

PDC18-016

APPENDIX B

Historic Report

HISTORIC RESOURCES PROJECT ASSESSMENT

239-259 Meridian Avenue
San José, Santa Clara County, California
(APN #274-14-152)

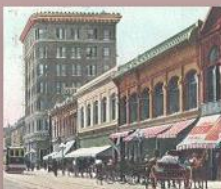


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06.06.2019



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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Introduction.....	3
Project Description.....	3
Purpose and Methodology of this Study	3
Previous Surveys, Planning Studies, and Historical Status	4
Location Map	6
Assessor Map	6
Summary of Findings.....	7
Background and Historical Context	7
Historical Development of the Study Area	7
Architectural and Land Use Context	11
Policy and Regulatory Context	19
General Plan Goals and Policies	20
San José Municipal Ordinance Requirements	20
California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)	21
Evaluation for Historic Significance	22
Sources Investigated, Consulted, and Cited.....	25
Qualifications of the Consultants	25
Appendix.....	25

(Cover image: highlighted project site viewed facing northwest from above, copyright Microsoft)

Introduction

A one-parcel three-building site located in the Sunol-Midtown neighborhood of San José is being proposed for a mid-rise mixed-use project. This site is within the West San Carlos Urban Village Planning Area. The project has been filed with the City of San José Planning Division under PDC18-016 and PD19-011. The proposed project includes the demolition of an existing one-story three-building medical office complex with addresses ranging from 239 through 259 Meridian Ave.

David J. Powers & Associates, Inc. contracted with Archives & Architecture, LLC to prepare this historic resource project assessment as a part of the preparation of documents for an Administrative Draft Initial Study. This report will be used to inform the environmental process of any issues regarding historic resources and will be included as a part of environmental review of the project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Project Description

The proposed project consists of a seven-story mixed-use building on a 1.28-gross acre site. The building will incorporate approximately 1,300 to 1,400 square feet of commercial space and up to 241 residential units.



Project front perspective at Meridian Avenue, LPMD Architects, 11/12/2018

Purpose and Methodology of this Study

This document is presented in a report format and addresses the extant buildings on the project site. It also provides some discussion of nearby properties that are within the context of neighborhood development. The report has been prepared to be consistent with the intent of the City of San José *Revised Guidelines for Historic Reports*, published on February 26, 2010.

Attached to this report are DPR523a series recordings for the property. The DPR523a forms provide property data and a detailed description of the buildings. Some information such as the narrative history and statements of significance that normally

would be provided within DPR523 records are embedded into this assessment report. This report also includes information on regulatory context pertaining to historic resources.

The site and nearby properties were examined in 2018 and again in May 2019 by Franklin Maggi, Architectural Historian. Digital photographs of the exterior of the buildings and views of the adjacent and nearby buildings were taken during these two visits. Photographic documentation is included within the DPR523 forms and within the main body of this report.

Historical research was conducted by the staff of Archives & Architecture and consisted of a review of both primary and secondary sources of historical information. The research and historical investigation was prepared utilizing the methodology recommended by the National Park Service, as outlined in *Preservation Brief #17 - Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character* (1988), and #35 - *Understanding Old Buildings: The Process of Architectural Investigation* (1994).

The evaluation considered the information and findings of the *San José Modernism Historic Context Statement* prepared by PAST Consultants, LLC in 2009 and the *West San Carlos Historic Context Statement* prepared by Margorie Dobkin, Ph.D. and Basin Research Associates in 2011.

Research and information on historic-era site usage was prepared in order to provide context for the site development but should not be relied upon for any analysis for the potential for sub-surface resources.

Previous Surveys, Planning Studies, and Historical Status

The project site has not been individually surveyed and/or recorded as a part of any historic resources survey in the past—as well as can be determined.

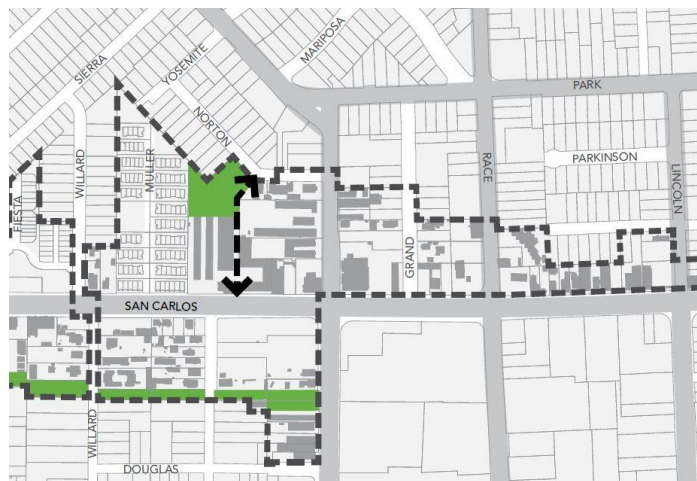
The West San Carlos Street corridor and the greater Burbank community have been the subject of planning studies by both the City of San Jose and County of Santa Clara since the 1990s. The Burbank Historic Home Survey of 1993 and 1994 undertaken at the direction of District 4 Supervisor Rod Diridon was conducted by Mardi Bennett, Principal of Marben Associates. The survey and property recordings covered much of the Burbank neighborhood outside of the San Jose city limits. This included properties south of West San Carlos Street as far as Page Street in an area that is now recognized as San Jose's Buena Vista neighborhood, but did not include properties to the north of West San Carlos Street (including the subject property). The area in which the subject property is located has been within the San Jose corporate limits since 1925.

The Redevelopment Agency of the City of San Jose established the boundaries of a business district along West San Carlos in 1988 in order to support small business and neighborhood infrastructure improvements. The West San Carlos Street Business

Association was formed the following year and was joined or expanded by the West San Carlos Street Neighborhood Business Association, Inc. in 1998 and partnered with the Redevelopment Agency on several initiatives. Although the Agency conducted a survey of business structures along this corridor, that survey is not available publicly as well as can be determined. However, by 2000, the City of San Jose had reconstituted many of the business districts into the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative. The Burbank/Del Monte SNI Planning Area, established in 2002, included properties along the West San Carlos Street corridor from Bird Avenue to Highway 880 and included properties both within the city limits and unincorporated lands. The northerly boundary of the SNI Planning Area included properties and neighborhoods north of West San Carlos Street and included all the properties east of Meridian Avenue between West San Carlos Street and Park Avenue but excluded the subject property and adjacent properties to its north on the west side of Meridian Avenue.

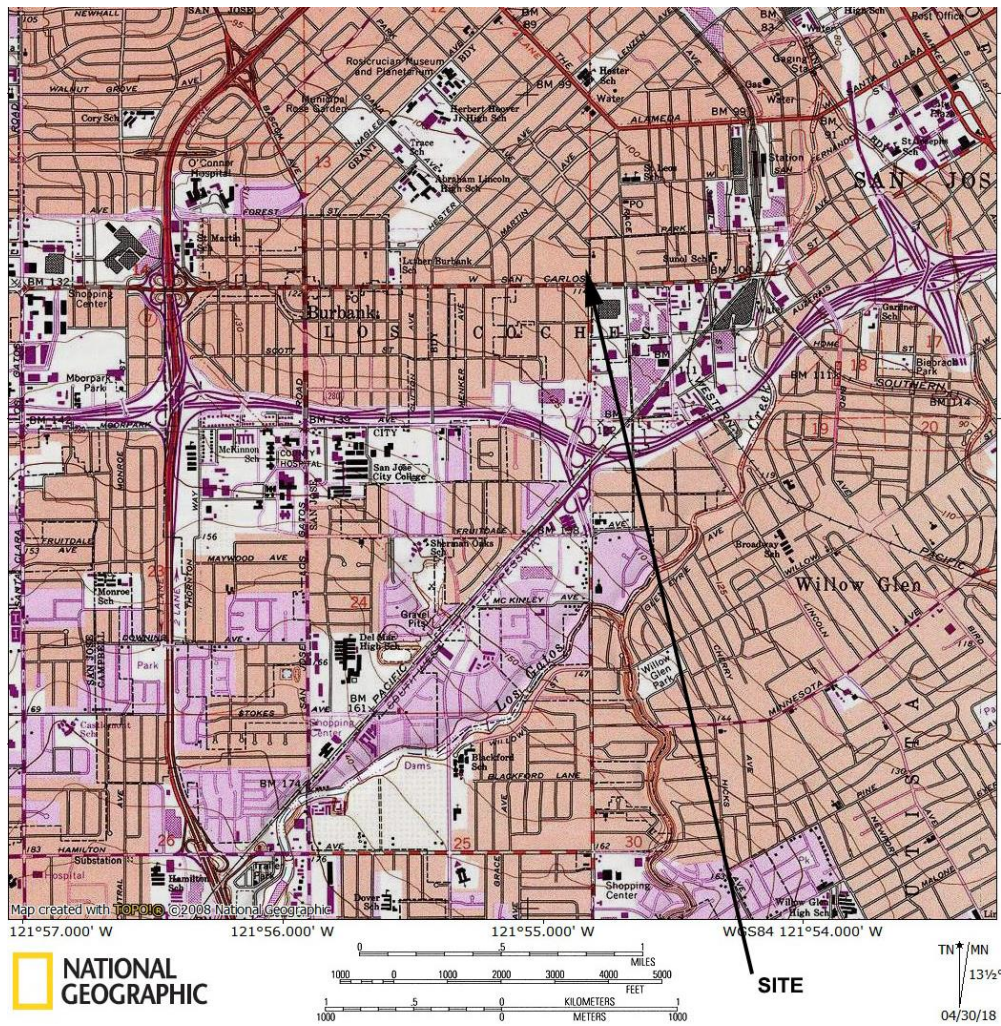
The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative was followed by the establishment of the West San Carlos Urban Village Plan in 2014. Prior to plan adoption, the City funded a historic context statement in 2011 for the then proposed Urban Village Planning Area. The survey and subsequent context statement was prepared by Margorie Dobkin, Ph.D. in collaboration with Basin Research Associates but did not include any individual property evaluations.

The Urban Village Plan calls for 980 new jobs and 1,245 new homes along the commercial corridor, with height limits up to seven stories at West San Carlos Street and Meridian Avenue for new homes with ground floor retail. The boundaries for this planning area do not coincide with the earlier SNI boundaries, but rather included the subject property as well as the two properties to the immediate north. Only around half of the properties across Meridian Avenue to the east were included in the Urban Village boundaries, which excluded commercial properties to Park Avenue that had been included in the prior SNI boundaries.

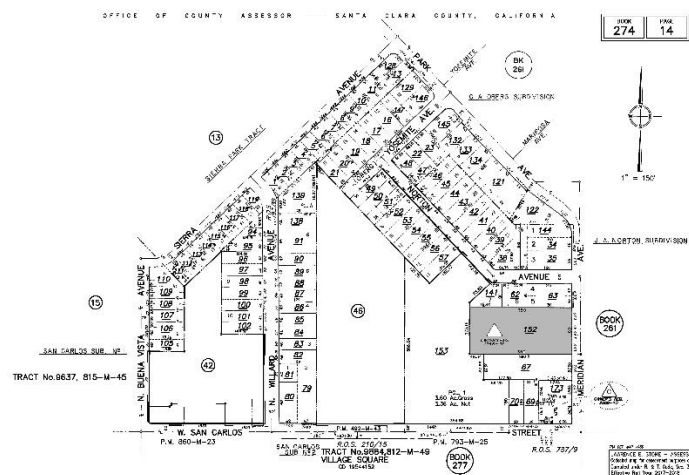


Map from Draft West San Carlos Urban Village Plan 2014 showing properties on Meridian Ave.

Location Map



Assessor Map



Summary of Findings

The construction of the project as presently proposed will result in the demolition of the three office buildings at 239-259 Meridian Avenue. These buildings were constructed in the 1950s-1960s in three phases and have been used by a succession of medical-related tenants since built. A detailed review of the architecture and context of the extant buildings as they exist today finds that they do not appear to meet the eligibility criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources or designation as San José City Landmark structures or as a landmark site. When considering the project under the Envision San José 2040 General Plan, the property and its associated buildings were not found to be eligible for the San José Historic Resources Inventory with a Structure of Merit (SM) listing, as they were not found to qualify as buildings or a site of “Lessor Significance” based on their 1950s modern design.

A further investigation into the likelihood that this site and its buildings contribute to a potential historic district was not found to be likely, as the early buildings associated with this commercial zone along Meridian Avenue have only secondary importance in terms of mid-century architecture, and there lacks a sufficient density of mid-century commercial buildings in the immediate vicinity of the project site to clearly associate this neighborhood with the modern post-war period. Other related mid-century resources further distant from the subject site in the area along West San Carlos Street and Meridian Avenue have been lost in recent times due to construction within this Urban Village Planning Area.

Background and Historical Context

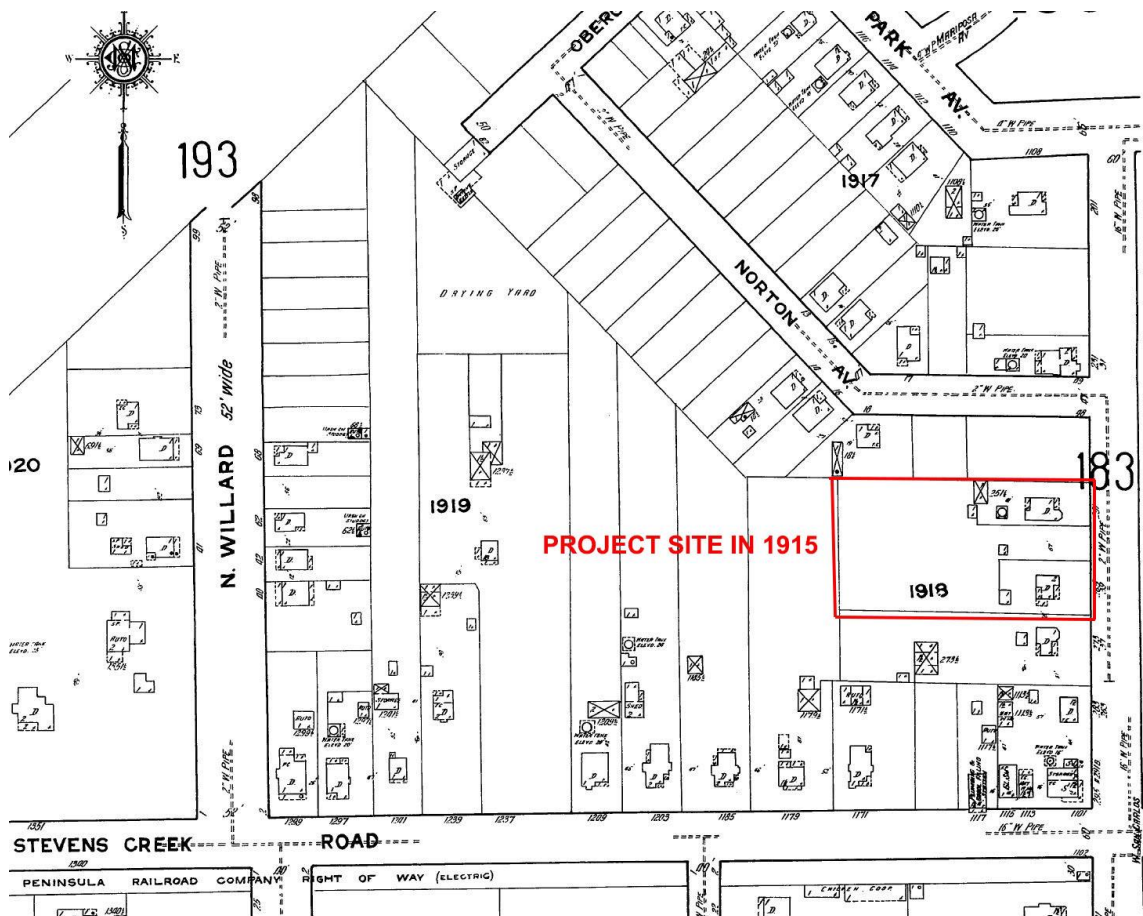
Historical Development of the Study Area

The site for this mixed-use project is within an area near the community of Burbank that had once been owned by Henry Morris Naglee, a prominent early San Jose resident, who obtained a large tract of land of the *Los Coches* rancho and was a co-grantee patented from the U.S. Land Commission. After the 1857 patent, Naglee quickly subdivided much of his land into 10-acre parcels. He also sold 75 acres north of Park Avenue (then called South Street) to the Santa Clara Valley Agricultural Society who established the first agricultural park and fairgrounds on that site. Meridian Road began at the fairgrounds and became a major route into the city west of the Willows, as it continued southward to the Dry Creek, the old channel of the Los Gatos Creek. Steven Creek Road was the road to the western foothills at that time. It began at Meridian Road and led to west valley and the community of Saratoga.

In the late 1880s and 1890s, suburban expansion to San Jose’s west brought the O’Connor Sanitarium to a newly connected West San Carlos Street and the district began to develop with industrial uses to serve the horticultural ranches in the western reaches

of the valley. Residential subdivision followed, with the Red Letter Tract created to the immediate east of the subject site in 1889. In 1903, the San José & Los Gatos Interurban Railroad was constructed along West San Carlos Street and Stevens Creek Road, and with easy access to the Interurban from adjacent lands, development was encouraged of additional residential subdivisions west of downtown San José beyond those that had previously reached westward to Meridian Road such as the Red Letter Tract. Six suburban residential subdivisions in what became the Burbank area were first offered to the public between 1904 and 1908. As the community of Burbank, San Jose's first "streetcar suburb" emerged, the residential district and its related neighborhood commercial properties matured into an unincorporated urban community.

Much of the development of the Red Letter Tract to the east of the project site and other nearby lands such as the subject property occurred in the post-1906 Earthquake period. The J. A. Norton Subdivision to the immediate north of the subject property was established in 1909 (Maps M2:61). The two houses that had existed on the subject property were built around that time or earlier on what had originally been a 4.32-acre remnant parcel remaining from the Naglee estate.

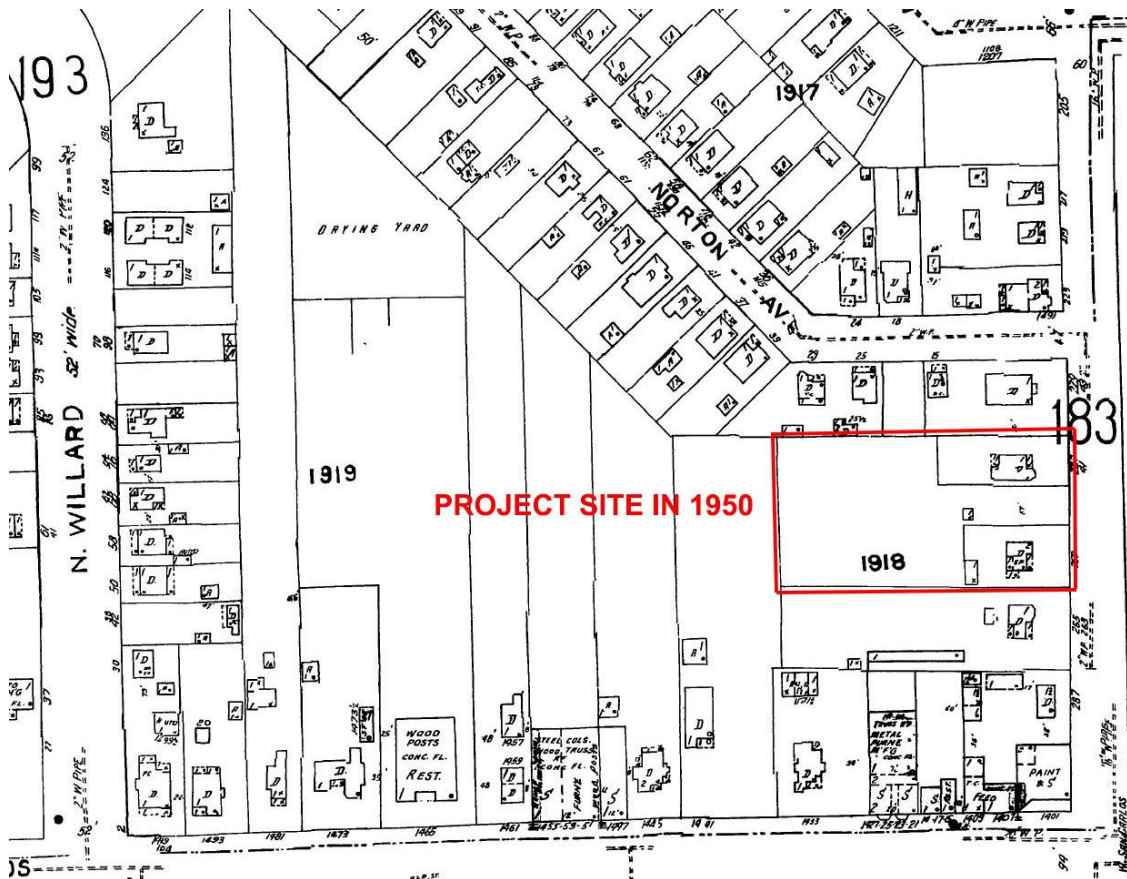


1915 Sanborn Map Company map excerpt showing project site, then within a sparsely developed residential area with some minimal commercial development along Stevens Creek Road.

By mid-twentieth century, commercial development had begun to replace houses along the then renamed West San Carlos Street, and the Bethel Church had been built on Meridian Road at the intersection of Norton Avenue to the northeast of the project site.

O'Connor Hospital had been the primary anchor in the neighborhood during the first half of the twentieth century, and during the early years of the post-World War II period, the Catholic archdiocese began plans to expand the hospital to address growing demand as the region began to expand. By 1950 however, plans to expand the hospital were shelved in favor of building a wholly new facility, which broke ground off Forest Avenue in mid-1951. Following the opening of the new hospital in 1954, the site on Stevens Creek Road was sold to Sears, which proceeded to demolish the building in 1955 and construct a new suburban big-box store.

Although the City of San Jose had expanded in the 1920s into the Rose Garden/Hanchett and Hester Park areas and to Steven Creek Road to the south, the suburban community of Burbank to the west has remained primarily unincorporated to the present.



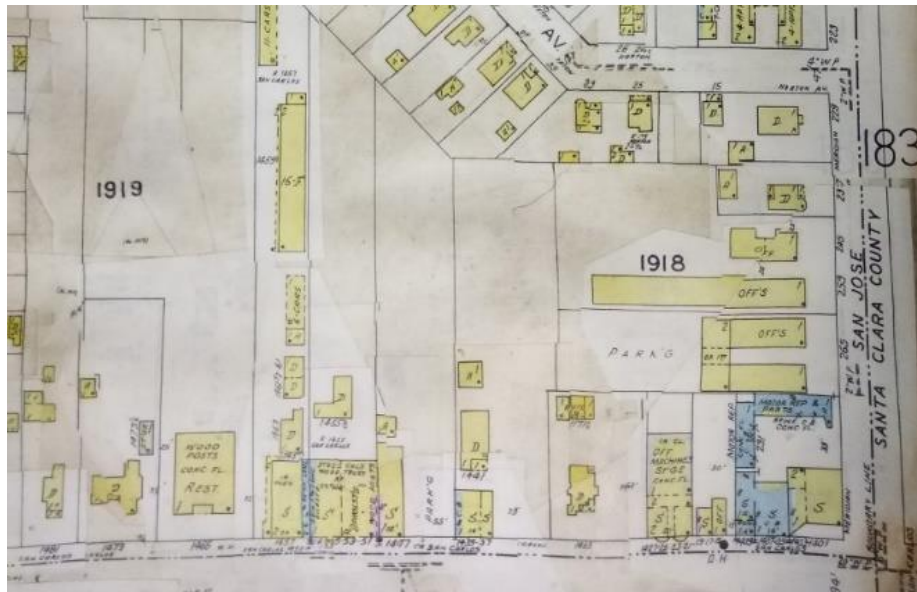
1950 Sanborn Map Company map excerpt showing little new development from the 1915 Sanborn map on the previous page other than some new commercial uses along Stevens Creek Road.

Development of the Project Site

During the early 1950s, much redevelopment occurred along this stretch of Meridian Road between Park Avenue and Steven Creek Road. The two houses on the site from the earlier part of the century were on three parcels that had been carved out of an approximately 1.25-acre parcel that had been created from the earlier 4.32-acre parcel remaining from the Naglee estate. In 1951 Robert Hancock obtained a permit to build a duplex on the large center parcel. In June of 1953, a building contractor Irvin Herman and his wife Jeannie acquired the property at the south end of the current site and applied for a permit under Herman and Parenti in September 21, 1953 to build a 9-office building at an estimated cost of \$50,000 (permit #17679).

Ten months later the Daily Pacific Builder included a listing for a new 3,000 square foot stucco office building in San Jose by Jaekle & French with an estimated value of \$19,432. While the contractor and owner listing has not been verified with this center parcel that had at that time contained a new duplex, this listing is consistent with the timing of the development of this site, as the second building at what is now the center of the site is around 3,000 square feet in size and was completed shortly after the 1954 notice date.

The office building at 259 Meridian Ave. noted in the paragraph above was expanded to the rear during the mid-1960s under a City of San Jose building permit. By then the most northerly (239 Meridian Ave.) of the three buildings had also been built (by late 1958), and that building was also expanded to the rear in the mid-1960s. However, original permits for both the middle and most northerly buildings are not listed in the City's permit database.



1958 Sanborn Map Co. fire insurance map excerpt of area with site at center right (California Room). At the time of the preparation of this map the most northerly of the three medical office buildings had not yet been constructed.



1962 Sanborn Map Co. fire insurance map excerpt of area with site at center right (California Room). At the time of this map, the most northerly of the three medical offices buildings had been constructed.

The architectural character of the buildings is typical of the work of architect Donnell Jaekle design during this period. The assemblage of these three properties, and the ultimate build out of the complex on the three parcels by 1958 and expansion to the rear of both the most southernly and northernly buildings by about 1967 is not well understood from existing permit records. Herman and Parenti continued to be identified as the owner of the all the built parcels at least into the late 1960s (from permit records). By the late 1970s the property was owned by Mark LaFrom. Members of the LaFrom family continued to own the complex until 2015.

Architectural and Land Use Context

The design of this 1950s complex of buildings is “modernist” and associated with a form of Modern architecture known as “Googie.” Googie architecture is known for its simple use of Modern materials (including concrete, steel, and plate glass and often stone) formed into striking, expressive shapes, such as large-scale zigzags, boomerangs, or scallops. The obvious architectural element that is associated with this style is the flared vertical boomerang fixed at the lower front corner of each building. The three buildings have canted roof lines with a low slope but visibly expressive slant at front.

The identification of local architect Donnell Jaekle with this complex is assumed but cannot be verified, as the permits do not identify the architect, and the referenced *Daily Pacific Builder* citation appears to pertain to the site but could not be confirmed as the citation has no specific address on Meridian and no owner listed.

Donnell Jaekle is one of a number of (young) local architects of the post-World War II period (Industrialization and Suburbanization 1945-1991) who embraced Modernism in their professional work.

Shortly after World War II, the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects was founded as the Coast Counties Chapter. While some architectural firms from the pre-war period remained active during the post-war period and embraced the new Modernism (Binder & Curtis, Edward Kress, Ralph Wyckoff, etc.), the AIA was soon populated by a growing membership of young architects who were trained in the new Modernism and who sought to redefine the character of the area's built environment. Among those architects were Donnell Jaekle, Gifford Sobey, Warren Gilbert, Hollis Logue, Alan Walter, Will Blessing, Earnest J. Kump, Norton Curtis, Warren Heid, Chester Root, Birge Clark, Goody Steinberg, Fred Marburg, and Kurt Gross, among others.

The *San José Modernism Historic Context Statement* categorizes much of this local modern work in the commercial sector as "Commercial Modern (ca. 1945-1975). As defined by the authors Past Consultants, Inc.:

Utilized during the post-war boom period of commercial architecture, Googie describes buildings constructed using futurist architectural elements, designed to address the automobile culture that proliferated during the era of suburbanization. Much like the influence of locomotive and ocean liner designs of the 1920s, groundbreaking advances in air and space technology inspired the swooping futurist shapes of Googie architecture. Named after the John Lautner-designed Googie's Coffee Shop (1949) in Los Angeles, the term came into use after editor Douglas Haskell's article on the style appeared in the February 1952 issue of House and Home magazine. In a new age charted by the automobile and fueled by unprecedented levels of consumerism, the striking forms of Googie architecture served their purpose well.

Space-age shapes, often incorporating huge electric and neon signs, proliferated on all manner of automobile-related commercial establishments, from drive-in restaurants to gas stations, automobile repair facilities, motels and shopping strips. In San José, Googie architecture is present along many of the automobile-oriented commercial arterial streets, such as West San Carlos Street, Alum Rock Avenue, and Bascom Avenue.

Continuing, Google character-defining features are defined as:

- *Abstract, curvilinear or stylized organic shapes*
- *Multi-story sweeping and soaring lines*
- *Exaggerated rooflines in steel or concrete, often in repetitive folded or curvilinear*

- *patterns*
- *Large expanses of glass in primary building, set within flush-mounted steel or aluminum*
- *frames*
- *Use of modern materials of steel, concrete, porcelain enamel, ceramic tile, prismatic glass, and glass block*
- *Space-age motifs of rockets and aircraft*
- *Prominent signage, integrated with the building design, or as a large free-standing composition. Signage often electrified with swooping designs in neon.*

Many adjacent properties nearby along Meridian Road were also redeveloped during the 1950s with one-story office buildings, creating at the time a zone of similar-type buildings. This conversion from residential to mostly medical office uses seems to be connected to the planned rebuilding of O'Connor Hospital on Stevens Creek Road, but as noted earlier in this narrative, the Catholic Archdiocese had decided as early as 1950 to change their development strategy to a site relocation, and by 1953 had broken ground on their new facility on Forest Avenue.

Even though the hospital days were numbered, a number of sites along Meridian Road were redeveloped to one-story commercial uses beginning in 1950 and continuing into the early 1960s. Most of the new buildings were designed by the architectural firm of Higgins & Root, who also acted as the developer on some of these properties. They moved their offices to the Park Meridian Professional Offices at 220 Meridian Rd. during the early 1950s. By 1955, Jenkel & Davidson opticians had moved into 210 Meridian Rd., 228 Meridian Rd. was converted from a residence to commercial use for Valley Fair Realty, Pace Optical was operating in 242 Meridian Rd. along with Clinic Pharmacy to the rear at 244 Meridian Rd. (later to expand to 240 Meridian Rd with additional medical occupants), and Century Medical Center had opened to the immediate south of the subject site at 265 Meridian Rd. Around the north corner of Meridian Road at Park Avenue two additional buildings were constructed that were designed by Higgins & Root that were occupied by medical users, and lastly an additional site at 260 Meridian Rd. was built for medical offices but now replaced with a modern Walgreens drugstore.

Given the public plans to relocate O'Connor Hospital, it is not understood what drove the property owners along Meridian Road to redevelopment a mostly residential neighborhood to commercial offices. Half of the commercial properties were developed within the San Jose city limits, while the other half were developed within unincorporated Santa Clara County. Within the block from Park Avenue to West San Carlos Street, two single family residential property remain as well as a church, and a multifamily property was developed during the mid-century period. One property was converted from residential to office use, and Walgreens now dominates the south end of the district as it terminates at West San Carlos Street.

West San Carlos Street is now a diverse mix of building types and land uses, and Park Avenue remains primarily residential in character, although a number of residential buildings along the south side of Park Avenue east of Meridian Avenue have been converted to commercial use.



Neighborhood diagram showing office uses in grey, and mid-century office buildings in red outline









1981 USGS aerial of neighborhood (California Room, SJPL)

Of the 16 or so properties along Meridian Avenue between Park Avenue and West San Carlos Street, around half were built in the 1950s. From what had previously been a mostly suburban residential neighborhood during the first half of the twentieth century, only two residential properties remain. One church exists at the center of this neighborhood, and three properties have been developed in the recent past. The table below visually presents this information with short summaries of the property characteristics.

Address/Parcel	Type of Building/Style	Build Date	Image
1207-1209 Park Ave.	Modern medical office building by Higgins & Root	Ca. 1955	
1201 Park Ave.	Modern medical office building by Higgins & Root	Ca. 1955	

Address/Parcel	Type of Building/Style	Build Date	Image
219 Meridian Ave.	Contemporary office building at rear of parcel	1991	
223 Meridian Ave.	Modern vernacular apartment building – replaced windows	1956	
229 Meridian Ave.	Single family residence designed in the Spanish Eclectic style	1924	

Address/Parcel	Type of Building/Style	Build Date	Image
265 Meridian Ave.	Office building known initially as Century Medical Center, now containing a mix of office uses.	1954	
204-210 Meridian Ave.	Jenkel & Davidson Medical offices	1950	
220 Meridian Ave.	Park Meridian Professional Offices (remodeled)	1950	

Address/Parcel	Type of Building/Style	Build Date	Image
224 Meridian Ave.	Bethel Assembly of God	Pre-1950	
226 Meridian Ave.	Single family residential converted to Purple Heart Industries	Converted 1956-1957	
228 Meridian Ave.	Valley Fair Realty and medical offices	1955-1960s	

Address/Parcel	Type of Building/Style	Build Date	Image
242 Meridian Ave	Converted residence to Pace Optical in early 1950s.	Ca. early 1950s	
1399 West San Carlos St.	Walgreens	1996	

Policy and Regulatory Context

A number of guidelines pertaining to regulatory context were used in the preparation of this report and project assessment. For an understanding of historic significance under the California Environmental Quality Act, the California State Historic Resources Commission's requirements for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, and the City of San José's Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 13.48 of the Municipal Code) were considered in evaluating or re-evaluating two of the properties within the project site.

Additionally, the San José Envision 2040 General Plan Goals and Policies are addressed in the following section. Policies and regulations in the City's General Plan and the Historic Preservation Ordinance have been adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating cultural resource impacts resulting from planned development.

General Plan Goals and Policies

As outlined in the Envision 2040 General Plan Update, historic sites and structures provide an educational link to San José's past; they foster a sense of place and community identity for San José. The preservation of appropriate remnants provides multiple benefits important to the health and progress of the city.

The proposed project may be subject to the following General Plan Goals and Policies:

Goal LU-14 – Historic Structures of Lesser Significance

Preserve and enhance historic structures of lesser significance (i.e., Structures of Merit, Identified Structures, and particularly Historic Conservation Areas) as appropriate, so that they remain as a representation of San José's past and contribute to a positive identity for the City's future.

Policies – Historic Structures of Lesser Significance

LU-14.1 Preserve the integrity and enhance the fabric of areas or neighborhoods with a cohesive historic character as a means to maintain a connection between the various structures in the area.

LU-14.2 Give high priority to the preservation of historic structures that contribute to an informal cluster or a Conservation Area; have a special value in the community; are a good fit for preservation within a new project; have a compelling design and/or an important designer; etc.

LU-14.4 Discourage demolition of any building or structure listed on or eligible for the Historic Resources Inventory as a Structure of Merit by pursuing the alternatives of rehabilitation, re-use on the subject site, and/or relocation of the resource.

San José Municipal Ordinance Requirements

Under the City of San José Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 13.48 of the Municipal Code), preservation of old historic or architecturally worthy structures and neighborhoods which impart a distinct aspect to the City of San José and which serve as visible reminders of the historical and cultural heritage of the City of San José, the state, and the nation, is promoted in order to stabilize neighborhoods and areas of the city; to enhance, preserve and increase property values; carry out the goals and policies of the city's general plan; increase cultural, economic, and aesthetic benefits to the city and its residents; preserve, continue, and encourage the development of the city to reflect its historical, architectural, cultural, and aesthetic value or traditions; protect and enhance

the city's cultural and aesthetic heritage; and to promote and encourage continued private ownership and utilization of such structures.

The landmark designation process itself requires that findings be made that proposed landmarks have special historical, architectural, cultural, aesthetic, or engineering interest or value of an historical nature, and that designation as a landmark conforms to the goals and policies of the General Plan. The following factors can be considered to make those findings among other relevant factors:

1. Its character, interest or value as a part of the local, regional, state or national history, heritage or 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, state or national culture and history;
4. Its exemplification of the cultural, economic, social or historic heritage of the city of San José;
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 José;
8. Its embodiment of elements of architectural or engineering design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represents a significant architectural innovation, or which is unique.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires regulatory compliance in regard to projects involving historic resources throughout the state. Under CEQA, public agencies must consider the effects of their actions on historic resources—a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment (Public Resources Code, Section 21084.1).

The CEQA Guidelines define a significant resource as any resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) (see Public Resources Code, Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 (a) and (b)).

The California Register of Historical Resources was created to identify resources deemed worthy of preservation and was modeled closely after the National Register of Historic

Places. The criteria are nearly identical to those of the National Register, which includes resources of local, state, and regional and/or national levels of significance.

Under California Code of Regulation Section 4852(b) and Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, an historical resource generally must be greater than 50 years old and must be significant at the local, state, or national level under one or more of the following four criteria:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

Properties of local significance that have been designated under a local preservation ordinance (local landmarks register or landmark districts) or that have been identified in a local historical resources inventory may be eligible for listing in the California Register and are presumed to be historical resources for the purposes of CEQA unless a preponderance of evidence indicates otherwise (Public Resources Code, Section 5024.1g; California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 4850).

Integrity

California Code of Regulations Section 4852(c) addresses the issue of “integrity” which is necessary for eligibility for the California Register. Integrity is defined as “the authenticity of an historical resource’s physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource’s period of significance.” Section 4852(c) provides that historical resources eligible for listing in the California Register must meet one of the criteria for significance defined by 4852(b) (1 through 4) and retain enough of their historic character of appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. Integrity is evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It must also be judged with reference to the particular criteria under which a resource is proposed for eligibility. Alterations over time to a resource or historic changes in its use may themselves have historical, cultural, or architectural significance.

Evaluation for Historic Significance

The three buildings at 239-259 Meridian Ave. are not listed on the San José Historic Resources Inventory. As noted in the attached DPR523a forms, the buildings generally

have integrity to their 1950s design, although expanded to the rear, and having their fenestration replaced.

The buildings on the site were initially developed *ca.* 1950s by Herman and Parenti and expanded around 1966-1967. The design appears to have been executed by local architect Donnell Jaekle and was done in a Modern style variant called "Google." The period of significance based on its architecture is 1953-1958.

The buildings at 239-259 Meridian Ave. have some architectural interest based on their association with emerging patterns of commerce in the 1950s, particularly those associated with medical offices and modern development. The area along Meridian Avenue to Park Avenue within and to the immediate north of the West San Carlos Urban Village is a fairly intact representation of new patterns of development during San Jose's Period of Industrialization and Urbanization (1945-1991), although the larger area including West San Carlos Street was developed with a variety of retail and office that have a mix of building types and styles.

Many of these buildings have just turned 50 years in age. The development of this site for medical offices appears to be associated with O'Conner Hospital, but coincided with the relocation of the hospital facility to Forest Avenue. Consequently, the concentration of medical uses along Meridian Avenue lost its reason for being in this location and does not presently present a unified district of similar uses/building types. Of the sixteen or so sites along this portion of Meridian Avenue between Park Avenue and West San Carlos Street, around half are representative of 1950s commercial architecture, and of this subgroup, one has lost its integrity (220 Meridian Ave.) When evaluating the Meridian Professional Center complex under Criterion (1) of the California Register of Historical Resources, the buildings and their grouping within the larger commercial zone along Meridian Avenue do not represent a significant concentration of uses to adequately represent this mid-century pattern of development, and the subject property in itself has only a secondary relationship to patterns of medical office development that is commonly found near larger hospital sites. As such, the medical office complex at 239-259 does not appear to qualify for the California Register under patterns or events (Criterion 1).

The Meridian Professional Center is not directly associated with any persons known to be historically important. The buildings and early owners, the firm of Herman and Parenti and the individual owners associated with this business were not found to be significant personages after a review of available historical references to their individual lives. The property therefore does not qualify for the California Register under Criterion (2) related to significant personages.

Post-war development and modern commercial architecture maybe be eligible for the California Register under Criterion (3), if the architecture is distinctive within one of the many variants of the Modern Movement. Although the building complex is over 50 years in age, it is modest version of the Googie variant of modern architecture with some

association with roadside architecture that was popular during the period. The architecture of these buildings is representative of the emerging Googie-style during this period in a secondary way, and although the designer of the building complex was not confirmed, circumstantially they appear to be the work of Donnell Jaekle, an architect of some importance in post-World War II San Jose. The buildings are clearly architect-designed, and have unique features found on Jaekle's designs during the late 1940s and 1950s in San Jose. This particular building complex is a good example of mid-century Googie design but is not individually significant within this architectural context and would not be considered a distinctive example within the larger context of roadside architecture during the post-war period. The building complex therefore does not appear to qualify for the California Register under Criterion (3).

When evaluating the property under the City of San Jose criteria for landmark designation, the building complex, while having an identifiable association with mid-century roadside architecture, its value within the larger context of architecture during this era is not significant as a part of the local culture or history. The site is not associated with a significant historic event, nor identified with persons who significantly contributed to the local culture and history, and does not exemplify the cultural, economic, social or historic heritage of the city of San José, nor significantly portrays the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style. While a recognizable mid-century building of some architectural interest, it lacks the embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen that can be found in more distinctive mid-century architectural examples, and while appearing to be associated with the work of a local architect, Donnell Jaekle, it does not have the distinguishing characteristics of his work that would define itself as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city of San José.

The City's Historic Resources Inventory identifies historic and architectural resources that should receive careful scrutiny during the land use and development planning processes. The Inventory has established a classification system with categories that related to types of other listings and designations, and levels of identification. Listing on the Inventory is based on relevant General Plan goals and policies related to what are identified as "Historic Structures of Lessor Significance." The goal is to preserve these structures as appropriate when they contribute to San Jose's past and contribute to a positive identity for the City's future.

Following a detailed review of the architecture of the three-building complex under General Plan Goal LU-14 and Policies 14.1, 14.2, and 14.4, findings were not made that this site qualifies as a site or structure(s) of Lessor Significance, as the building complex, and its associated mid-century architectural context along Meridian Avenue do not seem to be representative of important aspects of San José's past nor do they contribute to a positive identity for the City's future.

Sources Investigated, Consulted, and Cited

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Qualifications of the Consultants

The principal author of this report was Franklin Maggi, Architectural Historian, who consults in the field of historic architecture and urban development. Mr. Maggi has a professional degree in architecture with an area of concentration in architectural history from the University of California, Berkeley.

Franklin Maggi meets the Secretary of the Interior's qualifications to perform identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment activities within the field of Architectural History in compliance with state and federal environmental laws.

Appendix

DPR523a forms for 239-259 Meridian Ave. (Archives & Architecture 2019)

State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
NRHP Status Code _____

Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

Page 1 of 4

*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) Meridian Medical Building

P1. Other Identifier: 239, 245-249, 259 Meridian Ave. / Meridian Professional Center

*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

*a. County Santa Clara

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad San Jose West Date 1980 photorevised T.7S.; R.1W.; Mount Diablo B.M.

c. Address 239-259 Meridian Ave. City San Jose Zip 95126

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone 10S; 596216mE/ 4131437mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

Assessor's Parcel Number: 274-14-152;

west side of Meridian Avenue between West San Carlos Street and Norton Avenue.

*P3a Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

This one-story commercial building complex was likely designed by local architect Donnell Jaekle and served to provide medical offices near what was once the location of O'Conner Hospital. Although the hospital is long gone, Meridian Professional Center has continued to exist as a doctor's office complex to the present and provides small private offices in three buildings with a large parking area to the rear for occupants and patients.

Located along the west side of Meridian Avenue in an area containing similar scaled small office buildings, the site is situated at center block on a deep 350-foot lot. Other one-story office buildings are to the south and east, and another large grouping of office buildings frames the curve of Park Avenue at the northerly terminus of Meridian Avenue.

(Continued on next page, DPR523L)

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP6. 1-3 story commercial building

*P4 Resources Present: ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)

View facing northwest,
April 2018

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:

☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both

1953-1957, permits & Polk
Directories, 61-64 years

*P7. Owner and Address:

Holmes Business, LLC

*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address)

Franklin Maggi
Archives & Architecture, LLC
PO Box 1332
San Jose, CA 95109-1332

*P9. Date Recorded: June 6, 2019

*P10. Survey Type: (Describe)

Intensive

*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none".)

Archives & Architecture, LLC: Historic Resources Project Assessment, 239-259 Meridian Avenue, San Jose, Santa Clara County, California, 2019.

*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☒ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure and Object Record ☐ Archaeological Record
☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling State Record ☐ Rock Art Record ☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List)

Many of these office buildings had medical-related uses, but with the relocation of O'Connor Hospital in 1953 to its present location on Forest Avenue, the small grouping of offices in the vicinity has remained an isolated land-use anomaly. Most of these office buildings were developed in the 1950s and are reflective of modest mid-century modern designs that characterized commercial development in the early years of the post-War period. Along Meridian Avenue, most were designed by the innovative firm of Higgins and Root, and they had their architectural offices located in one of the buildings across Meridian Avenue from this site during the 1950s before the firm moved to Los Gatos.



south building viewed facing west

The design of this 1950s complex of buildings is "modernist" and associated in a minor way with a form of Modern architecture known as "Googie." Googie architecture is known for its simple use of Modern materials (including concrete, steel, and plate glass and often stone) formed into striking, expressive shapes, such as large-scale zig-zags, boomerangs, or scallops. The obvious architectural element that is associated with this style is the flared vertical boomerang fixed at the lower front corner of each building. The three buildings have canted roof lines with a low-slope but visibly expressive slant at front.



center building viewed facing northwest

The footprints of these three buildings are setback from the street and are separated by driveways that lead to the rear parking area. The first building (1953-1954) was that on the south (left when viewed from the street), and the second building (1954) was the middle, which was built to flank the original driveway. When the third (north) building was constructed around 1957, a second driveway was added to keep the buildings separate.

The buildings are wood framed and clad with stucco except for the front facades. The front walls facing the street are clad with T1-11 plywood, set within frames of running course modern brick wainscots, brick columns, and the roof soffits, and the wood-clad boomerangs at the outside corners. At the opposite corners of the vertical elements, the brick facings rise up to the soffits in a way that appears to mimic where outside columns would be located. The brick wainscots are capped with angled ledgers, and as they wrap around the front corners of the buildings drop slightly as they continue along the primary side walls that contain the entries to the offices. The rear and outside walls have no brick facings. The bases of brick wainscoting contain clay vents with circular holes that are recessed into the wall plane. The purpose of the venting is not known, as the buildings appears to be set on concrete slabs.



North building at front, viewed facing northwest.

The low slope but slanted roofs have moderate sized eaves as well as deeper eaves that extend outward over the adjacent walkways to the offices. At the north building, the footprint has an L-shape at the front, most likely to exploit the wider lot size, with additional drive-up parking located near the office entrances. The roof fascias are sloped inward, a streamline feature characteristic of the work of architect Donnell Jaekle.

Fenestration currently consists of black anodized aluminum sliders. These windows likely replaced the original silver aluminum units that were commonly used in the 1950s. The entry doors to the office, now paneled units, were also apparently replacements to the originals.

The building setbacks contain well-manicured shrubbery areas, and the rear, although mostly covered with an asphalt parking lot, has some minor tree planters. Large shrubs shield the back side of the middle building from view, and along the office entries small raised planters provide some landscaping relief. Walkways along the office entries are raised from the asphalt driveways and have a pebbled texture.

The site and its buildings are in excellent condition.



Rear of north building viewed facing northeast

Integrity

The three buildings that constitute the Meridian Profession Center have a fairly high level of integrity to their original design and form according to the National Register's seven aspects of integrity. The complex is still surrounded by an open, commercial setting, including surrounding commercial office buildings of similar scale and design. The building has integrity with its modest modern "Googie" design, including its original roof form and composition of common buildings materials used at the mid-twentieth century. Other buildings of this era might have more elaborate representations of trim and workmanship; however, this building includes simple original stucco work and appropriate joinery techniques for its era. Most of its original character-defining materials have been preserved, including bricks, stucco, and plywood walls, although the original windows and doors appear to have been replaced. The building retains its mid-twentieth-century form, scale, and feeling and continues, through its location, setting, design, and form, to illustrate its associations with secondary patterns of commercial development in greater San José at mid-century.