Trinomial

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Bayside Canning Company Historic District

Page 11 of 13

developed techniques for canning and packing that remain in practice today. The Bayside Canning Company Historic District is recommended eligible for listing in National Register under Criterion B and in the California Register under Criterion 2 for its association with the productive working life of Thomas Foon Chew, a prominent Chinese American businessman who helped to shape the packing and canning industry in the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The period of significance for Criteria B/2 is 1908 – 1931, representing the date the company was founded through the death of Thomas Foon Chew.

### *Criterion C/3 (Design)*

The contributors to the Bayside Canning Company Historic District represent a variety of common and utilitarian designs. The cannery building (1290 Hope Street) and the office (907 Elizabeth Street) are both designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. This style was popular in 1920s and 1930s and was adapted for a wide range of building types from industrial plants to residences to civic architecture. Neither building demonstrates particularly innovative or unusual adaptations of the style. The Union Warehouse (1200 Hope Street) and Chinese Cookhouse (906 Elizabeth Street) are utilitarian in form and design. Both have been modified several times since they were initially constructed. As a whole, the district does not have a uniform design, architecture, or cohesive development pattern. As such, the Bayside Canning Company Historic District is **not recommended eligible** for listing on the National or California registers under Criterion C/3 for its design.

### *Criterion D/4 (Information Potential)*

After the company was sold in 1936, canning operations were scaled back. By the 1960s, none of the buildings were being used for canning or canning-related purposes. All four contributors to the Bayside Canning Company Historic District have since been modified to varying degrees and are unlikely to provide additional information regarding canning, canning operations, or the Chew family. As such, the Bayside Canning Company Historic District is **not recommended eligible** for listing on the National or California registers under Criterion D/4 for its information potential.

### *Integrity*

The Bayside Canning Company Historic District is located on its original site along the shoreline of the Guadalupe River and San Francisco Bay. The area around it has changed little since the period of significance. It is still fairly open and undeveloped with views to the bay, to the railroad right-of-way, and into the surrounding neighborhood. The neighborhood retains its eclectic mix of commercial, light industrial, and residential uses intersperses with undeveloped areas and relatively large lots. As such, the district retains integrity of **location, setting, and feeling**.

All four contributing features have been modified since the end of the period of significance to varying degrees. The Bayside Canning building (1290 Hope Street) has a collapse roof but retains its overall design, form, and appearance. The Office (907 Elizabeth Street) has been in continual use and its exterior is nearly unchanged since the period of significance. The other two buildings (1200 Hope Street and 905 Elizabeth Street) have had cannery-era additions removed. Overall, the Bayside Canning Company Historic District had diminished integrity of **design, workmanship, and materials**.

The association with Thomas Foon Chew and with canning and packing in the Santa Clara Valley remain intact. The buildings still retain their physical relationship to one another, as executed by Chew under his 1929 expansion. The Bayside Canning Company Historic District retains integrity of **association**.

Overall, the district retains sufficient integrity for listing on the National and California registers.

### *City of San Jose Historic Resources Inventory*

1. Its character, interest, or value as part of the local, regional, state, or national history, heritage for culture;

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Bayside Canning Company Historic District

Page 12 of 13

The Bayside Canning Company was a national leader in the canning and packing industry and a highly influential business in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. As noted above in the discussion under Criterion A/1, It helped to solidify Santa Clara Valley's reputation as the "Valley of the Hearts Delight" by packing and shipping produce from throughout the valley to locations around the United States.

2. Its location as a site of a significant historic event;

The Alviso location served as the headquarters of the Bayside Canning Company but is not associated with a specific historical event.

3. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the local, regional, date, or national culture and history;

Thomas Foon Chew was a highly successful and influential Chinese American businessman at the local and state levels. As noted above under the discussion for Criteria B/2, the Bayside Canning Company Historic District is directly associated with his productive working life.

4. Its exemplification of the cultural, economic, social, or historic heritage of the city of San Jose;

The Bayside Canning Company was the first major Chinese owned industry in Santa Clara County. It was also a major employer of Chinses and other immigrant labor which directly influenced the settlement patterns in the Alviso neighborhood and beyond. It represents an important contributing part of the overall immigrant settlement and commercial context within the City of San Jose.

5. Its portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style;

There is no specific overall style or distinctive character to the Bayside Canning Company Historic District.

6. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen;

There is no specific overall style or distinctive character to the Bayside Canning Company Historic District.

7. Its identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city of San Jose; and

No designer has been identified with relation to the to the Bayside Canning Company Historic District.

8. Its embodiment of the elements of architectural or engineering design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship which represents a significant architectural innovation, or which is unique.

There is no specific overall style or distinctive character to the Bayside Canning Company Historic District.

Overall, the Bayside Canning Company Historic District qualifies as a City of San Jose Landmark under Criteria 1, 3, and 4. Criteria 1 and 3 most closely correspond to National Register criteria A and B and to California Register criteria 1 and 2. It is recommended eligible for the San Jose Historic Resource Inventory as a City Landmark under criteria 1, 3 and 4.

### Summary

State of California C Natural Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Primary#  
HRI #  
Trinomial

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Bayside Canning Company Historic District

Page 13 of 13

The Bayside Canning Company Historic District is recommended eligible for listing on the National and California registers under both Criteria A/1 and B/2 and the state and local levels. Under Criterion A/1, it is recommended eligible for its association with Chinese and Chinese American history in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in California. Under Criterion B/2, it is recommended eligible for its association with the productive working life of Thomas Foon Chew, a prominent Chinese American businessman who helped to shape the packing and canning industry in the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Under both, the recommended period of significance is 1908 – 1931, representing the date the company was founded through the death of Thomas Foon Chew. Additionally, it is recommended eligible for consideration as a San Jose City Landmark under criteria 1, 3 and 4.

### D7. References (Continued)

San Jose, City of. *Application for California Point of Historical Interest: Port of Alviso*. 1995.

----. *California Historic Context Survey, Draft*. September 29, 2021.

----. *Planning, Building & Code Enforcement*. "Historic Resources Inventory." <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/planning-building-code-enforcement/planning-division/historic-resources/historic-resources-inventory>.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. *Alviso, Santa Clara County, California*. 1908.

----. *Alviso, Santa Clara County, California*. 1930.

University of California at Santa Barbara. *Geospatial Collection: Aerial Photography*. <https://www.library.ucsb.edu/geospatial/aerial-photography>.