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MEMORANDUM

Date: July 7, 2020

To: Shannon George
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From: Meg Scantlebury, Architectural Historian

Project: Project No. 2019035, 26-34 South First Street – San José, California Consulting

Re: Review for conformance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings
Review for conformance with the Downtown San José Historic District Guidelines (2003)
Review for conformance with the Draft Downtown Historic Design Guidelines (2004)
Review for conformance with the San José Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards (2019)

Via: Email

The following memo has been prepared for architectural preservation consulting services in connection with the proposed new construction at 26-34 South First Street, San José, California. This memo includes a summary of the review of the Architect’s design for conforming with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, the Downtown San José Historic District Guidelines (2003)–for infill construction, the Downtown Historic Design Guidelines (2004 Draft) –for infill construction; and the San José Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards (2019)–for historic adjacency. This memo also includes a broad reconnaissance level survey of historic properties within 200 feet of the proposed project’s outer boundary. The 2004 draft guidelines and 2019 guidelines and standards apply to the proposed project as it relates to these resources as well. This memo does not include any review of the impact of the removal of the building currently on site, which requires a detailed demolition plan and in-depth study.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The approximately 0.35-acre project site (15,041 square feet) is comprised of three parcels (APNs 467-22-02, -03, and -04) located at 26-36 South First Street in downtown San José. The project site is located within the San José Downtown Commercial Historic District (District). The site is currently developed with a surface parking lot (part of the Fountain Alley parking lot), a two-story commercial structure known as the Lido Nightclub building, and a three-story commercial structure known as the Knox-

Goodrich building. The Knox-Goodrich building is designated as a San José City Landmark, a contributing structure to the Historic District, and is individually eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources. Vehicular access to the site is provided via the 18-foot Fountain Alley Parking Lot driveway easement on South Second Street. The project site is designated Downtown and is in the Employment Priority Area overlay of the City's General Plan and is zoned Downtown Primary Commercial District.

The project proposes to demolish the existing surface parking lot and Lido Nightclub building in order to develop an approximately 91,992-square foot, six-story commercial building with office and retail uses. The building would contain 12,227 square feet of leasable retail and restaurant uses on the ground and rooftop levels, and 51,255 square feet of leasable office space on levels two through six. The building is proposed to be approximately 84' to 94' to rooftop projection. The restaurant on the rooftop level would include a bar and lounge area on the northern half of the rooftop. Mechanical equipment would be located on the southern half of the rooftop. A terrace is proposed on level six fronting South First Street. A below-ground basement is included and would contain a 350-kilowatt diesel emergency generator, utility and maintenance rooms, shower rooms, and bicycle storage. The maximum building height would be 99.6 feet to the top of the elevator shaft. The project proposes outdoor seating on South First Street and Fountain Alley, which would require a five-foot encroachment into the public right-of-way on the two project frontages. An existing 10-foot easement along the eastern building frontage would remain to connect to the 18-foot Fountain Alley Parking Lot driveway easement on South Second Street for egress, trash pick-up, fire department access, and deliveries. Trash enclosure and utility space would be located on the southeast corner of the building.

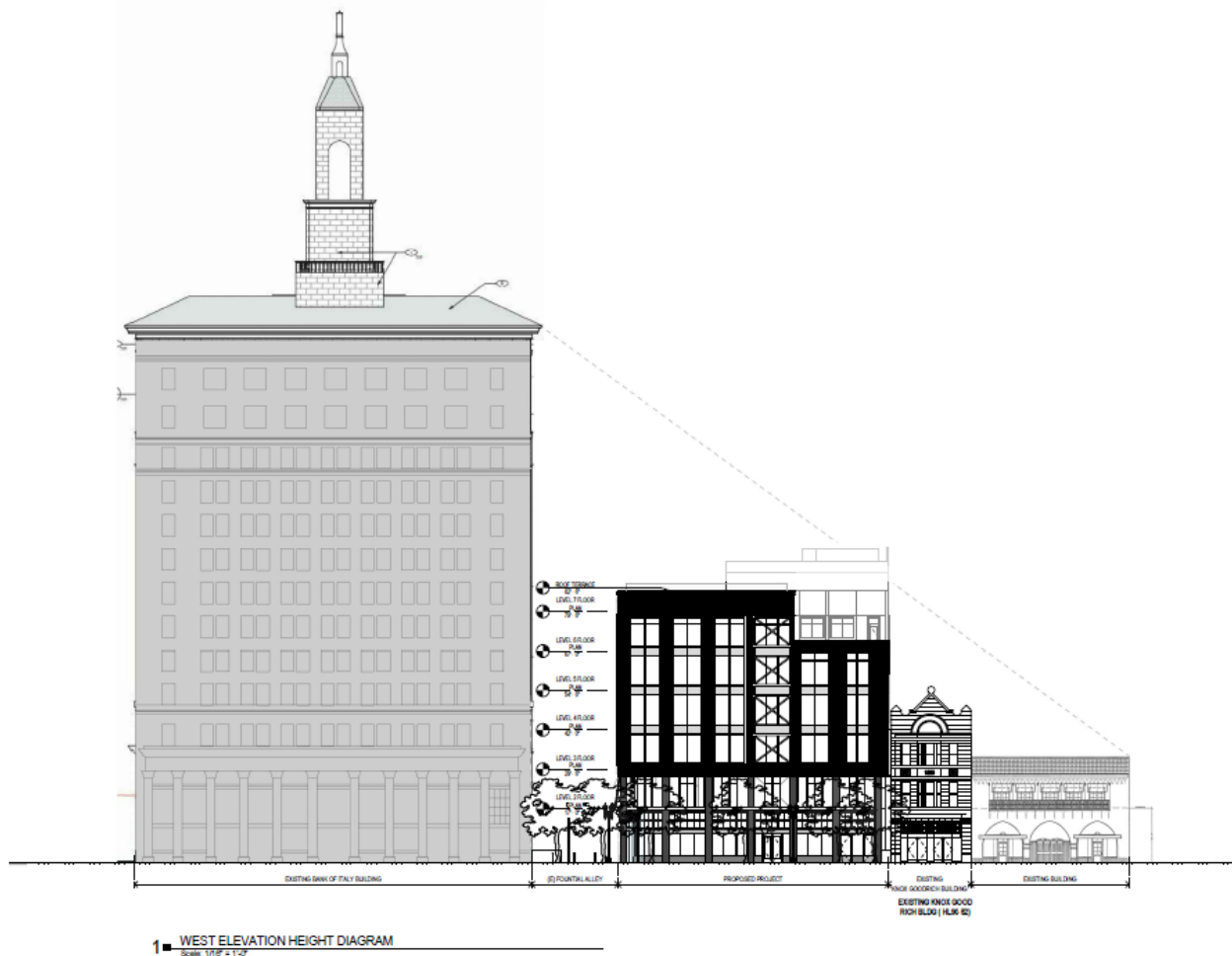
The main façade of the proposed project faces South First Street and is divided into six bays, separated by metal pilasters on the first two floors then vertical flat brick cladding starting at the third floor. A soffit at the second and third floor transition is supported by four glass fiber reinforced concrete wrapped (GFRC) columns. The cornice is flat brick. The first two floors are recessed approximately eight feet compared to the façade of the adjacent Knox-Goodrich Building; columns are placed at the property line. A flat metal awning 17 feet above ground level is coincident with the height of the first floor, extends about 13 feet out from the façade, and covers the recessed eight feet as well as an additional five-foot proposed easement to provide for additional outdoor restaurant seating. The clerestory windows above the awning, which front the second floor, are two-part vertical windows flanked by stucco panels between pilasters and the GFRC-wrapped columns. There are two double glass door entrances on the South First Street facade; the other openings are fixed glazed windows. Panelized bulkheads would be painted to match the storefront. A water feature wraps around the corner of the building at South First Street and Fountain Alley.

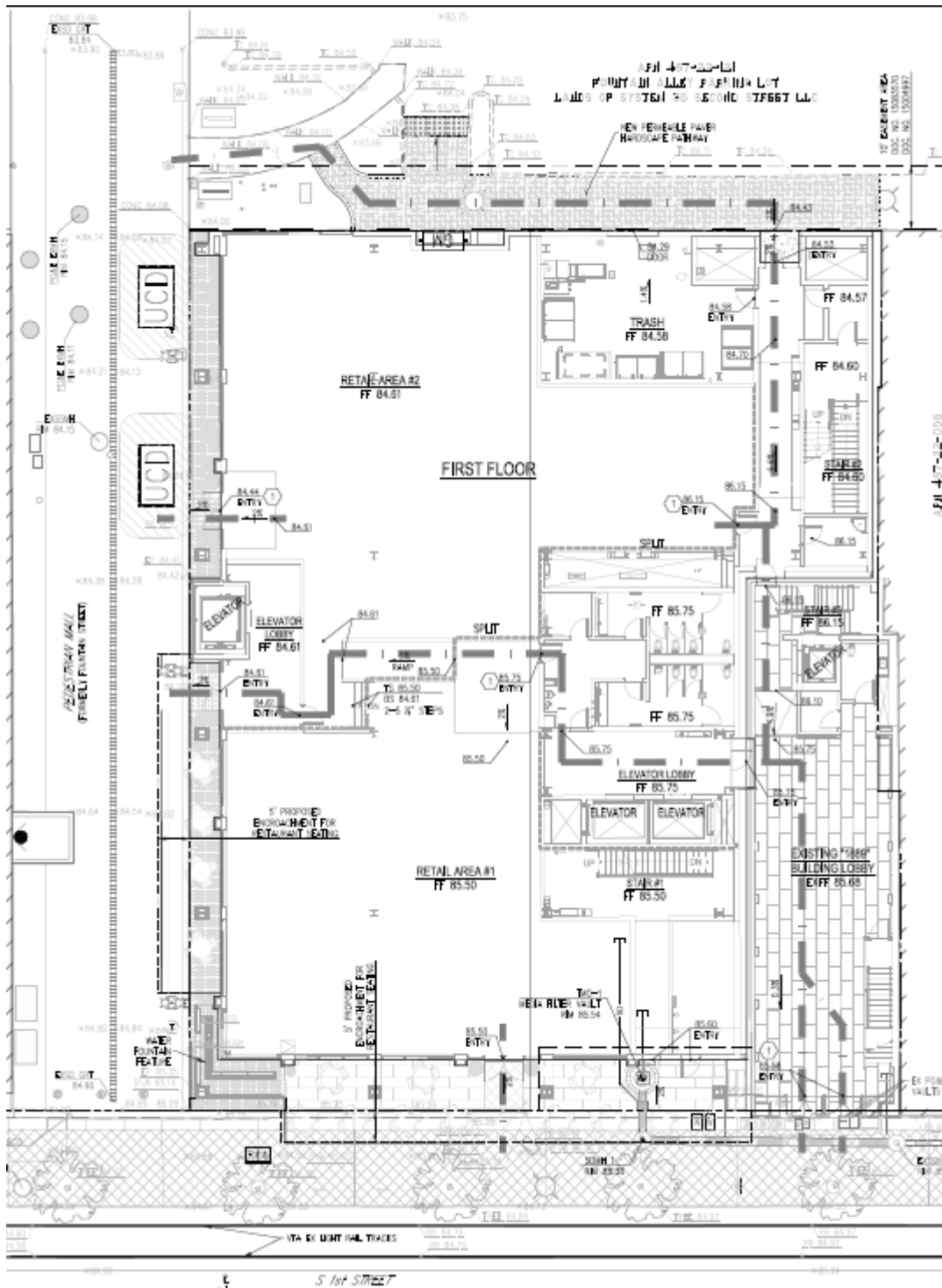
The stucco soffit at the transition between the second and third floor brings the building façade in line with the Knox-Goodrich building. Horizontal metal panels indicate transitions between the subsequent floors. Large two-panel windows fill the spaces between the metal panels and the vertical brick. The fourth set of bays have three-part windows and X-bracing on the third through sixth floor. The two sixth floor southern bays are notched back where the building is adjacent to and wraps around the Knox Building. The material on the notched back portion of the sixth floor transitions from flat brick to light colored plaster. A glass wind breaker tops the sixth-floor cornice to accommodate a roof terrace.

The Fountain Alley-facing façade is similar to the South First Street façade. It features the same materials, fenestration and spatial proportions as the primary façade. However light-colored plaster cladding is used in lieu of flat brick cladding after the first two bays of floors three to six. An elevator shaft is glazed and has X-bracing flanked by metal panels. The first two floors are recessed to provide for additional outdoor

restaurant seating covered by a second awning over about half of the length of this secondary façade. As with the primary façade, a five-foot proposed easement is covered by the awning.

The project would preserve and renovate the three-story Knox-Goodrich building. The 7,901 square foot Knox-Goodrich building would include approximately 2,966 square feet of leasable retail space on levels two and three of the building. The ground level of the Knox-Goodrich building would connect to the proposed new building and be used as the primary lobby entrance for both buildings. The two buildings would only be interconnected on the ground level, via openings on the north side and the east side of the Knox-Goodrich building. A building seismic separation is proposed between the Knox-Goodrich building and the proposed building. The historic exterior façade of the Knox-Goodrich building would be preserved, except for the ground level storefront, which was previously modified by the existing use. The proposed storefront would remove the glass window and doors below the transom window, and install a new metal awning, and glass doors. A detailed description of the proposed improvements to the Knox-Goodrich building is included in the Preservation Plan.







RECONNAISSANCE-LEVEL SURVEY OF BUILDINGS WITHIN 200 FEET OF THE PROJECT SITE

The following is a brief general description of the buildings within 200 feet of the project site's outer boundary, both within the San Jose Downtown Commercial District, National Register Historic District (NR 83003822) (District), and outside of the District boundary. The descriptions of buildings outside of the historic district are excerpted from a Draft Historic Report produced by MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC.¹

The District is bounded by South First Street to the west, East Santa Clara Street to the north, South Third Street to the east, and East San Fernando Street to the south. It was listed on the National Register in 1983 and was comprised of 45 properties – 27 contributing properties and 18 non-contributing properties are identified in the nomination. The nomination states that the District is significant for being the mercantile and financial center of Santa Clara Valley for over 100 years. It includes buildings dating from the 1870s, reflecting the emergence of the American City; from the 1890s, reflecting San Jose's boom years as an agricultural center; and from the 1920s, reflecting the South Bay's first skyscraper construction.²

The 14 properties within the District that are within 200 feet of the outer boundary of the proposed project are listed below and briefly described; the list includes the two that are part of the proposed project. Of the 14 buildings within the district, three do not contribute to the District as indicated in the nomination.

12 South First Street (1926)

Bank of America Building, formerly the Bank of Italy Building. The architect was H.A. Minton. The 12-story building is an early San José skyscraper with Renaissance detailing. There are 12 fluted columns topped with Corinthian capitals on the primary façade; some windows between the columns have been replaced with modern glass doors. An entablature with an ornate frieze is above the columns. The middle or shaft level is clad in brick; the top level is lighter colored stone. The tile hipped roof is topped with a small decorative tower. There is a modern addition in the rear of the building.

28 East Santa Clara Street (c1880)

This two-story building has a modern first floor storefront. The second story contains four double Italianate windows. The façade is flanked by quoins and it is topped with a simple cornice.

36 East Santa Clara Street (c1880)

This two-story commercial building is not a contributor to the District.

50 East Santa Clara Street (c1937)

Three-story Moderne Commercial. The first-floor storefront is infilled with modern glazed windows on top of a ceramic tiled lower window panel. The second story of the main façade is a series of fluted pilasters with metal multi-light windows between them.

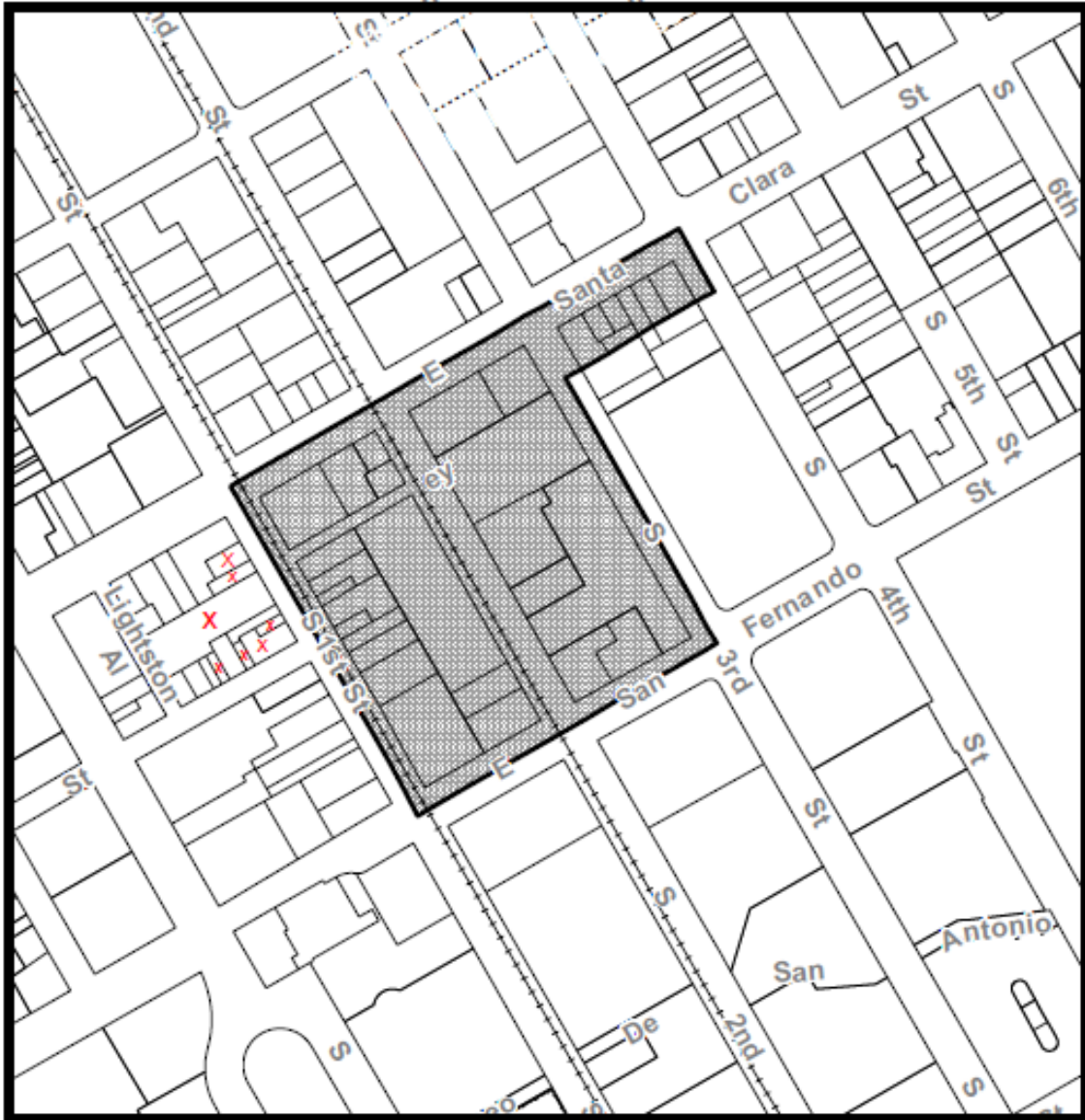
27-29 Fountain Alley (c1889)

Three-story Italianate. The first floor has a modern commercial façade. The second and third stories each include two sets of bay windows.

¹ MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC., *Draft Historic Report* (February 5, 2019).

² National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: San José Downtown Commercial District (1983)

Downtown Commercial National Register Historic District



Map Prepared by: City of San Jose, Planning Division, May 2008



Scale: 1 Inch = 300 feet

X = Historic buildings outside of the District, within 200' of the outer boundary of the proposed project.

33 Fountain Alley (c1889)

Three-story building with Classical-revival detailing. The first floor has a modern commercial façade; the second and third floors each contain two large evenly spaced windows. Three fluted pilasters, two stories in height are evenly spaced across the façade – one on each corner and one between the windows. Garland friezes mark the transition between the second and third floors.

37 Fountain Alley (c1920)

This one-story building is not a contributor to the District.

30 South First Street (c1890)

This two-story building is not a contributor to the District. The proposed project will demolish the building.

34 South First Street (c1899)

This three-story Richardsonian Romanesque building will be rehabilitated as part of the proposed project.

42 South First Street (c1920)

Two-story Spanish Colonial Revival with a courtyard. The first-floor storefront includes three arches – two with modern glass door entrances on either side of a fully open archway leading to a central courtyard. The second floor has four large evenly spaced floor-to-ceiling multi-light windows with metal balconettes in front of them. The roof is Spanish mission tile.

50 South First Street (c1890)

This building is not a contributor to the district.

52 South First Street (c1890)

Three-story commercial building with Romanesque details. The articulated storefront includes two entrances covered by a full-width horizontal awning. Clerestory windows are above the awning, the full width of the building. The second and third story façades contain two two-story glazed and metal Romanesque arches.

58 South First Street (c1870)

This commercial building contains three distinct entrances. The first floor has been altered. The second story contains five glazed Romanesque arches with keystones, each flanked by fluted pilasters. There is an ornamental triangular pediment flush with the wall above the middle window. Above that pediment is a second, arched pediment.

68 South First Street (c1890)

Four-story Romanesque Revival building. There are seven bays, most containing entrances, in the first floor; one entrance has a Romanesque arch and the remaining six are rectangular. The first-floor cladding is grey stone and the three floors above are clad with a warm tan-colored stone. The pattern of seven openings are repeated by the rectangular fenestration pattern on the second and third floors. The fourth-floor fenestration consists of twelve arches. A frieze visually separates the third and fourth stories.

Outside of the District and within 200 feet of the proposed project are several properties that have been previously evaluated and included in the City's Historic Resources Inventory. They are categorized as one or more of the following: Eligible National Register (individually), Eligible for California Register, Contributing Site/Structure, and/or Structure of Merit. The City's Historic Resource Inventory is an

accumulation of several survey efforts that began in 1975. Many of the properties around the proposed project have not had an updated survey or evaluation done in several years.

27 Post Street (ca.1860s)

Sullivan-esque Commercial. The building is listed as Contributing Structure on the San José Historic Resources Inventory. It does not appear to be part of an identified potential National Register District or a City Landmark District.

39 Post Street (ca.1886)

Commercial brick building. Listed as a Contributing Structure in the San José Historic Resources Inventory. It does not appear to be part of an identified potential National Register or City Landmark District.

15 South First Street (ca.1870)

Mediterranean Style building currently used as a Carl's Jr. restaurant. This building is listed as a Contributing Resource on the San José Historic Resources Inventory. It is not part of an identified potential National Register District or a City Landmark District.

19 South First Street (A. Hirsch and Sons Building, ca.1857)

This building is listed as a Structure of Merit on the San José Historic Resources Inventory.

27 South First Street (Woolworth, ca.1926-1953)

This building is listed as a Structure of Merit on the San José Historic Resources Inventory. It is not part of an identified potential National Register District or a City Landmark District. A Special Use Permit has been granted to allow the demolition of this commercial building. It will be replaced by a 22-story, 242 foot-tall mixed-use building consisting of 374 residential units and approximately 35,712 square feet of retail space, with an alternative parking arrangement (parking stackers) and reduced parking on a 0.57-gross acre site in the DC Downtown Core Zoning District.

33-35 South First Street (F. Stock/Fisher Pellerano Drugs Building, ca.1857)

This building is individually eligible for the National Register, individually eligible for the California Register, and is listed as a Structure of Merit on the San José Historic Resources Inventory.

41-43 South First Street (Holman Building, ca.1925)

Originally of a modern design, the building was given an updated façade and a new storefront system. The building is listed as a Structure of Merit on the San José Historic Resources Inventory.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES OF THE SAN JOSÉ DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

District Definition

A district possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A district derives its importance from being a unified entity, even though it is often composed of a wide variety of resources. The identity of a district results from the interrelationship of its resources, which can convey a visual sense of the overall historic environment or be an arrangement of historically or functionally related properties. A district can comprise both features that lack individual distinction and individually distinctive features that serve as focal points. The majority of the components that add to the district's

historic character, even if they are individually undistinguished, must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole.³

According to the National Register nomination form, “The San José Downtown Commercial Historic District is comprised of both architecturally and historically significant buildings. Dating from the 1870s to the early 1940s, the district represents the remaining vestiges of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial structures in the downtown.” It is comprised of 45 buildings (27 contributing and 18 non-contributing).⁴

Although the nomination for the district does not specify character-defining features, it does state that “the structures included within the district represent a variety of architectural styles [that convey] the historical significance of the development of the commercial core of San José, as can be seen in their various styles.”⁵ The following discussion of character-defining features is largely gleaned from the Downtown San José Historic District Guidelines (2003).

District-Wide Character-Defining Features⁶

The Downtown San José Historic District Guidelines characterize design settings and elements found throughout the historic district. Below are the settings and elements that describe the interrelationship of the contributing resources, which convey a visual sense of the overall historic environment - an arrangement of historically or functionally related properties that comprises a district. An understanding of these characteristics allows the Downtown San José Historic District to be considered a single, unified historic property.

Character-Defining Settings

The buildings, storefronts and outdoor spaces that line each street are the contributing elements that define each street in terms of place recognitions, economic vitality and quality of pedestrian activity. Character-defining settings are specific types of urban places long associated with Downtown San José – streets, alleyways, paseos and, in particular, Fountain Alley.

Settings provide us with orientation and allow making connections and associations. As such they greatly contribute to the livelihood and memorability of historic districts. Together with historic buildings, settings play a major role in the ability of an urban place to convey its past. In the Downtown San José Historic District, settings are both past and present. It is near present-day Fountain Alley that artesian wells were discovered as part of the early settlement of San José, thereby making an important contribution to the city’s initial development. In time, Fountain Alley has lost much of its spatial definition and the historical significance of the area has been blurred.

Character-Defining Design Elements

Storefronts: Historically, two distinct storefront styles have contributed to the townscape of Downtown San José: the classic Main Street storefront and the postwar storefront. The storefront may be the paramount design element in this historic district. Their spacing, design configuration, use of materials,

³ National Park Service, National Register Bulletin, How to apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (1990, revised 2002)

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Excerpted from Downtown San José Historic District Guidelines (2003), 39-74

signing, and display windows may determine the degree of appeal and overall success associated with an urban place. Typical design elements include a transitional zone between the first and second story, often brick or terracotta clad; high-ceilinged inside spaces with clerestory windows; a transom bar; display windows; and entryways in deep recesses. Postwar storefronts have angled sides at the store entry, a display case; and usually the store name inlaid in terrazzo in the recessed entryway.

Façades, Looking Down the Block: Downtown San José is not a building complex with a focal point, but a variegated and rich tapestry. The majority of the individual buildings abut one another. They vary in height, number of stories, cladding material, color and texture. Most of the contributing buildings are between two and four stories, with the exception of the Bank of America Building and Hotel Clariana. Materials include rusticated stone, smooth stone, stucco, brick, metal, glass, and ceramic tile. Above the storefront, upper story fenestration patterns vary between the buildings but are generally proportionally large within the width of the façade and exemplify the overall style of the building. Upper floor openings are often articulated by pilasters or arches and are spatially and numerically repeated on each of a building façade's story. Some façades are punctuated by awnings or balconettes.

Façades, Looking Up a Building: Multi-story historic commercial buildings in Downtown San José consist of three levels or zones; the bottom or base level, the middle or shaft levels, and the top of cornice level. In classic settings, the ground and attic floors are taller than the floors in between, while middle floors are of equal height. Buildings in Fountain Alley and paseos are characterized by a ground level and an upper section with a top edge; alleyway buildings often have just two vertical parts or zones, a ground level and an upper level.

Rooflines: Rooflines usually serve to complete or "top off" a building's architectural style, and to terminate a building's presence against the sky. Some rooflines involve elaborate statements such as a cornice with dentils, modillions and ornamental molding, while others may consist of a single element, like Spanish clay tile.

Exterior Spaces: Exterior spaces vary by degree of accessibility and openness: courtyards, arcades, atriums and passages tend to provide a greater degree of enclosure and privacy, whereas paseos, plazas and alleyways, both visually and physically, tend to be more spacious, inviting and public in nature.

Integrity: As previously mentioned, the District, when listed, consisted of 45 buildings, 18 of which were identified as non-contributing. As of today, three contributors on South Third Street are no longer extant. The single remaining contributor on the west side of that street is the Oddfellows Building on the corner of South Third and East Santa Clara. The nomination only minimally described the contributing buildings, so the extent of alterations to the façades of the extant buildings is difficult to assess. Based on historic aerial photographs, the footprints of the District's remaining contributing buildings do not appear to have been altered since listing. The non-contributors along South Third Street are described as parking lots and small two-story commercial buildings; the three no longer extant contributing buildings (19, 51, and 99 South Third Street) are described as two two-story brick commercial buildings and one one-story modern commercial building. These eight parcels were developed between 1998 and 2002 with multi-unit modern apartment complexes; the contributing building on the corner of South Third Street and East San Fernando Street was replaced by a four-story modern commercial/office building.

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

The Design Guidelines for the Downtown San José Historic District state that infill construction that would affect historic properties is subject to review per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, and specifically, Rehabilitation Standard 9.

The purpose of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* is to provide guidance to historic building owners and building managers, preservation consultants, architects, contractors, and project reviewers prior to beginning work. The Guidelines are intended as an aid to assist in applying the Standards to all types of historic buildings. Of the four standards – preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and reconstruction – rehabilitation is the only treatment that allows introducing new construction to a historic site or district. Generally, per the standards, a new building added to a site or replacing a non-contributing resource within a historic district should be subordinate to the historic character of the district.

The following are the ten Secretary of the Interior's standards for rehabilitation.⁷ Several of these standards are not applicable to the portion of the proposed project being analyzed in this memo, which is solely considering whether or not the new construction or infill portion of the project negatively impacts the historic character of the district.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

⁷ The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings. U.S Department of the Interior, National Park Service. 2017

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Rehabilitation standards 1-7 are specific to the physical rehabilitation treatment of individual historic buildings and do not apply to this analysis. The treatment of the adjacent historic Knox-Goodrich Building is addressed separately in the Knox-Goodrich Preservation Plan. While the proposed project would physically alter the district as a whole, no other contributors to the District would be physically altered by the proposed project. Rehabilitation standard 8, which recommends that if the project has the potential to disturb archaeological resources that mitigation will be undertaken is applicable to the project but outside of the purview of Garavaglia Architecture. The proposed project includes the construction of a basement floor and will result in ground disturbance and should be considered by the city of San José as having the potential to affect buried historic resources. Rehabilitation standard 10, ensuring the new construction would be done in such a manner that should it be removed in the future the historic fabric of the Knox-Goodrich building will not be damaged is addressed in the Preservation Plan for the Knox-Goodrich Building. Consequently, the proposed project's conformance to standard 9 is only applicable to this analysis.



Rehabilitation Standard 9

The proposed project – the removal of a non-contributing building and a parking lot, and the construction of a modern building in their place – will not destroy any historic materials or features of the District. It will introduce a new, modern building in place of these two resources.

The spatial relationship of the buildings throughout the district is one of a concentration of largely small-scale two- to four-story commercial buildings built immediately adjacent to each other, arranged in this manner both historically and functionally, with corner “anchor” buildings of greater mass. These anchor buildings vary in height between two and twelve stories. The proposed project would be constructed immediately adjacent to and wrap behind the historic Knox-Goodrich building, which is consistent, although taller, with the current spatial relationship the Knox-Goodrich building shares with the non-contributing building that will be demolished. In addition to replacing a non-contributing building, the new building would eliminate the parking lot north of the existing building at 32 South First Street. This would restore the original narrower and more intimate setting of Fountain Alley between the new building and the Bank of America building, bringing back some of the alley’s original spatial definition.

The new building is of modern design and will be easily recognized as new construction. The proposed materials include glass, metal, GFRC, stucco, and flat brick. All but one – the GFRC – can be found throughout the District. The proposed building is primarily red brick, glass, dark metal, and light stucco; the brick is reflective of the cladding on the middle floors or shaft of the Bank of America building; sharing a similar cladding enables the new smaller building to be recognized as subordinate to this important District contributor and individually significant building.

Several features of the proposed design are consistent with those found on District contributors. Consistent are the three levels or zones found on multi-story historic buildings in the District: bottom or base level, middle or shaft level, and top cornice level. The proposed six-story project includes a glass storefront on the first floor and a transitional zone between the second and third floors, which is proportionally consistent with similar transitions between first and second floors found on three- and four- story District buildings as well as the much taller Bank of America building. A secondary storefront faces Fountain Alley, which is consistent with most corner-located contributors except the Bank of America’s façade facing Fountain Alley. An upper story repeating fenestration pattern is found on both the proposed project and most District contributors.

Features that are inconsistent with those found in the District include the exterior patio proposed along both South First Street and Fountain Alley, which is designed as a recessed colonnade. This arcade treatment is unlike any other feature in the District. This arcade treatment almost invisibly transitions into the interior of the building, giving the building the appearance of floating, which is also inconsistent with District contributors. Additionally, all of the contributing buildings’ façades are built to the parcel edge while the proposed project’s base is recesses approximately eight feet on the north and east façades. Also inconsistent is the asymmetrically notched or stepped-back roofline on the South First Street façade, though its stepped rhythm is not unlike the varying heights and cornices of the District rooflines, particularly as one moves south along South First Street. The lighter stucco of the stepped back portion of the top floor and the majority of the Fountain Alley-facing façade is a nod to the lighter stone of the upper portion of the Bank building. However the light color of the sharp geometric massing of the stepback is in stark contrast to the rest of the proposed building, the softer light color of the Bank building, and the contributing buildings on the rest of the block.

District corner buildings act as anchors to their blocks. Even though most of the corner buildings are only two- to three-stories in height, their massing appears greater than those in the middle of the block because at least two, and sometimes three sides of the buildings are visible. These corner locations have one façade on broad, heavily trafficked streets and one on secondary streets, such as the hotel on the corner of East Santa Clara Street and South Third Street. The corner of Fountain Alley and South First Street is not a prominent corner, despite the historic significance of Fountain Alley. While the proposed building is similar in massing as that of the District’s anchor buildings, it is clearly and appropriately subordinate to the Bank of America – the corner anchor building – in scale and massing.

Conclusion

As required by Rehabilitation Standard 9, the proposed project does differentiate the old from the new and is generally compatible with historic materials and features. It does not destroy historic materials or features. It is larger in size, scale and proportion than the majority of the District contributors. However, its cladding and color, along with its adjacency to the Bank of America building allow for the proposed building to be recognized as subordinate to the Bank building and results in a gradual transition moving south along South First Street. The treatment of the storefront is not compatible with the historic first floor storefronts found in most of the contributing properties in the district. The recessed patio is designed as an arcade and almost invisibly transitions into the open floorplan of the first or grand floor interior. A character-defining feature of the majority of storefronts are recessed entries that invite the pedestrian into the building where they discover a larger space – a space that feels separate from the street, behind the glass display windows. While generally compatible with the overall district, modifications to the grand floor storefronts to be more in keeping with the District’s character-defining storefronts – particularly reconsidering the colonnade, property setback and flush entryways – and softening the contrasting light color of the stucco would better integrate the proposed project into the District.

CONFORMANCE WITH THE DOWNTOWN SAN JOSÉ HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES (2003)

The Design Goals and Design Principles described in the Design Guidelines state infill construction should strive to be compatible with character-defining features of buildings and objects identified as historic and to enrich the historic district and add to life on the street, with quality design, materials, and finishes clearly befitting the downtown core. Additionally:

“Infill construction must respond to, and be evocative of the past, but should not attempt to imitate a historic style or period of architecture. It must respect general height, massing, scale, materials, and composition of neighboring and nearby historic structures. Additionally, it must avoid design features that resemble or even faintly suggest a suburban shopping center, “box like” structure. It must orient to street frontages, Fountain Alley, and second frontages, such as alleyways and paseos. Ground floor openings should include passageways, and interior courtyards where possible. Storefront, openings, and upper floor fenestration should be transparent and inviting to contribute new spirit and animation to life on the street.”⁸

The proposed design of the new building was reviewed for conformation with each individual design element of the guidelines for the Downtown San José Historic District (2003)–for infill construction:

Building Height: Maximum of four stories above grade, not to exceed 60 feet. Grand stories (floor-to-ceiling heights of 18 to 20 feet) permitted on first and second stories, when called for by use or program

⁸ Excerpted from Downtown San José Historic District Guidelines (2003), 39-74

requirements. The building height of infill construction that fronts onto Fountain Alley shall not exceed the roofline height of any adjacent structure.

The current projects envisions a six-story building of a maximum height of 99'-6" feet (to the top of the elevator shaft), 84'-94' at the façade's maximum height (along South First Street), and 70'-6" at its lower point (adjacent to the Knox-Goodrich Building). Grand stories consist of floor-to-ceiling heights of 17' at the first floor and 12'-6" at the second floor. The roofline height of adjacent structures is 55'-9" (Knox-Goodrich building) and 227' (Bank of America Building). The buildings adjacent to Fountain Alley, which connects South First Street to South Second Street, include three contributing buildings in addition to the Bank of America building: 27-29 Fountain Alley, a three-story Italianate; 33 Fountain Alley, a three-story building with classical revival detailing; and the secondary façade of 19 South Second Street, a two-story circa 1920 building with its primary façades on South Second Street and Santa Clara Street. At 99' and six stories, the proposed building exceeds the maximum 60' and four-story limit described in this guideline. It also exceeds the height of three of the four contributing buildings along Fountain Alley.

Strict interpretation of this guideline would indicate that the proposed project does not conform. In a memo written on June 10, 2020 by Juliet Arroyo, Historic Preservation Officer for the city of San José, clarified that this guideline is flexible in practice; the height of an infill project can be considered on a case by case basis. Specifically, "the design principal of infill construction that respects general height, massing, scale, materials, and composition of neighboring and nearby historic structures can guide the height for this project given its unique location and position within the District."⁹ In a telephone conversation it was reiterated that the guideline stating that the height of infill buildings on Fountain Alley cannot exceed the height of any other Fountain Alley building is also flexible and proposed projects should be considered on a case by case basis. The purpose of this analysis is to assess the proposed project's conformance with each guideline in order to assist the city of San José in their project review process; as proposed, considering this prescriptive guideline, the project does not conform to it.

Corner Element: At the corner of major intersections, and at the southwest corner of Second Street and Fountain Alley, the use of a corner element can add distinction to a building's architecture and enhance character-defining settings.

The location of the subject building is not on a major intersection or at the southwest corner of Second Street and Fountain Alley. However, this Corner Element guidance could be assumed to apply to this proposed project at Fountain Alley and South First Street. The project design includes a 17' tall water feature that wraps around the building's corner, dropping from the top of the first, grand story to the ground, creating a corner element that relates to the origin of Fountain Alley and its association with artesian wells located here early in San José's history. This corner element conforms to this guideline.

Massing: Massing to be responsive in form and composition to prevailing character of the existing urban setting. At the same time, infill construction with extensive frontage on streets or alleys needs to be segmented into several smaller façades or buildings.

The proposed project's massing is responsive in form and composition to the District's corner anchor buildings. Three of its façades are exposed as are those of several District anchor buildings. These District contributors' have extensive frontage on the street and, while their upper stories have broad façades with regularly spaced consistently designed fenestration, the street level storefront stories are generally segmented into several façades, with separate entrances and display windows. The proposed building's upper floors also have regularly spaced and consistently designed fenestration; the street level grand floor design is somewhat articulated by the application of dark metal pilasters. However the colonnaded patio facing both South First Street and Fountain Alley almost invisibly transitions into the interior's large open floorplan. The façade along Fountain Alley is articulated into two distinct sections by the central

⁹ Memorandum June 10, 2020. Subject: Downtown Historic District Guidelines Applicable for the Project.

placement of the elevator shaft which juts out from the façade to the property line. The articulation of the two first floor elevations are not fully responsive to the primary character of the District's storefront façades. The proposed project does not fully conform to this guideline.

Façades: Spacing, sizing, and rhythm of opening and fenestration are to be compatible with neighboring structures; by contrast, there are to be no blank façades that front onto streets, alleyways, courtyards, light courts or façades of neighboring structures with openings. All façades are to include a base or bulkhead element.

The building façades in the District generally consist of three levels – the bottom or base level, the middle or shaft levels, and the top cornice level. The proposed building's façades include a ground level and upper section with a top edge and are defined by cladding, columns, and fenestration. The first or ground floor is primarily glass panels divided by dark metal pilasters regularly spaced across the façade. This treatment overall confers the building a contemporary character with subtle references to classical archetypes in the form of unadorned pilasters and the columned arcade. The columns of the proposed project appear to be referencing those found on the Bank of America building. There are no blank façades onto streets, alleyways, courtyards, or light courts. The storefront includes bulkhead elements at the base of the ground floor façades and between the strip of recessed clerestory windows on the second floor. The proposed project conforms with this guideline.

Rear Façades: To be articulated and punched in a manner compatible with existing adjacent rear façades.

The rear façades of the existing buildings along South First Street contain windows on each floor but are minimally articulated; the proposed project also has fenestration on the rear South Second Street facing façade and is not articulated. The proposed project conforms with this guideline.

Openings: All windows and doors (with the possible exception of security, fire safety or service doors) are to be transparent and inviting to the passerby; no mirror, tinted, frosted or opaque glazing. All windows at ground level are to include a base or bulkhead element.

All windows and doors are transparent and inviting to the passerby with no apparent mirror, tinted, frosted or opaque glazing. The windows at the ground level of the northwest corner include a base or bulkhead element. The proposed project conforms with this guideline.



Entries: Historic storefront entries in the District are well defined and connect the building to the street. New entries should be similarly articulated.

Two storefront entries are placed asymmetrically in and flush with the primary façade; they are not well defined. Overall, two storefronts could better articulate and complement the aesthetic of the new storefront. A character-defining feature of the District's storefronts includes recessed entrances flanked by display windows. Corner District contributors, such as the building on South First Street and East San Fernando, contain several clearly articulated individual entrances. The current storefront design is inconsistent with this feature. The entries of the proposed project do not conform with this guideline. It is unclear if the guideline recommends that storefronts should be also present facing Fountain Alley.

Exterior Materials: Masonry, terra cotta, limestone, plaster, glass mosaic, cast stone, concrete, metal, glass

and wood (trim, finishes and ornament only). The use of GFRC (glass fiber reinforced concrete), EIFS (exterior insulating finish surface), unclad concrete, lava rock or used brick is inappropriate, especially within the Downtown Commercial National Register Historic District.

The exterior of the proposed building will consist of flat brick and stucco cladding, some metal panels and bulkheads, and glass. The District buildings display a variety of materials, including rusticated stone, smooth stone, brick, wood, stucco, glass and some metal. The project is proposing to use GFRC to wrap the columns. A granite pavement is proposed for the frontage at South First Street. The brick pavement will be protected in place along the public area (and outdoor seating) at Fountain Alley. Except for the GFRC proposed to wrap the columns, this project conforms to this guideline.

Ground Floors: Classic elements of storefront design are to be the dominant treatment, and all strongly pedestrian-oriented.

An outdoor seating area is envisioned for the façade opening on Fountain Alley, as well as recessed seating areas at the main storefront entry on South First Street. While being strongly pedestrian-oriented, with the open colonnaded eating area, this design feature is inconsistent with ground floor or storefront features of the District. This arcade treatment is unlike any other feature in the District. The application of this façade treatment makes the storefront almost invisibly transition into the interior of the building, giving the building the appearance of floating, which is also inconsistent with District contributors. The proposed project does not conform with all aspects of this guideline.

Setbacks and Stepbacks: Not permitted.

The first and second floor on both Fountain Alley and South First Street are recessed by approximately eight feet from the lot line. A soffit at the second-third floor transition brings the façade back to the lot line. Columns in front of the first and second floors visually bring the façade to the property line. The two southern bays of the sixth floor facing South First Street are stepped back, apparently to soften the roofline transition between the proposed building and the Knox-Goodrich building and the rest of the South First Street block. The revised design no longer conforms with this guideline.

Pedestrian Passageways: Strongly encouraged, with minimum of one each for infill construction that replaces at-grade, paved parking lots that presently exist as the two large parcels known as APN 467 22 121 and APN 467 22 134; passage- ways to be “lined” with retail storefronts and/or active display cases. The proposed building’s north elevation faces the pedestrian mall of Fountain Alley, so this guideline may not apply.

Vehicular Access: One each for infill construction on APN 467 22 121 and APN 467 22 134. This guideline does not apply to the subject parcels.

Parking: No new surface or visible above-grade parking; valet services to be provided as appropriate or required.

The proposed project does not include surface or visible above-grade parking. Therefore it conforms to this guideline.

Conclusion

The design of the new building proposed to be constructed within the boundaries of the National Register listed Downtown San José Historic District was reviewed for conformance with the San José Downtown Historic District Design Guidelines (2003). How the proposed project conforms when considering the district as a whole is the focus of this analysis. As it is currently designed, the proposed new building at 26-34 South First Street conforms with the majority of the guidelines. The design most significantly deviates from the height guideline, entries and the ground floor guideline. While generally compatible with the overall district, modifications to the grand floor storefronts to be more in keeping with the District’s character-defining storefronts – particularly reconsidering the colonnade, property setback and flush entryways – and softening the contrasting light color of the stucco would better integrate the proposed project into the District.

CONFORMANCE WITH THE DRAFT DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DESIGN GUIDELINES (2004)

Lot Patterns: Retain and respect historic lot patterns on the street. Add larger new buildings that are divided into smaller articulated building widths with multiple entrances that are similar in size and proportion to those seen traditionally.

The proposed project replaces a building with a smaller footprint by incorporating the existing parking lot, increasing the size of the building’s footprint. At the time of the district’s nomination a non-contributing building stood on the parking lot parcel. The proposed project will generally restore the historic lot pattern. The first and second floor on both Fountain Alley and South First Street are recessed by approximately eight feet from the lot line, however the columns of the arcade visually mark the original lot pattern. A soffit at the second-third floor transition brings the façade back to being flush with the lot line. The two storefront entries are placed asymmetrically on the west elevation. They are not clearly distinguished by design, such as recessed entryways, but are flush with the rest of the storefront façade which is articulated between dark pilasters as are larger fixed windows. Dividing the storefront into two more clearly articulated storefronts and entryways and building to the lot line would better respond to the size and proportion of the district and adjacent historic buildings and better conform with this guideline.

Massing: Retain and respect the massing of historic buildings on a street. Respect the overall heights of historic buildings, street walls, districts and areas. Add significantly higher new buildings, where appropriate, that are carefully sited in relationship to historic structures and predominant street “walls”.

The proposed subject building is an overall rectangular block 70'-6" to 99'-6" high with a surface area of 12,999 square feet. The proposed project's massing is responsive in form and composition to the District's corner anchor buildings, which are generally two to five stories in height, with the exception of the Bank of America building. Three of the proposed project's façades are exposed as are those of several District anchor buildings. These District contributors' have extensive frontage on the street and, while their upper stories have broad façades with regularly spaced consistently designed fenestration; with the exception of Hotel Clariana, most have street level storefront stories that are segmented into several façades, with separate entrances and display windows.

The guidelines state that significantly higher new buildings should be carefully sited in relationship to historic structures. The Bank of America building is the only building within the District that is taller than the proposed project; outside of the district, within 200 feet of the project, no historic buildings are taller than four stories; a modern high-rise is across from the Bank of America building and a recently permitted 22-story mixed-use building will be constructed across the street from the proposed project.

The proposed project will become part of the eastside South First Street "street wall" from East Santa Clara Street to East San Fernando Street. The Bank of America building is visually separated from this wall by Fountain Alley, but the proposed infill of the parking lot will reduce the gap and restore Fountain Alley to its original width where it enters South First Street, reducing the visual separation between the Bank building, the proposed project, and the rest of the street. Currently the height transition from the Bank building to the non-contributing building slated for removal is abrupt. The massing of the proposed project will soften the transition between the skyscraper and modest commercial stores.

The buildings comprising the street wall range from two to four stories in height and are primarily Romanesque or have elements of Romanesque features; there is one Spanish Colonial Revival building. The façades are all built to the lot lines. The cladding materials include brick, rusticated stone, smooth stone and stucco. The storefronts are pedestrian friendly, with recessed entries and display windows above lower window panels. Second and third story fenestration patterns vary among the buildings but are generally rhythmic and highly detailed, more strongly invoking the primary design style of the building than most other features. Openings are often separated by pilasters or arches. Rooflines are defined by highly stylized cornices or simple, single elements like a row of Spanish tile. Façades are punctuated by awnings or balconettes. The massing of the building on the corner of South First Street and East San Fernando Street, as it wraps around the block is indicative of an anchor building. It has a longer façade and more articulated storefronts than the other interior block buildings.

The proposed project's first two floors are recessed approximately eight feet from the lot line so the new building storefront will not be parallel with the rest of the street wall; the proposed columns visually mark the edge of the lot line. The proposed setback or notch on the sixth floor where the roofline transitions to the Knox-Goodrich building softens what would be an abrupt three-story height difference with the adjacent building. The proposed awning is similar in form and material with others that punctuate the street wall. Overall, the proposed project conforms with this guideline.

Façades: Retain and respect the historic patterns and proportions of historic façades on a street. Add new façades that include features that are compatible in scale, material, detail and massing with other façades on the street.

The historic patterns and proportions of the historic façades on South First Street are described in the guideline above. The proposed building is modern and its façade design is primarily expressed by the structural materials and cladding, rather than ornament. As such the façade is quickly recognizable as new construction, which is appropriate. The proposed materials other than the GFRC are consistent with those

found throughout the district. The building façades in the District generally consist of three levels – the bottom or base level, the middle or shaft levels, and the top cornice level. The proposed building's façades include a ground level and upper section with a top edge and are defined by cladding, columns, and fenestration. The first or grand floor is primarily glass panels divided by dark metal pilasters regularly spaced across the façade. This treatment overall confers the building a contemporary character with subtle references to classical archetypes in the form of unadorned pilasters and the columned arcade. The storefront includes bulkhead elements at the base of the ground floor façades and between the strip of recessed windows on the second floor. Its massing is greater than the massing of the individual interior block buildings but is in keeping with the massing of the District's corner anchor buildings. The proposed project conforms with this draft guideline.

Corner Elements: Retain historic scale and relationships of corner buildings on the block and in the urban downtown core. Add new corner development that is compatible with and respectful of historic corner development and relationships, in terms of scale, massing, materials, texture and color.

The subject building proposes a strip of recessed fenestration at the second floor, separated by black columns and flanked by panels. These black columns break the glass storefront into smaller sections. This treatment seems an attempt at replicating the classical lines of the Bank of America building, and at creating a corner element, which is enhanced with a 17' waterfall wrapping around the corner Fountain Alley and South First Street. The brick cladding on the corner of the upper floors is compatible with the colors and materials of the District; the placement of a corner column, although square and dark, is responsive to the columns in of the Bank building. The proposed building conforms with the Corner Element of the draft design guidelines for infill construction.

Rear Façades: Retain and respect features of existing historic rear façades and sites, taking into consideration pedestrian and loading access from secondary streets, parking lots and alleys.

The rear façades of the existing buildings along South First Street contain windows on each floor and pedestrian and loading access; the proposed project also has fenestration on the rear South Second Street facing façade, and takes pedestrian and loading access into consideration. Therefore the proposed building conforms with the Rear Façade element of the draft design guidelines for infill construction.

Entries: Retain and respect the scale of historic entries that connect the building to the street. Add new entries that address the historic pedestrian orientation and scale of the downtown core.

Two storefront entries are placed asymmetrically on the west elevation. Typical storefront entries in the District and other nearby historic buildings consist of high-ceilinged inside spaces with clerestory windows, a transom bar, display windows, and deeply recessed entryways. The design of the proposed entries appear larger in scale than those of the more intimate pedestrian entrances of the neighboring historic buildings. Conforming elements include the clerestory windows, transom bar, and large windows. The high-ceiling interior is visible from street, diminishing a more intimate transition from the exterior, through a recessed entrance and into the interior retail space. Increased articulation of the storefront may address this. Overall, the building conforms with some aspects of this guideline.

Exterior Materials: Add new building materials that match the historic materials where possible. New materials should be compatible with historic materials in scale, proportion, design, color, finish, texture and durability.

The exterior of the proposed building will consist of flat brick and stucco cladding, some metal panels and bulkheads, GRCF and glass. All are durable materials. The District buildings display a variety of materials, including rusticated stone, smooth stone, brick, wood, stucco, and some metal. The project is proposing to use GFRC to wrap the columns. A granite pavement is proposed for the frontage at South First Street. The brick pavement will be protected in place along the public area (and outdoor seating) at

Fountain Alley. The proposed materials are compatible in design, color, finish, texture, and durability. Overall, the proposed building conforms with this draft guideline.

Vehicular and Pedestrian Access: Retain significant historic vehicular and pedestrian access patterns of historic buildings, sites and streets. Add new access patterns where necessary that are compatible with historic structures, sites and streets.

The proposed building's north elevation faces the pedestrian mall of Fountain Alley. The new building is accessible by South First Street, and by an existing parking lot at South Second Street. The proposed building appears to conform with this draft guideline.

Conclusion

The design of the new building proposed to be constructed within the boundaries of the National Register listed Downtown San José Historic District was reviewed for conformance with the San José Downtown Historic District Design Guidelines (2004 DRAFT). How the proposed project conforms when considering the district as a whole is the focus of this analysis. As it is currently designed, the proposed new building at 26-34 South First Street conforms with the majority of the guidelines. The design most significantly deviates from the height guideline, entries and the ground floor guideline. While generally compatible with the overall district, modifications to the grand floor storefronts to be more in keeping with the District's character-defining storefronts – particularly reconsidering the colonnade, property setback and flush entryways – and softening the contrasting light color of the stucco would better integrate the proposed project into the District.

CONFORMATION WITH THE SAN JOSÉ DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS FOR HISTORIC ADJACENCY

Guidelines

General: Design a building to stand on the quality of its own architecture, not as a backup for historic buildings. Use a streetscape and landscape design that helps unify the new and old structures.

The proposed building design is not a backup for historic buildings and stands on the quality of its own architecture. The proposed project conforms with this guideline.

Massing: Use a transition massing element to relate a new building to Historic Context buildings below 40 feet in height on the same side of the block. This may be achieved with setbacks.

The proposed project's first two floors are recessed approximately eight feet from the lot line so the new building storefront will not be parallel with the rest of the street wall; the proposed columns visually mark the edge of the lot line. The proposed setback or notch on the sixth floor where the roofline transitions to the Knox-Goodrich building softens what would be an abrupt three-story height difference with the adjacent building. However the stark geometric corner of the proposed building where it transitions to and wraps the Knox-Goodrich building is starkly geometric and light in color. Softening the color would reduce the starkness of this form and better reference the softer light stone colors found elsewhere in the District to better maintain street wall continuity. While the proposed design conforms with this 2019 guideline for adjacency, the 2003 historic district guidelines do not allow for setbacks.

Façade: Design the Skyline Level (above 70') with massing and façade elements that reduce contrast to Historic Context buildings. Design new buildings to be compatible with rear façade features, circulation patterns, loading access and alleys established by Historic Context buildings. Use façade elements with a scale that creates visual correlation with nearby Historic Context buildings.

The proposed building has a clearly defined pedestrian level (bottom 20'), a clearly defined podium level that exceeds the 2019 guidelines definition of below 70', and a clearly defined skyline level. The proposed building's podium level and skyline level share the same design except for a notch or setback of the two southern bays on the sixth floor, which soften the transition between the proposed project and the Knox-Goodrich building and the rest of the historic block. The notch however reveals a starkly geometric form in light stucco which is in contrast with the Historic Context buildings. Softening the color to make the form less pronounced would reduce this contrast.

The building façades in the District generally consist of three levels – the bottom or base level, the middle or shaft levels, and the top cornice level. The proposed building's façades include a ground level and upper section with a top edge and are defined by cladding, columns, and fenestration. The first or grand floor is primarily glass panels divided by dark metal pilasters regularly spaced across the façade. This treatment overall confers the building a contemporary character with subtle references to classical archetypes in the form of unadorned pilasters and the columned arcade. The columns of the proposed project appear to be referencing those found on the Bank of America building. The proposed building is compatible with the circulation patterns, loading access, and alleys of the Historic Context buildings. The proposed project conforms with the Façade guideline for adjacency.

Elements: Use distinctive architectural features in the Podium Level that relate to those in nearby Historic Context buildings. Place windows and doors in a rhythm that responds to the established rhythm of windows and doors of Historic Context buildings.

Two storefront entries are placed asymmetrically on the west elevation, flush with the fixed glass openings of the rest of the façade which are articulated by dark metal pilasters; the secondary façade on Fountain Alley is similar, however the elevator shaft breaks the flat façade, extending out toward the property line. Typical storefront entries in the District and other nearby historic buildings consist of clerestory windows, a transom bars, display windows, and deeply recessed center entryways that lead into high-ceilinged interior retail spaces. The design of the proposed entries are larger in scale than those of the more intimate pedestrian entrances of the neighboring historic buildings. Conforming elements include the clerestory windows, transom bar, and large windows. The high-ceiling interior is visible from street, diminishing a more intimate transition from the exterior, through a recessed entrance and into the interior retail space. More pronounce articulation of the storefront in the form of recessed entrances may address this. Overall, the proposed building conforms with most aspects of this guideline.

Standards

Massing: Relate Podium Level building massing to the scale of Historic Context buildings by breaking a large building into masses of similar scale. Design buildings with rectilinear rather than curved and diagonal forms where rectilinear forms are typical of the Historic Context buildings. Use cornice articulation at the Podium Level at a height comparable to the Historic Context buildings. Maintain Streetwall continuity on the same side of the street.

The proposed project's massing is broken into three levels or zones found on multi-story historic buildings in the District: bottom or base level, middle or shaft level, and top cornice level. The proposed six-story project includes a glass storefront on the first floor and a transitional zone between the second and third floors, which is proportionally consistent with similar transitions between first and second floors found on three- and four- story District buildings as well as the much taller Bank of America building. A secondary storefront fronts Fountain Alley, which is consistent with most corner-located contributors except the Bank of America's façade facing Fountain Alley. An upper story repeating fenestration pattern is found on both the proposed project and most District contributors.

The proposed design is rectilinear, which is consistent throughout the District. The street wall ranges in height and massing from two-story to 12-story buildings and includes a corner anchor building at the end of each street wall. The cornice articulation of the buildings making up the street wall is variable, but overall proportional. This proposed six-floor building's cornice is not physically at the same height as those found on other buildings on its side of the street; the transitions between levels, leading to the cornice, is proportional. The first and second floor of the proposed project is recessed approximately eight feet compared to the façades of the street wall; the columns are placed at the lot line, giving an appearance that the façade is spatially equal to that of the buildings in the rest of the block. The proposed project generally conforms with this standard.

Façade: Use articulation that creates façade divisions with widths similar to Historic Context buildings on the same side of the same block. Do not simulate historic architecture.

The Historic Context building widths along South First Street vary. The Bank of America building width is approximately 135', the anchor building on the opposite end of the block is approximately 186', and the buildings in the interior of the block range from approximately 25' to 70'; they generally get wider as they approach the end of the block. The proposed project's façade on South First Street is approximately 84', making the width within the broad range of building widths along this street wall. The proposed project does not simulate historic architecture. The proposed project conforms with this standard.

Elements: Use some building materials that respond to Historic Context building materials. New materials should be compatible with historic materials in scale, proportion, design, finish, texture, and durability.

The exterior materials of the proposed building will consist of flat brick and stucco cladding, some metal panels and bulkheads, GFRC, and glass. The District buildings display a variety of materials, including rusticated stone, smooth stone, brick, stucco, wood, glass and some metal. The proposed materials are generally consistent with those found on District contributors and other nearby historic buildings, however they are used in a manner that expresses the modern style of the proposed project. The overall proportion of design composition is consistent with the District contributors and historic buildings adjacent to, but outside of the District. Storefront windows are large; upper story windows are large, have frames that express the overall building's design style and are in rows generally evenly spaced both horizontally and vertically below the cornice. The composition of the material elements of the proposed building reflects the proportion, scale, and design of District contributors. The proposed materials are durable. The proposed project conforms to this standard.

Ground Floor: Space pedestrian entries at similar distances to Historic Context building entries. Create a ground floor with a similar floor-to-ceiling height as nearby Historic Context building entries.

Pedestrian entries into the Historic Context buildings vary. Generally the narrow buildings have one central entrance flanked by display windows; slightly wider buildings often have a primary entrance and a secondary entrance; still wider buildings, such as the one on the corner of South First Street and East San Fernando Street (approximately 186' wide) contain multiple storefronts equally spaced in bays that relate to the rhythm of the fenestration of the upper floors. These store-front bays contain a central recessed entrance flanked by display windows. The proposed project has evenly spaced openings – a combination of fixed glass openings and doors – articulated across the primary first floor façade between dark metal pilasters; the glass doors are placed asymmetrically within the façade. Visually, the opening widths are consistent across the façade, and therefore adequately conform to this standard. The floor to ceiling height of the entrances is consistent with the Historic Context buildings and, therefore also conforms with this standard. The first floor is 17' in height and the doors are not floor to ceiling. A transom topped by clerestory windows and an awning visually brings the proportion of the entrances to be visually consistent with the Historic Context buildings' entrances. The proposed project conforms to this standard.

Conclusion

The design of the new building proposed to be constructed within the boundaries of the National Register listed Downtown San José Historic District was reviewed for conformance with the San José Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards for Historic Adjacency (2019). How the proposed project conforms when considering the district as a whole and how the proposed project may affect adjacent historic buildings is the focus of this analysis. As it is currently designed, the proposed new building at 26-34 South First Street conforms with most of the standards and guidelines.

The design deviates somewhat from two standards: Element and Massing. The Elements standard states that windows and doors are to be placed in a rhythm that responds to those of the Historic Context buildings. The proposed project's first floor façade does place the windows and doors between pilasters in a rhythmic pattern. However the entrances are minimally distinguishable from the fixed glazed units. The rhythm of the Historic Context buildings is more articulated, with the entrances generally more recessed or otherwise more distinguishable from the fixed glazed display windows. The Massing standard requires that the street wall be maintained. The proposed project's first two floors are recessed in the primary and secondary façades; columns placed at the lot line visually bring the façades to the street wall. However the arcade created by the introductions of the columns – and the space between the columns and the wall – are inconsistent with the street wall.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall Conformance

The design of the new building proposed to be constructed within the boundaries of the National Register listed Downtown San José Historic District and adjacent to other nearby historic buildings was reviewed for conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Infill), the Downtown San José Historic District Guidelines (2003), Downtown Historic Design Guidelines (2004 Draft)-for infill construction, and the San José Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards (2019)-for historic adjacency. Each guideline and standard described in each set of guidelines was discussed and general conclusions for each set were presented after each discussion. While some of the terminology and focus varied between these guidelines, the recommendations generally consistently describe how new construction would best fit within this historic district and its setting.

A newly introduced building should be respectful of the massing of the neighboring historic buildings; it should consider the rhythm and articulation of the historic storefronts, fenestration, and rooflines of the street wall; it should be responsive to the three-part vertical transition between the base, shaft, and top of contributing and historic buildings within the district and adjacent to the proposed project; and the materials and colors used for the new construction should be consistent with those used in the District and adjacent historic buildings. The proposed project largely conforms with these parameters. While it is taller than all but one District contributor and historic buildings outside of the District but within 200', its design allows it to be respectful of and subordinate to the adjacent Bank of America building. It generally considers the street wall in that it provides a stepped transition between the tall Bank building and the central block contributors. And its massing is responsive to that of the corner anchor building on South First Street and East San Fernando Street.

District Impacts

The NRHP-listed Downtown San José Historic District form describes the district as “not a building complex with a focal point, but a variegated and rich tapestry... a variety of architectural styles [that

convey] the historical significance of the development of the commercial core of San José, as can be seen in their various styles.” And that “the interrelationship of the contributing resources conveys a visual sense of the overall historic environment - an arrangement of historically or functionally related properties that comprises a district. An understanding of these characteristics allows the Downtown San José Historic District to be considered a single, unified historic property.” The National Parks Service Bulletin 15 describes a historic district as possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A district must have integrity or the ability to convey its significance. To retain its integrity, a district will always possess several and usually most of the seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

When considering the District as a single resource, it has lost some integrity since it was listed, particularly along South Third Street where all but one contributing building have been replaced with infill apartment complexes and a commercial corner building. The setting surrounding the District has also changed. While it is still a densely built commercial area, new construction has replaced older, smaller scale buildings. The nomination describes the district as a significant concentration of a broad period of commercial properties having a variety of architectural styles, which give it its integrity of feeling and association. The 2003 guidelines define the overall unifying characteristics of the architectural forms found in the district that gives it its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Most of the contributing buildings, which range in height, massing and style are composed of three levels – the ground level or store front, the middle level or shaft, and the upper level with a top edge. The façades include an articulated store front, middle floors with large repeated fenestration that exemplify the style of the building, and a cornice that may be highly detailed or simple. The introduction of the proposed building, as designed, is generally responsive to this design pattern yet is clearly recognizable as new construction. The District’s integrity will be somewhat reduced; however, it will retain enough concentration and continuity of buildings to continue to convey its significance. It is recommended that the District nomination be updated, and the boundary be revised to eliminate most of South Third Street to better represent the concentration of contributing resources.

Recommendations

The proposed project could better conform to the various guidelines and be more responsive to the character of the historic district by modifying the articulation of the ground floor, such as more clearly dividing the space into two distinct units and making the entrances more distinctive compared to the fixed glazed panels between the pilasters. The full width of the colonnade is inconsistent in treatment with the District’s store fronts. It introduces a void in the street wall, blurs the transition from the exterior to the interior, and gives the building an impression of floating. Eliminating the colonnade on the South First Street façade, and better articulating the storefronts would make the design more responsive to this street wall. While a colonnade is not characteristic of the District, this treatment could be retained along the Fountain Alley façade, its secondary façade.

The step back on the top floor reveals a starkly abrupt geometric form in contrasting color, particularly as it relates to the Knox-Goodrich building and the other contributors on South First Street. It is assumed the white color is in response to the lighter stone found on the Bank of America building. Increasing the set back and softening the color contrast to better blend with the sky would allow the building to better assimilate with the street wall and overall District.

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