



EVANS & DE SHAZO

ARCHAEOLOGY HISTORIC PRESERVATION

A HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION FOR THE PROPERTY AT 514-518 FRONT STREET, SANTA CRUZ, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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Management Summary

Evans & De Shazo, Inc. (EDS) completed a Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) of 1926 building located at 514-518 Front Street, Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County, California (Property) that is part of the proposed Front/Soquel Mixed-Use Project (Project). The Project consists of three parcels (Project Area), including one parcel located at 514-516 Front Street, within Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 005-15-137, with a 1926 building and two ca. 2007 sheds, and two parcels at 530 Front Street, within APNs 005-151-47 and 005-151-44, which include a 1981 commercial building (most recently operating as Wells Fargo bank) and paved surface parking lot. The proposed Front/Soquel Mixed-Use Project consists of the demolition of the 1926 building and ca. 2007 sheds (APN 005-15-137) and the 1981 commercial building and paved parking lot (APNs 005-15-144 and 005-15-147) and the redevelopment of the Project Area including the construction of a six-story mixed-use building with multi-family residential and commercial uses (Project).

The 1926 building is not currently locally listed or previously found eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), is not listed on the Historic Property Data (HPD) file for Santa Cruz County (2012) and does not appear to have been previously evaluated for eligibility for listing in the CRHR. The 1926 building was previously surveyed in 2013 as part of Volume III of the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey and was subsequently identified as locally eligible for listing in the Historic Building Survey; however, the property was not listed in the local Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey due to owner's decision to "opt out" of the listing.¹ The ca. 2007 sheds, and 1981 commercial building and paved parking lot were not included in the 2012 survey by the City of Santa Cruz, likely due to their age, being less than 45 years in age, at the time of the 2012 survey.

Based on California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) Instructions for Recording Historical Resources,² EDS Principal Architectural Historian Stacey De Shazo, M.A. and EDS Senior Architectural Historian Brian Matuk, M.S. conducted research and a survey to evaluate the built environment that is at least 45 years in age, recommended by the OHP as a threshold, within the Project Area to determine if any of the built environment qualifies for listing on the CRHR. Utilizing CEQA regulations and OHP guidelines, EDS determined that of the built environment resources within the Project Area only the 1926 building warranted recordation and determined that the ca. 2007 sheds,³ 1981 commercial building, and vacant parking lot did not warrant recordation.⁴ As such, the 1981 building, ca. 2007 sheds, and parking lot were not documented or evaluated. In addition, there is no local City of Santa Cruz policies or ordinance that would require EDS to record or evaluate properties within the city that are less than 45 years in age.

The results of the HRE determined that the 1926 building is not eligible for listing in the CRHR under any criteria. However, the 1926 building was previously determined to be a historical resource eligible for local listing. But, currently, the 1926 building is not locally designated or listed as the property owners elected

¹ City of Santa Cruz, City Council Resolution No. NS-28,621 (passed and adopted March 2013).

² Office of Historic Preservation, Instructions for Recording Historical Resources, March 1995

³ Available aerial photographs from 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 suggest that these garbage sheds were constructed in ca. 2007.

⁴ Both EDS and the City of Santa Cruz did not record or evaluate the ca. 2007 sheds and 1981 commercial building.

to “opt-out”⁵ of the listing. As such, based on Resolution No. NS-28.621 it does not appear that the 1926 building is subject to the City’s historic preservation regulations.

In April 2022, the City of Santa Cruz requested a re-evaluation of the 1926 building due to issues with the 2013 Archives & Architecture local evaluation of the building,⁶ which lacked the historical context such as architectural style and the history associated with the signature theme of Commercial Development from 1927 to 1948, and a thorough integrity section, required to support historical significance. As such, the following HRE has been updated to include a local “re-evaluation”, completed by EDS Principal Architectural Historian Stacey De Shazo, M.A. following the guidance of the Santa Cruz Historic Preservation Ordinance (HPO), specifically related to the local designation of historical resources.

In summary, the 1926 building at 514-518 Front Street is not individually eligible for listing in the CRHR. In addition, the re-evaluation of the 1926 building for local significance recommends the building is not eligible for local listing.

As such, the Proposed Project would not have any impact on historical resources under CEQA.

⁵ City Council Resolution No. NS-28,621 (passed and adopted March 2013).

⁶ Archives & Architecture, *Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey – Volume III*, Prepared for the City of Santa Cruz Department of Planning and Community Development, March 2013, 20.



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INTRODUCTION

Evans & De Shazo, Inc (EDS) completed a Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) of the 1926 building located at 514-518 Front Street, Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County, California within Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 005-15-137 (Property) that is part of the “Front/Soquel Mixed Use Project” that is currently being developed. The proposed project includes three adjacent parcels including one parcel at 514-516 Front Street, within Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 005-151-37, which includes the 1926 building and two ca. 2007 sheds, and two parcels at 530 Front Street, within APNs 005-151-47 and 005-151-44, which include a 1981 commercial building (most recently operating as Wells Fargo bank) and paved surface parking lot, located within the City of Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County (Project Area). The proposed project consists of the demolition of the 1926 building and ca. 2007 sheds at 514-518 Front Street (APN 005-15-137), as well as the demolition of the 1981 commercial building and paved parking lot at 530 Front Street (APNs 005-15-144 and 005-15-147), and redevelopment of the three parcels that includes the construction of a six-story mixed use building with multi-family residential and commercial uses (Project). The 1926 building is not currently locally listed or previously found eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), is not listed on the Historic Property Data (HPD) file for Santa Cruz County (2012), and does not appear to have been previously evaluated for eligibility for listing in the CRHR. The 1926 building was previously surveyed in 2013 as part of Volume III of the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey and was subsequently identified as locally eligible for listing in the Historic Building Survey; however, the property was not listed in the local Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey due to owner’s decision to “opt out” of the listing.⁷ In April 2022, the City of Santa Cruz requested a re-evaluation of the 1926 building due to issues with the Archives & Architecture evaluation of the building in 2009,¹ which lacked the historical context such as architectural style and history of the significance them of *Commercial Development from 1927 to 1948*, as well as a section that details the status of all seven aspects of integrity need to support significance. As such, the following HRE has been updated to include a local “re-evaluation”, completed by EDS Principal Architectural Historian Stacey De Shazo, M.A. The re-evaluation was included within updated on DPR 523 forms (attached) that will be submitted to the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) of the California Historical Resources Information Systems (CHRIS).

Based on the California Office of Historic Preservation instructions for Recording Historical Resources,⁸ EDS Principal Architectural Historian, Stacey De Shazo, M.A., and Senior Architectural Historian, Brian Matuk, M.S., who both exceed the Secretary of Interior’s qualification standards in Architectural History and History surveyed of the property located at 514-518 Front Street that includes the 1926 building, two contemporary garbage sheds from ca. 2007,⁹ and the 1981 commercial building and vacant parking lot at 530 Front Street that are part of the Project Area. It was determined by Ms. De Shazo and Mr. Matuk utilizing the OHP guidelines that the 1981 building did not warrant recordation. As such, the 1981 building was not documented.

The following HRE is based on specific guidelines and evaluation criteria of the California Register of

⁷ City of Santa Cruz, City Council Resolution No. NS-28,621 (passed and adopted March 2013).

⁸ Office of Historic Preservation, Instructions for Recording Historical Resources, March 1995

⁹ Available aerial photographs from 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 suggest that these garbage sheds were constructed in ca. 2007.

Historical Resources (CRHR) (14 CCR §15064.5 and PRC§ 21084.1), as well as local guidelines and ordinances. A Cultural Resource Study (CRS) was also completed by EDS Principal Archaeologist, Sally Evans, M.A., RPA, and EDS Senior Archaeologist, Gilbert Browning M.A., RPA, of which the findings are presented in a separate report.¹⁰

The results of the HRE are presented herein.

¹⁰ Sally Evans, M.A. RPA, and Gilbert Browning, M.A., RPA, Results of an Archaeological Study for the Proposed Project at 516 Front Street, Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County, California. Evans & De Shazo, Inc., 2019.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed “Front/Soquel Mixed Use Project” consists of the demolition of the 1926 building and the two ca. 2007 sheds located at 514-518 Front Street (APN 005-151-37), as well as the demolition of the 1981 commercial building and paved parking lot at 530 Front Street (APNs 005-151-47 and 005-151-44) and the redevelopment of three adjacent parcels that will include an eight-story mixed-use building consisting of multi-family residential and commercial uses, as well as a street-level garage.

PROJECT AREA LOCATION

The Project Area consists of three parcels, which total 1.03 acres fronting the east side of Front Street in Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County, California. These parcels include the 0.42-acre parcel located at 514-518 Front Street within APN 005-15-137, and two parcels located at 530 Front Street (APN 005-15-144, 0.22 acres; and, APN 005-15-147, 0.39 acres) (Figure 1). The Project Area is bound to the north by Soquel Avenue, to the east by the Santa Cruz Riverwalk and the San Lorenzo River, to the south by an adjacent parcel at 512 Front Street, and to the west by Front Street. The Project Area consists of four buildings, including a 1926 building and two ca. 2007 sheds at 514-516 Front Street, and a 1981 commercial building at 530 Front Street, as well as adjacent associated paved surface parking lots.

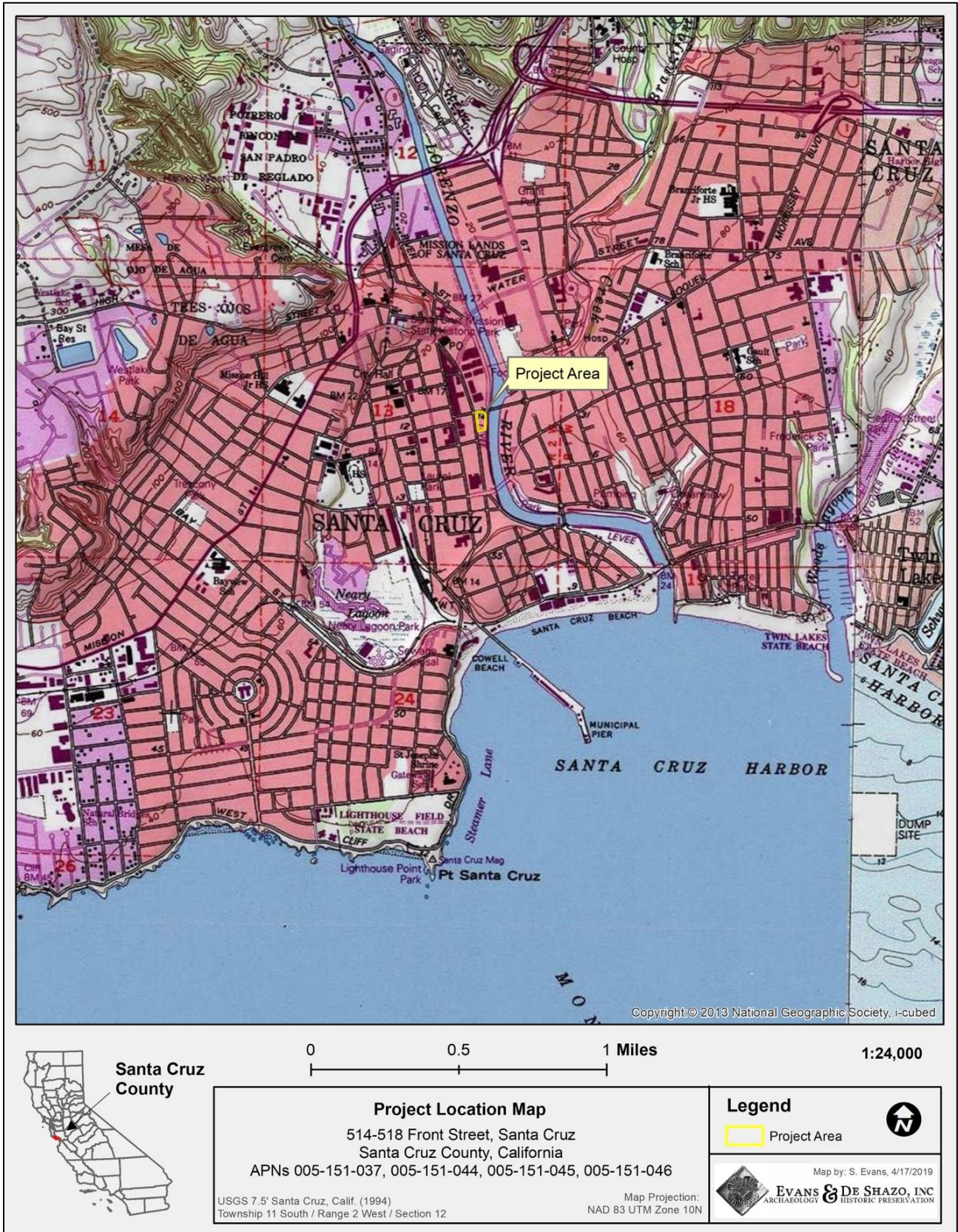


Figure 1. Project Location Map

REGULATORY SETTING

California Environmental Quality Act

CEQA and the Guidelines for Implementing CEQA (State CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5) give direction and guidance for evaluating properties, and the preparation of Initial Studies, Categorical Exemptions, Negative Declarations, and Environmental Impact Reports. Under California State law, the City of Santa Cruz is legally responsible and accountable for determining the environmental impact of any land use proposal it approves. Cultural resources are aspects of the environment that require identification and assessment for potential significance under CEQA (14 CCR § 15064.5 and PRC § 21084.1).

There are five classes of cultural resources defined by the State OHP. These are:

- **Building:** A structure created principally to shelter or assist in carrying out any form of human activity. A “building” may also be used to refer to a historically and functionally related unit, such as a courthouse and jail or a house and barn.
- **Structure:** A construction made for a functional purpose rather than creating human shelter. Examples include mines, bridges, and tunnels.
- **Object:** Construction is primarily artistic in nature or relatively small in scale and simply constructed. It may be movable by nature or design or made for a specific setting or environment. Objects should be in a setting appropriate to their significant historic use or character. Examples include fountains, monuments, maritime resources, sculptures, and boundary markers.
- **Site:** The location of a significant event. A prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses historic, cultural, or archaeological value regardless of the value of any existing building, structure, or object. A site need not be marked by physical remains if it is the location of a prehistoric or historic event and if no buildings, structures, or objects marked it at that time. Examples include trails, designed landscapes, battlefields, habitation sites, Native American ceremonial areas, petroglyphs, and pictographs.
- **Historic District:** Unified geographic entities which contain a concentration of historic buildings, structures, or sites united historically, culturally, or architecturally.

According to CCR § 15064.5, cultural resources are historically significant if they are:

- (1) A resource listed in or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (PRC §5024.1, 14 CCR § 4850 et seq.).
- (2) A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in PRC § 5020.1(k) or identified as significant in a historical resource survey meeting the requirements PRC § 5024.1(g), shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.
- (3) Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency

determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California may be considered to be a historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record. Generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be "historically significant" if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (PRC § 5024.1, 14 CCR § 4852), including the following:

- (A) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;
 - (B) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
 - (C) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values;
or
 - (D) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.
- (4) The fact that a resource is not listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the CRHR, not included in a local register of historical resources pursuant to PRC § 5020.1(k), or identified in a historical resources survey meeting the criteria in PRC § 5024.1(g) does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be a historical resource as defined in PRC § 5020.1(j) or § 5024.1.

Additional Criteria Considerations as Referenced in CEQA

The NRHP considers certain kinds of properties are not usually considered for listing in the National Register: religious properties, moved properties, birthplaces and graves, cemeteries, reconstructed properties, commemorative properties, and properties achieving significance within the past fifty years. However, these criteria considerations are not part of the CEQA criteria for listing on the CRHR (PRC § 5024.1, 14 CCR § 4852). As such, and as noted in the section above, the Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c) lists the NRHP criteria that would also qualify a resource to be listed in the California Register of Historical Resources include criteria A, B, C, and D.

OHP Instructions for Recording Historical Resources

The following section provides the city with an understanding of what kinds of resources merit recordation under CEQA and decisions made by professionals regarding the "45-year criteria" with the OHP guidelines. The following guidance is taken directly from the OHPs "Instructions for Recording Historical Resources".¹¹

What Kinds of Resources Merit Recordation?

A broad threshold is set here for the kinds of resources that may be recorded for inclusion in the OHP's filing system. That threshold is designed to encompass resources that have been formally evaluated, as well as those whose importance has not yet been determined. Any physical evidence of human activities **over 45 years old** may be recorded for purposes of inclusion in the OHP's filing system. Documentation of resources **less than 45 years old** also may be filed if those resources have been formally evaluated,

¹¹

regardless of the outcome of the evaluation.

The 45-year criteria recognizes that there is commonly a five-year lag between resource identification and the date that planning decisions are made. It explicitly encourages the collection of data about resources that may become eligible for the NRHP or California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) within that planning period. More restrictive criteria must be met before the resources included in OHP's filing system are listed, found eligible for listing, or otherwise determined to be important in connection with federal, state, and local legal statutes and registration programs.

The OHP recognizes that there are a wide range of reasons for recording historical resources. It is understandable that within the constraints of a survey's objectives it is not always reasonable or appropriate to record all historical resources as defined here. **Professional judgement in the field is essential when determining whether or not a resource warrants recordation.** The scope of surveys may be defined by specific legal criteria. In such cases, survey methods may be clarified through consultation and agreement with the State Historic Preservation Officer. Professional surveys that do not evaluate resources against specific legal criteria should record all resources that meet the broad threshold set here when those studies are conducted in connection with planned developments. Detailed recordation of all but the most limited resource types is generally required for such project-driven, non- evaluative professional surveys.

Surveys conducted for reasons other than development activities may focus on a narrower range of resources based on the user's need for information. For example, a thematic survey may focus exclusively on the identification of a certain type of resource, or a reconnaissance survey may be conducted to develop a management plan for a large tract of land. The submission of records not produced as the result of surveys is also encouraged.

City of Santa Cruz Local Regulations

Santa Cruz City Ordinance No. 2003-14, Part 5: Historic Preservation

24.12.400 Purpose.

It is hereby found that the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of structures, districts, lands, and neighborhoods of historic, archaeological, architectural, and engineering significance, located within the City of Santa Cruz, are of cultural and aesthetic benefit to the community. It is further found that respecting the heritage of the city will enhance the economic, cultural and aesthetic standing of this City. The purpose of provisions in this title related to historic preservation is to:

1. Designate, preserve, protect, enhance, and perpetuate those historic structures, districts, and neighborhoods contributing to cultural and aesthetic benefit of Santa Cruz;
2. Foster civic pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the past;
3. Stabilize and improve the economic value of certain historic structures, districts, and neighborhoods;
4. Protect and enhance the City's cultural, archaeological and aesthetic heritage;
5. Promote and encourage continued private ownership and use of such buildings and other structures now so owned and used, to the extent that the objectives listed above can be obtained under such policy;

6. Serve as part of the Local Coastal Implementation Plan for the Coastal Program.

(Ord. 94-33 § 60, 1994; Ord. 85-05 § 1 (part), 1985).

24.12.410 Historic Preservation Procedures Authorized by this Title.

The following procedures related to historic preservation are authorized by this title:

1. Historic District Designation (Part 2, Chapter 24.06).
2. Historic Landmark Designation (Section 24.12.420).
3. Archaeological Procedures (Section 24.12.430).
4. Procedure for Amending Historic Building Survey (Section 24.12.440).
5. Procedure; New Construction in Historic Districts (Section 24.12.450).
6. Historic Alteration Permit (Part 10, Chapter 24.08).
7. Historic Demolition Permit (Part 11, Chapter 24.08).
8. Historic Overlay District (Part 22, Chapter 24.10). (Ord. 86-13 § 6, 1986; Ord. 85-05 § 1 (part), 1985).

Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III – March 2013

With regard to the Amendment of the City Historic Building Survey, Section 24.12.440 (2)

All properties included in the Volume III Survey meet historic criteria listed in Section 24.12.440 (c) of the City zoning ordinance. The Survey was prepared by Archives and Architecture, a professional historic consulting firm, under contract with the City. Volume III property owners who have chosen to “*opt out*” of listing on the City Historic Building List have not been included on the list. Public hearings have been held by the Historic Preservation Commission and City Council.

City Registry Criteria Section 24.12.440 Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey

1. Background – Availability. The Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume I – prepared for the City of Santa Cruz by Charles Hall Page and Associates Inc., and published in 1976, and Volume II – prepared by John Chase, Daryl Allen and Jeanne Gordon, and published in 1989, is hereby adopted, as amended, as the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, and is incorporated herein by reference. Three copies of said building survey are, and shall be, maintained on file in the office of the city clerk, City of Santa Cruz, for the use of, and examination by, the public. See Chapter 24.08 for permits and requirements relating to Historic Building Survey buildings.
2. Procedure for Amending Historic Building Survey.
 - a. The city council may amend the Historic Building Survey by resolution by adding buildings or property to the survey or deleting buildings or property from the survey. This shall be done following a recommendation by the historic preservation commission. The historic preservation commission shall report to the city council on changes to buildings or property listed on the survey, and the commission shall recommend initiation of a new survey when there is a need to update the Historic Building Survey.
 - b. A public hearing shall be held by both the city historic preservation commission and the city

council, allowing time for notice to the owner or owners of the property and to the public pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 24.04.

c. Actions by both bodies shall be based on the following criteria:

The property is either a building, site, or object that is:

1. Recognized as a significant example of the cultural, natural, archaeological, or built heritage of the city, state, or nation; and/or
2. Associated with a significant local, state, or national event; and/or
3. Associated with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state, or nation; and/or
4. Associated with an architect, designer, or builder whose work has influenced the development of the city, state, or nation; and/or
5. Recognized as possessing special aesthetic merit or value as a building with quality of architecture and that retains sufficient features showing its architectural significance; and/or
6. Recognized as possessing distinctive stylistic characteristics or workmanship significant for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of native materials; and/or
7. Retains sufficient integrity to accurately convey its significance.

The district is:

8. Recognized as a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration of buildings that are well designed and other structures, sites, and objects which are united by past events or by a plan or physical development; or is
 9. Recognized as an established and geographically definable neighborhood united by culture, architectural styles or physical development.
- d. Upon the initiation of an amendment to the Historic Building Survey to add a building or buildings, no zoning or building or demolition permit shall be issued for a period of sixty days or until final action by the city council, whichever occurs first. An exception may be made where public health and safety require it. A public hearing shall be held upon any initiation of an amendment to the Historic Building Survey.

In 2013, the 1926 building within the Project Area was approved by the City Council for local listing within the city's historic resources registry, but this same year, the owner of the building opted-out of the listing.

METHODS

The HRE was completed by EDS Principal Architectural Historian, Stacey De Shazo, M.A. and EDS Senior Architectural Historian Brian Matuk, M.S. Ms. De Shazo served as Project Manager, and Mr. Matuk served as the Architectural Historian on the project. Mr. Matuk completed the local literature search and review that included documentation available at the County of Santa Cruz Office of the Assessor and Office of the Recorder, as well as information on file at the EDS office, Online Archive of California, and various other online sources to ensure the document provides a thorough understanding of the history of the

property. Mr. Matuk also conducted a site survey to document and assess the current condition of the property and to provide physical characteristics and character-defining features of the associated built environment at the Project Area, including the 1926 building, the two ca. 2007 sheds, and the 1981 commercial building. Updated Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms for the 1926 building were prepared for the Project Area (Appendix A).

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The following historical setting provides an overview of broader historical themes and specific history associated with the built environment resources within the Project Area.

Spanish Period (1772 - 1821)

The earliest European accounts of the Santa Cruz area include the Spanish expedition of Juan Cabrillo and Sebastian Vizcaino, who in 1542 and 1602 (respectively) entered Monterey Bay while charting the Pacific coast. One-hundred and sixty-seven years later, in October of 1769, Gaspar de Portola and Father Crespi arrived at Monterey Bay, not realizing it was Monterey Bay, as it did not fit Sebastian Vizcaino's 1602 description of a sheltered harbor. Upon their arrival in the area Father Crespi, the groups' priest blessed a creek in the name of Santa Cruz (The Holy Cross). However, being unable to verify his arrival at Monterey, the Portola expedition continued north and reached Point San Pedro (on what is now the San Francisco Bay) three weeks later. On November 11, Portolá and his men headed south again. They stopped at Monterey Bay from November 28 to December 11, and although they still did not think it was Monterey Bay, Portolá set up a large wooden cross on a hill near the beach before returning to San Diego in January 1770. Discovering he had reached his desired destination, the expedition quickly returned to Monterey Bay and established a small settlement. On August 28, 1791, the Mission de la Exaltacion de la Santa Cruz (The Mission of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross) was established on the banks of the San Lorenzo River by Padre Fermin Francisco de Lasuen. The twelfth mission in California, the location was also the site of a previous Native American village called *Uypi*.¹²

Six years later in 1797, the secular town of Villa de Branciforte was established on the opposite side of the San Lorenzo River from the mission. It was one of three Spanish cities established by Spain in Alta California¹³, including San Jose (1777) and Los Angeles (1781), and was named after Don Miguel de la Grua Talamanca Branciforte, aka, the Marques de Branciforte, the 53rd Viceroy of Spain who supervised Spain's American Colonies from 1794 to 1798. It was intended to be a diverse community of civilians and soldiers. However, when the Spanish government found it difficult to recruit settlers, they offered convicts their freedom in exchange for moving to the Villa. This led to an undesirable element within the population of Branciforte.¹⁴ The intent to assign soldiers to Villa de Branciforte who would eventually settle there was prevented by an outbreak of hostility between Spain and England.

¹² Andrew, E. Pulcheon, Timothy Jones, and Michael Konzak, Cultural Resources Background Report and Archaeological Sensitivity Map for the City of Santa Cruz General Plan Update. Unpublished report on file at the Northwest Information Center, Rohnert Park, CA. 2006.

¹³ *Alta California* was a polity of New Spain founded in 1769 and became a territory of Mexico after the end of the Mexican War of Independence on 1821.

¹⁴ *Mid-County Post*, 27 June 2006.

The first occupants of the Villa de Branciforte arrived in November 1797, and consisted of nine men from Guadalajara who had been condemned for petty crimes.¹⁵ Amongst them were three tailors, three farmers, a miner, a saddler and a carpenter; and upon their arrival they were provided with two carts, oxen, and tools for farming, carpentry and iron work.¹⁶ By December 1797 the population of the Villa had increased to forty people, including four retired soldiers and their families. In 1768, twenty-two convicts from Guadalajara and Guanajuato, Mexico arrived at the Villa de Branciforte. The Villa centered near what is now Branciforte Elementary School and houses lined what is now North Branciforte Street. The Villa was bounded by what is now Seabright on the south, De Lavega Park on the north, Branciforte Creek on the west, and Morrissey Boulevard on the east.¹⁷

In 1802, the Villa's residents established a civil government with the election of an alcalde (mayor), perhaps the first election held in Alta California.¹⁸ This was also the year the Spanish Crown ceased providing supplies to the Villa. Within a decade of being established, Spain became concerned with conditions and events at the Villa, and in 1803 Governor Jose de Arrillaga sent José de la Guerra to report on the conditions at the Villa de Branciforte. "*De la Guerra found the houses of the town constructed without solidity, arranged without symmetry, and located on a poorly chosen site, namely, a little level spot on the extremity of a small hill. Of the twenty-five houses, only one was built of Adobe. The rest were made of palisades covered with mud and were roofed with tule.*"¹⁹ In 1803, the town consisted of 101 individuals. By 1811, the population had dwindled to thirty-seven individuals, and in 1815 there were fifty-three people living at the Villa. The decline and eventual demise of the Villa de Branciforte is believed to be due to the lack of arable land.²⁰ In 1818, following report of attacks on other Spanish settlements in Alta California carried out by the Argentinian pirate Hippolyte Bouchard, residents of the Villa who were left to protect the Santa Cruz Mission, looted it instead, taking most of the assets and garnering further mistrust from Mission officials.

Mexican Period (1821 - 1848)

In 1821, Mexico won its independence from Spain with the signing of the Treaty of Córdoba and took possession of "Alta California". Dramatic changes occurred in Alta California during the Mexican Period due to the lack of strong oversight and strict military rule imposed by the Spanish who had previously ruled over Alta California. In addition to secularization in 1834 that saw mission land and property dissolved, new opportunities arose for trade because foreign ships that had previously been held off by Spanish guarded military ports were allowed to dock and so a variety of provisions were made available to local settlers. As a result, tea, coffee, sugars, spices, spirits of all kinds, as well as a variety of

¹⁵ Daniel Garr, "Villa de Branciforte: Innovation and Adaptation on the Frontier," *The Americas* 35(1), 1978, 105.

¹⁶ Florian Guest, "The Establishment of the Villa de Branciforte," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 1, March 1962, 36-37.

¹⁷ Phil Reader, "Branciforte History Chronology," *Santa Cruz County Historical Journal* 3 (Santa Cruz, Calif.: Museum of Art and History, 1997).

¹⁸ Villa de Branciforte Preservation Society, "Recognize, preserve and appreciate historical landmarks" [Electronic document], 2004. <http://www.villadebranciforte.org/>. Accessed April 17, 2019.

¹⁹ Florian Guest, "The Establishment of the Villa de Branciforte," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 1, March 1962, 45.

²⁰ Florian Guest, "The Establishment of the Villa de Branciforte," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 1, March 1962, 45-46.

manufactured goods made their way into the region; and the taxes on these imported goods became the main source of revenue for the Mexican government in Alta California. Likewise, products produced in Alta California were exported, which bolstered the hide and tallow trade that became the primary business activity in California during this time.

The Mexican colonial authorities also encouraged settlement of Alta California by permitting foreigners to settle and issuing politically prominent Mexican citizens and military leaders large land grants called ranchos. Because of this, the 20 or so ranchos that had been granted during the Spanish period increased to roughly 800 ranchos that varied in size between 10,000 and 50,000 acres. Since the income of the rancho was dependent on the amount of hide and tallow produced, a family's wealth was determined by the size of their rancho, number of cattle they owned, and the availability of a labor force, which consisted mostly of Indians and poor Mexicans who depended on the rancho owners for their basic needs during this time.

After secularization in 1834 the Santa Cruz Mission and the Villa were joined together in a separate parish known as the Pueblo de Figueroa. By 1845, the name Pueblo de Figueroa had been replaced by the name Santa Cruz.²¹ Title to the former Villa de Branciforte land began to be settled in 1864 when the county judge, Augustine W. Blair, ordered the county surveyor to make a full survey of the village, including the lots and parcels and owners or occupants of those lots.²² Claimants of those lots needed to file their claim with the County of Santa Cruz to retain them.

During the 1840s, the lumber industry in Santa Cruz County initiated commerce in the area, beginning with Francisco Lajeunesse, a French Canadian, Joseph L. Majors, a Mexican citizen, Isaac Graham and Henry Neale, both Americans.²³ All four were granted Rancho Zayatane in 1841, and that same year, Majors and a syndicate that included Graham had constructed a sawmill near Mount Herman—the first lumber mill in the County. The Lumber industry accelerated rapidly by statehood and became Santa Cruz County's major industry in the mid-nineteenth century.

American Period (1848 - present)

In 1850, when California received its statehood, Santa Cruz County was formed as one of the original 27 counties in the state. Although the lumber industry had got its start during the Mexican Era, the vast stands of old-growth redwood forests in the nearby Santa Cruz mountains also provided an economic opportunity for the newly formed town of Santa Cruz during the beginning of the American Period. In 1851, a wharf (name unknown) was built to facilitate the growing lumber industry, and a small business district soon developed around the wharf. The wharf was located south of Water Street, between Front Street and the San Lorenzo River—approximately 0.25 miles north of the Project Area.²⁴

By 1864 approximately 28 lumber mills were in operation within Santa Cruz County. In addition to mills, tanneries and lime quarries operated on the edges of the town and soon brought a number of workers,

²¹ Daniel Garr, "Villa de Branciforte: Innovation and Adaptation on the Frontier," *The Americas* 35(1), 1978, 108.

²² Edward Martin, *Illustrated Complete in One Volume*, Historic Record Company, Los Angeles, California. 1911

²³ Susan Lehmann, *Fully Developed Context Statement for the City of Santa Cruz*. Prepared for the City of Santa Cruz Planning and Development Department, 20 October 2000, 5.

²⁴ Lehmann, *Context Statement*, 19.; This area of Front Street was located north of Bridge Street (now, Soquel Avenue), and the section of Front Street that is currently south of Soquel Avenue did not exist until around ca. 1895.

and entrepreneurs who further expanded the growing town. In 1866, the Town of Santa Cruz was incorporated, which later became a City in 1876. A large population influx in the 1870s spurred greater development in Santa Cruz, with the center for city commerce focusing on Pacific Street, located to the west of Front Street (Figure 2).²⁵ During this transition, Front Street was designated a “secondary street” and saw the development of the City’s Chinatown in this area.²⁶



Figure 2: ca. 1900 photograph of Pacific Street in Santa Cruz (courtesy of California State Library).

In 1876, the Santa Cruz Railroad launched its first train along a narrow-gauge track that was constructed using local financing to connect the Southern Pacific rail line between Watsonville, Gilroy, and Salinas. By the 1880s, the rail line led to the decline of the wharf’s importance, as maritime shipping was no longer the only means of interregional commerce. The rail line was bought by the Southern Pacific in 1888, and the latter two decades of the nineteenth century saw a dramatic increase in Santa Cruz’s beachfront tourism industry, as tourists were able to reach Santa Cruz by train. During this time the birth of the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk (today California’s oldest amusement park), along with the construction of casinos and hotels added to the city’s growing tourism industry. By the 1890s, commerce was centered around Pacific Street and Soquel Avenue; however, on April 14, 1894, a devastating fire swept through downtown, and destroyed the Chinatown area that was focused on Front Street.²⁷

²⁵ Lehmann, Context Statement, 19.

²⁶ Ibid, 22.

²⁷ Lehmann, Context Statement, 20.

Tourism continued to become a major player in the local economy, as Santa Cruz became a destination for its seaside recreation, with additional resorts, grand hotels, and associated facilities constructed to accommodate and entertain the visitors (Figure 3 and Figure 4). Santa Cruz was envisioned by local developers as the West Coast version of New York's Coney Island, and tourism thrived in the city until the Great Depression. Around this time, the automobile took over as the preferable way to travel, and accommodations in Santa Cruz shifted to meet these needs. With the construction of auto courts and motels came the decline of the grand hotels and casinos that were so closely tied to railroad tourism.



Figure 3: Undated postcard (likely ca. 1900) of “The Auditorium” casino along the beach at Santa Cruz (courtesy of Santa Cruz Public Library).



Figure 4: 1900 photograph of the pier at Santa Cruz (courtesy of California State Library).

Development of Front Street as “Automobile Row” (ca. 1920 – ca. 1945)

During the 1920s, automobile travel in U.S. and California had increased significantly as cars became more affordable. This was the result of automobile manufacturers mass producing automobiles and the innovation of the Model T Ford, which made car ownership available to the average American. During this time, roads throughout the U.S. and California were improved as part of the “good roads” movement, which also helped improve access to the City of Santa Cruz (Figure 5).²⁸ At this time, the City of Santa Cruz and real estate developers, and automotive businesses sought to capitalize on the new automobile culture, and the City of Santa Cruz, like many other cities through the U.S., saw the construction of auto courts and auto camps, which replaced the grand hotels that once served tourists, who had previously arrived by railroad.²⁹

²⁸ Lehmann, Context Statement, 26.

²⁹ Archives & Architecture, *Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey – Volume III*, Prepared for the City of Santa Cruz Department of Planning and Community Development, March 2013, 20.



Figure 5: ca. 1935 automobile routes map published by the Automobile Club of Southern California (AAA) (courtesy Santa Cruz Trains).

The rise of the affordable automobile also signaled the rise of automobile showrooms and repair garages in Santa Cruz. The automobile showrooms that focused on the sale of cars were primarily located on the section of Front Street between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Street where the Project Area is located. A 1932 *Santa Cruz Sentinel* article about Front Street’s emergence as the city’s “Automobile Row” cited the Palomar Garage as the first automobile centric building that spurred further such development along Front Street—mostly constructed of reinforced concrete.³⁰ Headlines in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* such as “Modern Cement Buildings Grace Front Street, Now a Regular Automobile Row,” and “Front Street Rapidly Taking Place As Modern “Automobile Row”” chronicled the development of Front Street during the late 1920s through the early 1940s.³¹ The development along this section of Front Street is noted within the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013):

³⁰ “Brunetti Building Latest Substantial Structure on Front Street,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, 20 February 1932.

³¹ “Brunetti Building Latest Substantial Structure on Front Street,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, 20 February 1932.; “Front Street Rapidly Taking Place As Modern “Automobile Row”,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, 20 February 1932.

“Later, as the automobile became increasingly prevalent in urban centers during the interwar period, commercial sales and services clusters began to appear in Santa Cruz, primarily on Front Street. Prominent local architects such as Lee Dill Etsy and C. J. Ryland designed buildings for clients in the automobile business, including auto repair shops (Huston & Weymouth Garage, 418 Front Street) and auto showrooms (Thrash Pontiac Motors, 429 Front Street). In 1936 the nineteenth-century county jail was replaced with a Modern edifice designed by Albert Roller (now the Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center, 725 Front Street).”³²

While there are several automobile-centric buildings along Front Street that remain from the ca. 1920s to ca. 1945, including auto repair shop Huston & Weymouth Garage, 418 Front Street, and auto showroom, Thrash Pontiac Motors, 429 Front Street) that are listed within the Santa Cruz Historic Buildings Survey, Volume III – March 2013,³³ many have been demolished or repurposed for various commercial businesses. Currently, Front Street is not within or part of any listed or eligible national, state, or local historic district associated with the history of automobiles or the event of “Economic Development 1850-1950”, which is one of three themes detailed within the Santa Cruz Historic Buildings Survey, Volume III – March 2013.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

The following section provides a brief understanding of the Automobile Showroom property type as it relates to the 1926 building. While the source for this context includes that attained from an historic context statement for the City of Los Angeles, the applicable information regarding the Automobile Showroom Property Type can be accurately applied to the 1926 building, as the property type was prevalent in many urban areas of both northern and southern California in the 1920s and 1930s.

Automobile Showroom Property Type

The following context regarding the Automobile Showroom property type is quoted from the SurveyLA historic context statement related to the theme “Commercial Development and the Automobile, 1910-1970”. While this historic context was prepared for the City of Los Angeles, its description of the property type and historic events that led to its popularity apply to automobile showrooms throughout California. For these reasons, this historic context regarding the automobile showroom property type is relevant to the 1926 building and is used to evaluate the significance of the building for its architecture. Specific excerpts that are local-specific have been removed from this section, as they do not apply to the 1926 building.

“Buying an automobile was first done through a livery stable, carriage dealer, or bicycle shop. These early car vendors were businessmen who obtained a license to sell a particular brand of auto. Once purpose-built automobile dealerships began to appear, just before the First World War, they fit into the existing pre-automobile streetscape. They were

³² Archives & Architecture, Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey – Volume III, 18.

³³ Archives & Architecture, Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey – Volume III, 18.

essentially storefronts on a commercial street with a large entrance door and windows to show the product.³⁴

Unlike the service station, the showroom retained throughout the 1920s a central business district location and a traditional relationship to the street. The auto manufacturers chose to remain urban and to adopt the historicist styles that characterized the elite architecture of the city. Most potential customers did not yet own cars and therefore relied on public transportation to reach a dealership; the impressive revivalist architecture assured them of a reputable vendor.

The auto manufacturers first experimented with building what one historian has referred to as ‘object-lesson’ salesrooms in certain cities to show locally-owned dealerships what could be done. These corporate-sponsored buildings were designed to resemble banks and first-class office buildings, clad in traditional styles. ‘Exteriors often sported bas-reliefs, grand ornamental cornices, and entrance porticoes, while inside cars were sold in elegant surroundings in large, opulent sales salons.’³⁵

During the early twenties these urban dealerships began combining auto servicing and repair with sales. To fit onto their city sites, they constructed multi-storied buildings complete with ramps and auto-sized elevators for access to the upper levels. The facades sported historicist detailing; generally, the only feature on the street front that identified the building as an auto-service facility was the use of factory sash for the large windows on the upper floors.”

“Along with the multi-level downtown dealerships, the car companies built smaller outlets in outlying business districts. These more suburban showrooms continued the traditional pattern of being set hard against the street and of clothing themselves in historicist garb. The common façade composition consisted of an elaborate center entrance and symmetrically flanking show windows. These smaller showrooms were in essence single-story versions of the multi-story central business district dealerships, and maintained a footprint much like that of the earlier livery stable.”

“By the mid-1930s, the auto showroom adopted the Streamline Moderne. In an attempt to encourage flagging sales during the Depression, some of the older downtown showrooms replaced their historicist ornament, at least at the showroom level, with abstract lines, curves, and circles. More important, however, was a rethinking of location for those few new dealerships that were built in the 1930s. Most potential customers already owned cars, so there was no need to be close to streetcar lines. Now ease of auto access and adequate parking were needed.³⁶

The auto showroom moved to the strip. Instead of remaining on a tight lot in the central or local business district, it placed itself on an arterial road that allowed it to spread horizontally. The common arrangement was a showroom in the front, complete with large

³⁴ Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 75-76.

³⁵ Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 79.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 86-88.

expanses of glass, service bays to the rear, and adequate parking alongside for used cars and customer circulation. The showroom itself, with its expanses of glass, maintained its position directly on the street, without a setback. It was dressed in Streamline Moderne detailing, with an integral sign featuring the name and emblem of the brand sold within.³⁷

“Though construction of new dealerships ceased during the Second World War, anticipating a surge of new car customers, the auto companies studied the problem of designing attractive facilities. As early as 1944, before the end of the war, there appeared Post-War Housing and Facilities for Studebaker Dealers by that now vanished brand. In 1945 Ford published Plans for New and Modernized Sales and Service Buildings. That same year General Motors held a “Design Competition for Dealer Establishments” and three years later issued Planning Automobile Dealer Properties based on the submissions to the competition.³⁸

These planning manuals carefully considered issues of location and design. Not only should dealerships be placed along arterials on large plots of land, a common practice since the 1930s, manuals decreed, but they should sit on the far side of an intersection on the homeward-bound side of a commuter route. Potential customers could have full view of the showroom while waiting for red lights and then, with free time after work, pull in and inspect the autos on display. There should be a procession of visual delights to greet customers: first the new cars, seen through a glare-free expanse of glass, and then the service wing, providing potential customers with the assurance of care in the future. The final element should be the used car lot, arranged with the best models in front.³⁹

Much of this advice came from studying the few dealerships that were built in the 1930s. But there were a number of subtle and not so subtle changes. A subtle change was the shrinking size of the showroom, with just a few of the best looking models on display, and the growing respectability of the parts and service department, with attractive counters and waiting areas. A not so subtle change was in the dealership’s primary identifying sign. The sign in the 1930s, while an important design element, tended to be integrated into the architecture. By the 1950s the sign often detached itself from the building and became a free-standing, and increasingly dominant, element.⁴⁰

“During the first years of construction, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, auto showrooms were typically subdued Mid-Century Modern designs, with flat roofs and plain surfaces. The mammoth glass windows showing off the cars provided character.”

“Over the next fifteen years the most important design development was the separation of the sign from the structure. The detached sign occasionally took on Googie-like extravagance to attract attention, but generally the need to exhibit the brand emblem

³⁷ Liebs, Main Street to Miracle Mile, 86-88.

³⁸ Liebs, Main Street to Miracle Mile, 88.

³⁹ Ibid, 88-89.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 88-90

and name had precedence. The detached sign, enormous by earlier standards, was generally limited to serving as a giant billboard for the corporate logo.

This reticence extended to the showroom structure itself. The Googie style could occasionally be seen in an exaggerated roof line or a canopy extended over the service drive but this was relatively rare. The point was to call attention to the cars on sale and not to the architecture. The same was true when New Formalism, with its classicizing proportions and details, began to appear in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Again, the architecture was secondary to the merchandise and thereby kept subdued.

From the mid-1950s onward the most common architectural approach was to treat the showroom as a minimalist Mid-Century Modern container.”

“As with other auto-related building types, the auto showroom underwent a change after the mid-1960s in response to both growing conservatism and, more importantly, the changing nature of the automobile industry. To be sure, the showroom remained the place to purchase and service a car but increasingly as a structure showroom retreated from the road, behind parking lots, and became less visible. Instead, motorists were greeted by row upon row of new cars parked outside, displayed like cans of soft drinks on a supermarket shelf. This mode of selling required great amounts of space. Most of the existing dealerships simply were not large enough. The result was the abandoning of locations that, in 1950, seemed quite adequate for vast lots on the outskirts of development. This was accompanied by a massive reduction in the number of dealerships as American-made brands disappeared and those few remaining consolidated facilities. The showroom and the service bay took on a utilitarian form and only the dealer sign, free-standing and standardized for the brand, attracted attention.”^{41 42}

RECORD SEARCH AND REVIEW

As part of the HRE, research was completed at the NWIC, local repositories, as well as online resources to review published local histories, maps, photographs, and other available information that revealed the property history associated with the built environment at the Project Area to provide additional context for the evaluation. The results of the record search and review are within the section below.

NWIC

EDS Principal Archaeologist Sally Evans, M.A. conducted a record search at the NWIC on March 15, 2019 (NWIC File #18-1952).⁴³ According to information on file at the NWIC, there are no records at the NWIC that indicate the Project Area has been previously evaluated for eligibility for listing in the CRHR. However, there have been sixteen cultural resources studies, and there are five built environment resources within ¼ mile of the Project Area including three built environment resources that are either listed or eligible for

⁴¹ Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 90-93.

⁴² City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement, Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980, Theme: Commercial Development and the Automobile, 1910-1970. Prepared for SurveyLA, August 2016, 35-39.

⁴³ Additional details related to this record search are provided in the CRS by EDS.

the NRHP, and two built environment resource documented on DPR523 forms.

The five built environment resources are detailed in the following table:

Table 1: NRHP and CRHR listed resources and Historic Districts, and other surveyed properties, within approximately 1/4-mile radius of the Project Area, on records on-file at the NWIC

Name/Primary Record Number/ Status	Address	NRHP	CRHR	Historic District	Local Historic Building Survey List
Hotel Metropole (P-44-000227) (NR-79000553) <i>(not extant)</i> ⁴⁴	1111 Pacific Avenue	X	X	Contributor to the Pacific Avenue Historic District	N/A
Early 1940s Commercial Building - CA-2073A (P-44-000554)	709 Center Street	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pacific Avenue Historic District (P-44-000853) (NR-87000004, <i>delisted in 1991</i>) ⁴⁵	Various addresses on Pacific Avenue and Cooper and Front Streets	X (de-listed)	X	X	N/A
Santa Cruz Downtown Historic District (P-44-000939) (NR-89001005)	Rincon and Chestnut Streets & Cedar, Laurel, Myrtle	X	X	X	N/A
San Lorenzo River Bridge – Bridge 36C0102 (P-44-001128)	Laurel Street across San Lorenzo River	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Local Research

Local research was conducted on April 9, 2019, by Senior Architectural Historian Brian Matuk, M.S. and again in May 2022, to review primary source documents available at the County of Santa Cruz Office of the Recorder, as well as at the City of Santa Cruz Public Library to review documents such as the Polk's City Directories for City of Santa Cruz, historic maps, and photographs, and additional documentation provided by the City related to the history of the Project Area and its vicinity. In addition, EDS reviewed documents such as books, maps, and digital files available at the EDS office to assist in developing a context associated with the history of the property and surrounding area, as well as the built environment resources within the property.

The results of the local research revealed details regarding land ownership within the Project Area and assisted in the development of history of the area along Front Street.

⁴⁴ Demolished after it was severely damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake.

⁴⁵ The Pacific Avenue Historic District was de-listed from the National Register of Historic Places in 1991 due to the loss of several contributors because of the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake.

Online Research

In addition to local research, online research was conducted in 2019, and again in 2022, which included the following sources:

- www.newspapers.com
- www.ancestry.com
- www.calisphere.com (University of California)
- <http://www.library.gov/> (California State Library)
- [http:// history.santacruzpl.org/](http://history.santacruzpl.org/) (Santa Cruz Public Libraries Local History)
- <http://www.library.ca.gov/> (California State Library)
- <https://www.cityofsantacruz.com> (City of Santa Cruz)

Online research conducted by EDS provided additional context to assess the resources within the Project Area, including the history and development of the area, the City of Santa Cruz, and the subject property.

RESULTS OF THE PROPERTY SPECIFIC HISTORY RESEARCH

As part of the literature search, EDS reviewed historic maps, newspapers, city directories, and documents available online to obtain information regarding ownership and occupancy history associated with the subject property and the 1926 building within the Project Area, as well as Front Street. The results are detailed in the section below.

Property History

During the 1880s and 1890s, **Front Street** initially terminated at Soquel Avenue until ca. 1895 when it was extended southward along the San Lorenzo River. The 1926 building originally had the address of 227 Front Street and appeared to have been constructed immediately adjacent to the Armory of the 4th Division Naval Militia N.G.C, before the Armory was demolished due to a fire in 1920. Based on a photograph from ca. 1900, the 1926 building replaced an existing commercial building along Front Street that we constructed in ca. 1895 when this section of Front Street was constructed (Figure 6). Although the exact businesses in these previous buildings could not be determined, it is likely there was a mix of commercial storefront businesses.



Figure 6: ca. 1900 photograph of the buildings that existed on the subject parcel prior to the construction of the 1926 building—situated between the Armory building at left and the Sun Fat Laundry at right. (Photo from *Santa Cruz County: Parade of the Past* by Margaret Koch)

Owner and Occupancy History

The first business located in the 1926 building, then located at 227 Front Street, was shown in a June 23, 1926, issue of the *Santa Cruz Evening News*, which describes the following: “Harvey Bryan has opened an auto repair shop at 227 Front Street and would like to meet all his old friends and patrons there. Expert repairing.”⁴⁶ Soon afterward, on July 10, 1926, the *Santa Cruz Evening News* published an advertisement for “The Whippet”, described as being “America’s First European-Type Light Car,” along with the address of the showroom “227 Front St.”. However, the advertisement lacked any particular business name associated.⁴⁷ By August 6, 1926, the 1926 building was associated with Santa Cruz Auto Sales. An advertisement displayed the Overland Six automobile and associated the business with “R. W. Plyer,” referring to Ralph W. Plyer.⁴⁸ Plyer’s Santa Cruz Auto Sales business was previously located at 14 Soquel Avenue (today, between Pacific Avenue and Front Street), as shown in the 1925 *Polk’s City Directory of Santa Cruz*.⁴⁹

By April 30, 1927, the 1926 building was occupied by the “Hutchings & Dodson”, a dealership that sold Pontiac Six automobiles produced by General Motors, as shown in the *Santa Cruz Evening News* advertisement (Figure 8).⁵⁰ The “Hutchings & Dodson” automobile dealership was owned by A. J. Hutchings and Dr. C. Dodson, who previously operated an automotive business in Santa Cruz from

⁴⁶ “Announcement,” *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 23 June 1926.

⁴⁷ [Advertisement], *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 10 July 1926.

⁴⁸ [Advertisement], *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 6 August 1926.

⁴⁹ *Polk’s Directory of Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and Santa Cruz County 1925* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1925).

⁵⁰ [Advertisement], *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 30 April 1927.

within the Sisson Building on Pacific Avenue.⁵¹ Around this time, a non-extant building to the east of the 1926 building was used as the offices for Hart Bros., a business selling and delivering washed sand and gravel, which is also shown on the 1928 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Figure 8).⁵² In July 1927, Dr. C. Dodson and son R. C. Dodson sold their interest in the Hutchings & Dodson company to W. W. Kirby of Los Banos, who owned Kirby Motor Company.⁵³ This change in ownership interest also led to the change in business name to reflect Kirby’s existing business—Kirby Motor Company—which shows in an advertisement in the *Santa Cruz Evening News* on August 1, 1927.⁵⁴

However, during the late 1920s, the area adjacent and near the 1926 building within the Project Area consisted of Chinese Laundry (no longer extant), a gasoline station (no longer extant), an automotive repair shop (no longer extant), automotive sales and services building (no longer extant), several commercial storefront buildings (mostly no longer extant), and a “dwelling” (no longer extant) (see Figure 8) and had not yet developed into an area where automobile related business were located.



**Features that only General Motors
 Could Provide at the Price**

The surpassing value of the New and Finer Pontiac Six is the direct result of those General Motors resources and abilities available to Oakland.

That great General Motors institution, the Fisher Body Corporation, created new and roomier bodies of surpassing beauty.

The economies of General Motors' vast purchasing power made possible exceptional new features.

Only on the General Motors Proving Ground could such stamina, speed and comfort be developed in a six so low in price.

COUPE
\$775

Yet despite all these extraordinary examples of extraordinary quality in design and construction—the New and Finer Pontiac Six is offered at new low prices!

Come in! See and drive this history-making car—an achievement whose importance is only surpassed by the never-to-be-forgotten introduction of the original Pontiac Six!

NEW LOW PRICES

Sixlet.....\$775	Sport Cabriolet (4-pass.)\$815
Coupe.....775	Deluxe Landay Sedan, 975
Sport Roadster (6-pass.) 775	Deluxe Road. Delivery 725
Landay Sedan.....895	Deluxe Screen Delivery 760
Oakland Six, \$1025 to \$1295.	

Dealers by Fisher. All prices at factory. Easy to pay on the General Motors Time Payment Plan.

Hutchings & Dodson
 227-229 Front St.
The New and Finer
PONTIAC SIX

Figure 7: Advertisement in the *Santa Cruz Evening News* from April 30, 1927 for the Hutchings & Dodson automobile dealership at the 1926 building.

⁵¹ [Advertisement], *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 29 September 1926.; “New Dealers Will Achieve Success,” *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 2 October 1926.

⁵² [Advertisement], *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 2 May 1927.

⁵³ “Oakland-Pontiac Agency Bought By Kirby Motor Co.” *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 2 July 1927.

⁵⁴ [Advertisement], *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 1 August 1927.

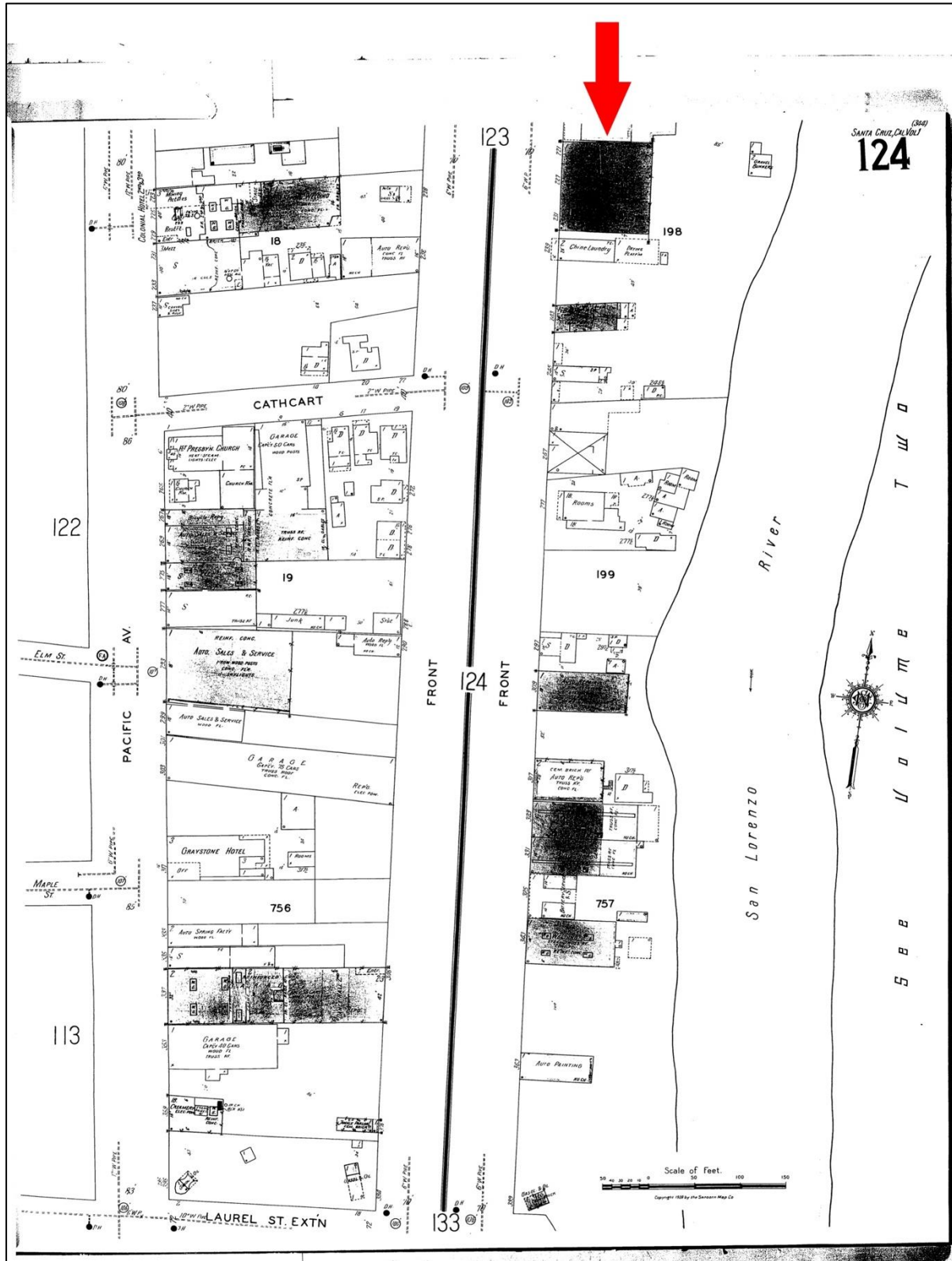


Figure 8: 1928 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, showing the 1926 building with a red arrow. The gravel business operated out of the rear, with the “gravel bunnars” visible to the east of the 1926 building. At this time, the area had not fully developed into an area centered around the automobile.

By 1928, Kirby Motor Company is listed in the Polk's City Directory associated with the 1926 building, along with Bryan & Churchill, an auto repair company likely operating out of the rear of the building.⁵⁵ By 1929, however, Kirby Motor Company was no longer operating out 227 Front Street, as the Polk's City Directory from that year showed Bate Motor Company operating out of the front portion of the 1926 building within the Project Area. An April 26, 1930 article in the *Santa Cruz Evening News* announces the building permit for a reinforced concrete garage on the west side of Front Street between Soquel Avenue and Cathcart to house the Kirby Motor Company.⁵⁶ The Bate Motor Company's tenancy in the 1926 building was short-lived, and are shown operating at 227 Front Street through at least June of 1931 (Figure 9).⁵⁷

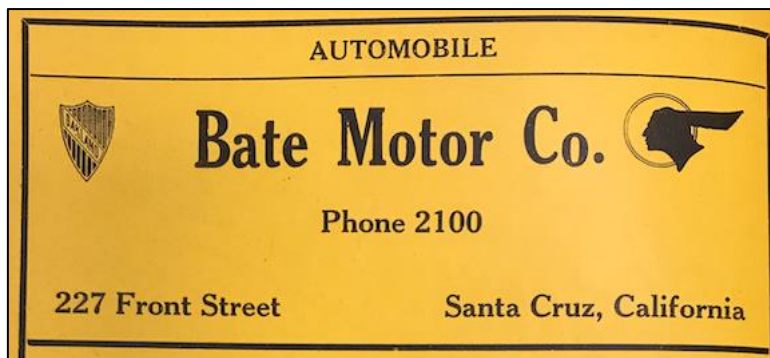


Figure 9: Advertisement within the “Business Guide” section of the 1931 Polk’s City Directory, showing Bate Motor Company operating at the 1926 building.

By September 1931, the front of the 1926 building housed Ward & Thrash, an Oakland-Pontiac dealer that took over the appointment as the Oakland-Pontiac dealer for Santa Cruz from the Bate Motor Company.⁵⁸ “Ward & Thrash” referred to owners Maurice Ward and Sylvan Thrash (Figure 10). At this time, the rear of the building also appears to have been occupied by Ward & Thrash, who according to a post in the *Santa Cruz Evening News*, spent over \$700 “in making their shop one of the most modern and up-to-date in Santa Cruz” with new machinery for servicing, though it appears this may have been the continuation of the business operations of Dunn & Ward. Dunn & Ward was an established auto repair shop that was previously operating at 267 Front Street, and owned by D. “Skinny” Dunn and Maurice Ward.⁵⁹ By 1933, Thrash bought out Ward’s interest in the business, and the dealership was renamed S. L. Thrash, with Ward & Dunn continuing to operate their auto repair business in the building.⁶⁰ an “automotive specialist” business out of the same building.⁶¹ However, while an advertisement for Dunn & Ward shows the business at the same 1926 building alongside S. L. Thrash,

⁵⁵ Polk’s Directory of Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and Santa Cruz County 1928 (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1928).

⁵⁶ “Building Permits Exceed \$20,000 in Program of Week,” *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 26 April 1930.

⁵⁷ Polk’s Directory of Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and Santa Cruz County 1930 (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1930).; “Notice,” *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 18 June 1931.

⁵⁸ [Advertisement], *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 12 September 1931.; “Ward and Thrash Shop is Equipped For All Repairs,” *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 3 October 1931.

⁵⁹ [Advertisement], *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 24 June 1930.; “New Equipment Is Installed By Ward and Thrash,” *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 26 September 1931.

⁶⁰ “General Notices,” *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 21 November 1934.

⁶¹ “New Today,” *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 9 March 1933.

the business of Dunn & Ward is not listed in any Polk City Directories associated with the building. It appears that S. L. Thrash is selling Pontiac and Packard automobiles by 1936 and continues to operate in the 1926 building until 1939.⁶² From 1933-1935 it appears the rear of the building is operated by Derrel T. Lake's auto repair business. In 1938, an \$1100 permit was issued by an individual named Isaac Gold "for reroofing the public garage at 227 Front Street," likely referring to the rear portion of the building.⁶³ By 1939, the auto repair business at the rear changes to Hemingway & Bryant, with E. R. Rice, Jr. also occupying part of the 1926 building with a welding business.⁶⁴



MAKING NEW FRIENDS AND KEEPING THE OLD

WARD & THRASH
227 FRONT ST.

announces its appointment as
OAKLAND-PONTIAC DEALER

It is a pleasure to announce our appointment as Oakland-Pontiac dealer in this city, not only because the appointment gives us the opportunity to sell and service two fine cars, but also because it reflects Oakland's confidence in our organization.

We are very proud of the two cars—the Oakland 8 and the Pontiac 6 . . . both with bodies by Fisher. We invite you to drop in at our showroom, inspect them, drive them and learn how little they cost to own.

Here in Santa Cruz you can now buy an Oakland, delivered, equipped and ready for the road, for as little as \$1129.50, or a Pontiac for as little as \$879.50. Certainly, in these outstanding General Motors values, you get a lot for your money. Moreover, your purchase can be made an easy and economical transaction through G. M. A. C. financial services.

And if you should need any adjustment or repair work done, be sure to visit our modern, well-equipped service station. We guarantee your satisfaction. Find out what a skilled service organization can do when its first purpose is to carry out the Oakland-Pontiac policy of "Making New Friends and Keeping the Old."

<p>OAKLAND</p> <p>\$1129.50 Delivered equipped in Santa Cruz for the 2-door Sedan or Coupe, Sport Coupe, \$1229.50, 4-door Sedan or Convertible Coupe, \$1229.50. Custom Sedan, \$1299.50. These cars are fully equipped—front and rear bumpers, extra tire tube and tire lock are included. Five wire wheels are standard equipment. You may have the advantage, too, of favorable G. M. A. C. Time Payments.</p>	<p>PONTIAC</p> <p>\$879.50 DELIVERED equipped in Santa Cruz for the 2-door Sedan or Coupe, Sport Coupe, \$979.50, 4-door Sedan or Convertible Coupe, \$1049.50. Custom Sedan, \$1099.50. These cars are fully equipped—even front and rear bumpers, extra tire tube, and tire lock are included. Five wire wheels are standard equipment. You may have the advantage, too, of favorable G. M. A. C. Time Payments.</p>
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TWO FINE CARS

Figure 10: Advertisement in the *Santa Cruz Evening News* dated September 12, 1931, for Ward & Thrash automobile dealership operating in the 1926 building.

⁶² *Polk's Santa Cruz City Directory 1935* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1935).; *Polk's Santa Cruz City Directory 1937* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1937).; *Polk's Santa Cruz City Directory 1939* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1939).; *Polk's Santa Cruz City Directory 1940* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1940).

⁶³ "Huxtable Will Remodel Unit," *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 7 April 1938.

⁶⁴ *Polk's Santa Cruz City Directory 1939* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1939).

By 1940, the 1926 building is occupied by Russ Samuels, Inc., which was an automobile dealership owned by Russell R. Samuels selling the Ford, Mercury, and Lincoln makes. Samuels had also purchased the building in 1940,⁶⁵ and applied for a sign permit that same year (Figure 11).⁶⁶ Russ Samuels, Inc. remained in the building until sometime in the mid-1940s.



Figure 11: Advertisement within the “Business Guide” section of the 1941 Polk’s City Directory, showing Russ Samuels, Inc. operating at the 1926 building.

By 1946, it appears that Russ Samuels may have sold his business to George H. Scofield, as the Polk City Directory from that year shows G. H. Scofield Motor Company—a dealership selling Ford, Mercury, and Lincoln automobiles—occupying the 1926 building.⁶⁷ From the listing in the 1946 Polk City Directory, it appears that Scofield’s business also operated a service garage out of the rear of the building. It was this same year that the building was sold by four individuals—Walter A. Huston, L. Fern Huston, Alvin L. Weymouth and Lois A. Weymouth—to Benjamin F. Kelley and Alice B. Kelley.⁶⁸ It is likely that the G. H. Scofield Motor Company remained in the building until at least 1958.⁶⁹

By 1959, it appears that the building’s owner Benjamin F. Kelley opened an auto parts and service business in the building named Kelley’s Auto Parts Service, also sometimes referred to as Kelley’s Service Inc.⁷⁰ The Kelley’s sold the 1926 building to Robert P. Chandler in 1972, but continued to operate

⁶⁵ Deed of Trust between Russell R. Samuels and Kathleen T. Samuels (Trustor) and K. D. Daubenbis and Bruce L. Sharpe (Trustee), dated March 23, 1940. On-file at the County of Santa Cruz Office of the Recorder.

⁶⁶ “Building Permits,” *Santa Cruz Evening News*, 27 May 1940.

⁶⁷ *Polk’s Santa Cruz City Directory 1946* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1946).

⁶⁸ Joint Tenancy Deed between Walter A. Huston, L. Fern Huston, Alvin L. Weymouth, and Lois A. Weymouth (Grantor) and Benjamin F. Kelley and Alice B. Kelley (Grantee; Joint Tenants), dated May 24, 1946. On-file at the County of Santa Cruz Office of the Recorder.

⁶⁹ *Polk’s Santa Cruz City Directory 1953* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1953).; *Polk’s Santa Cruz City Directory 1954* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1954).; *Polk’s Santa Cruz City Directory 1956-57* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1956).; *Polk’s Santa Cruz City Directory 1958* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1958).

⁷⁰ *Polk’s Santa Cruz City Directory 1959* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1959).; *Polk’s Santa Cruz City Directory 1964* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1964).

the auto parts and service business until at least 1977.⁷¹ Beginning in 1976, it appears that a business named Best Auto Parts was operating out of the 518 Front Street address, while Kelley’s Service Inc. was operating out of the 516 Front Street address.⁷²

By 1978, the 1926 building was occupied solely by Best Auto Parts, as there is no mention of Kelley’s Service in the Polk City Directory from that year, nor is there a listing for any business at the 516 Front Street address—suggesting that 516 Front Street had become vacant.⁷³ It appears that Best Auto Parts continued to operate in the 1926 building until at least 1981, and by 1982 the building was listed in the Polk City Directory as being vacant.

Around 1982, the building was reconfigured to accommodate three individual storefronts, as the city directory shows three separate businesses by 1985—each with a respective address of 514, 516, and 518.⁷⁴

HISTORIC ARCHITECTUAL SURVEY

On April 9, 2019, EDS Senior Architectural Historian Brian Matuk, M.S., completed a survey of the property located at 514-518 Front Street that includes the 1926 building, and two contemporary garbage sheds from ca. 2007.⁷⁵ There is also a 1981 commercial building and vacant parking lot at 530 Front Street that are within the Project Area but these built environment resources are not over 45 years in age, which is a recognized age within the OHP guidelines, providing a five-year gap to the NRHP’ 50 years age rule under the NRHP. It was determined by the Principal Architectural Historian that, based on the California OHP instructions for recording historic resources, the 1981 building, nor the ca. 2007 sheds, or parking lot warranted recordation based on age, and do not appear to exhibit any potential for consideration for exceptional significance for consideration under any criterion.⁷⁶ As such, the 1981 building, ca. 2007 sheds, and parking lot were not documented.

The following section documents the results of the architectural survey of the Property.

Property

The Property consists of a 1926 building, and a contemporary garbage shed to the northeast of the 1926 building (Shed 1), a contemporary garbage shed to the southeast of the 1926 building (Shed 2). The current neighborhood that surrounds the Property is generally characterized as a low-rise commercial, generally developed in the 1920s through 1940s, with many areas that consist of paved surface parking lots.

⁷¹ Deed between B. F. Kelley Trust (Grantor) and Robert P. Chandler (Grantee) dated October 25, 1972. On-file at the County of Santa Cruz Office of the Recorder.; *Polk’s Santa Cruz City Directory 1977* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1977).

⁷² *Polk’s Santa Cruz City Directory 1976* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1976).

⁷³ *Polk’s Santa Cruz City Directory 1978* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1978).

⁷⁴ *Polk’s Santa Cruz City Directory 1982-83* (San Francisco, Calif.: R. L. Polk & Co., 1982).

⁷⁵ Available aerial photographs from 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 suggest that these garbage sheds were constructed in ca. 2007.

⁷⁶ Please note that CEQA does not include the NRHP Criterion G, or any of the additional criterion for “exceptional” consideration.

1926 “Automobile Showroom” Building

The 1926 building is a one-story commercial building designed as an Automobile Showroom property type. The 1926 building is constructed of reinforced concrete, with an L-shape plan that appears to be defined by a main rectangular building form with a gabled wing near the northern end of the east elevation (rear wing). The building has stepped parapets at all elevations, and aerial photographs suggest that the main building form has a very low pitch front-gable roof, with the rear wing has a moderate pitch front-gable roof. It appears that both roof forms are clad in a modified bitumen roof. The exterior appears to consist of stucco at the front, west elevation, and painted board-formed concrete at the north, east, and south elevations, with painted concrete masonry units at the east elevation of the rear wing.

The building’s **west elevation** (Primary Façade) is defined by three distinct bays facing Front Street, with a parapet that displays a low-pitch gable above the center bay (Figure 12). The stucco exterior displays diamond- and rectangular-shape appliques attached to the west elevation parapet just below the coping, which appear to be constructed of painted wood. The west elevation has four contemporary signs marking each business currently in the building—with one sign centered at each end bay, and two signs at the center bay. Contemporary gooseneck lights attached to the parapet hang down to illuminate the contemporary signage along this west elevation. The three distinct storefront bays are denoted by changes in the pitch of the parapet along the front, west elevation, and are each denoted with separate addresses—514, 516, and 518 Front Street from south to north. The two end bays (514 and 518 Front Street) appear to be identical in size, and flank the larger center bay (516 Front Street). The southernmost bay consists of a central pair of contemporary glazed wood double doors that are flanked on either side by contemporary wood-frame plate-glass storefront windows (Figure 13 and Figure 14). Two wood-frame plate-glass transom windows are located above the doors, but within separate frames. Spanning the width of the southernmost bay is a wood-frame multilight clerestory window, located above the storefront and transom windows (Figure 15). The center bay currently has two businesses within the bay, and is defined by a deep-recess entrance that is slightly off-center from the otherwise nearly symmetrical composition of the west elevation (Figure 16). All fenestration at this center bay is topped by contemporary, traditional-shape fabric awnings with valances. The recessed entrance appears to have been altered in 1982, and is located within what appears to be an original wood-frame archway that has a transom consisting of a pair of single-light windows within the same frame, with a four-light clerestory window located above the transom (Figure 17). Within the recess is a set of contemporary glazed wood double-doors facing north, a wood-frame plate-glass storefront window facing west, and another set of contemporary glazed wood double-doors facing south (Figure 18 and Figure 19). The exterior within the recess is clad in contemporary horizontal droplap wood siding, and the floor consists of what appears to be contemporary concrete tile flooring. Flanking either side of the recessed entry are pairs of wood-frame plate-glass windows with six-light wood-frame clerestory windows located above (Figure 20 and Figure 21). There is an additional pair of wood-frame plate-glass windows and clerestory at the northern end of this center bay. The northernmost bay is located within a slight recess from the remainder of the elevation, and consists of what appears to be a set of contemporary glazed metal doors, with a pair of transom windows located above; however, the transom windows are located within individual wood-frames (Figure 22 and Figure 23). Flanking either side of the double doors are wood-frame plate-glass windows. Above both plate-glass windows and the

pair of transom windows are three sets of three-light clerestory windows, which appear to all be in individual frames.

The **north elevation** consists of a painted board-formed concrete exterior, with a parapet that steps downward toward the east (Figure 24). Near the western end of this elevation is a single diamond-shaped applique, and a contemporary sign attached to the exterior with a gooseneck light attached to the parapet that hangs down for illumination (Figure 25). Further east on this north elevation is a circular painted mural, which is located adjacent to a contemporary sign affixed to the exterior from 1993 that states the title of the artwork, “Bioregional mural project of Santa Cruz Mural #2”, as well as a description of the purpose and contributors of the piece (Figure 26 and Figure 27).⁷⁷ There is a cluster of 75 ribbed glass blocks located near the center of the north elevation that appear to not be original, given the visible repairs to the concrete that surround the cluster (Figure 28 and Figure 29). Near the eastern end of this north elevation are what appear to be two metal multi-light windows with operational awning sashes (Figure 30).

The **east elevation of the rear wing** appears to be constructed of concrete masonry units, and consists of a stepped parapet, and no fenestration (Figure 31). There is a contemporary chain link fence located near the northern end of this east elevation of the rear wing and appears to serve as a partial enclosure for mechanical equipment. The **east elevation of the main building form** (Figure 32) consists of a rear entry, located within the corner where the rear wing meets the main building form, and consists of two metal-clad slab doors situated in different frames, and sheltered by a wood frame awning (Figure 33). To the south of this rear entry is a contemporary sliding sash window that appears to have been installed in a previous door opening that has been partially infilled with horizontal wood siding (Figure 34). The original wood door frame that bordered this previous opening is still extant. To the south of this window is a contemporary metal roll-up garage door within what appears to be an original wood frame—similar in shape to that which has been partially infilled directly to the north. To the south of this roll-up garage door are two aluminum multilight windows that appear to have operational awning sashes.

The **south elevation of the rear wing** consists of a large metal roll-up garage door within a wood frame (Figure 35). Directly to the west of the garage door is a contemporary shed-roof addition that is clad in vertical wood siding with asphalt shingle roofing. The east elevation of this addition has a six-panel wood door, while the south elevation has a single-hung vinyl window. Under the awning at the corner where the main building form meets the rear wing, there appears to be a slight bump-pout that is clad in vertical wood siding, and consists of a narrow door—likely providing access to mechanical equipment, given the metal ventilation pipe that extends above the awning at this location. The **south elevation of the main building form** consists of a board-formed concrete exterior with a set of metal-clad double-doors that are nearly centered on the elevation (Figure 36). Toward the western end of this elevation is an area that appears to have been a door opening, which has since been infilled. To the west of this infilled door is utility equipment with conduits attached to the building exterior, leading to the roof. This utility equipment is protected by nine metal bollards. At the very western edge of this south elevation is a contemporary business sign that is identical to that on the north elevation, which is similarly illuminated by a gooseneck lamp affixed to the parapet, with a diamond-shape applique affixed to the exterior just below the parapet (Figure 37).

⁷⁷ Recently the mural was painted over and as such is no longer extant.



Figure 12: The west elevation of the 1926 building, facing east.



Figure 13: The west elevation at the southernmost bay, facing northeast.



Figure 14: Detail of the contemporary doors and transom windows at the southernmost bay of the 1926 building.



Figure 15: Detail of clerestory at the southernmost bay of the 1926 building, along the west elevation, facing southeast.



Figure 16: The center bay at the west elevation, facing east.



Figure 17: Detail of transom windows and clerestory windows above the recessed entrance in center bay on the west elevation.



Figure 18: Detail of recessed opening within the center bay, showing the south-facing double doors and plate-glass window, facing northeast.



Figure 19: Detail of recessed opening within the center bay, showing the plate-glass window and north-facing double doors facing southeast.



Figure 20: Detail of the pair of plate-glass windows located to the north of the recessed entry within the center bay of the 1926 building, facing southeast.



Figure 21: Detail of clerestory window above plate-glass storefront window at center bay of the 1926 building.



Figure 22: The northernmost bay at the west elevation of the 1926 building, facing north-northeast.



Figure 23: Detail of the contemporary metal double doors at the northernmost bay of the 1926 building.



Figure 24: The western portion of the north elevation of the 1926 building, facing southeast.



Figure 25: Detail of the diamond appliques on both the north and west elevations, with the contemporary business sign and gooseneck lamp at the north elevation visible at left.



Figure 26: Detail of the contemporary painted mural at the north elevation of the 1926 building, facing south.



Figure 27: Detail of the signage associated with the contemporary painted mural at the north elevation of the 1926 building, facing south.



Figure 28: Center portion of the north elevation of the 1926 building, showing the contemporary painted mural at right, and the cluster of glass blocks at center, facing southeast.



Figure 29: Detail of the cluster of glass blocks at the north elevation of the 1926 building, facing south.



Figure 30: Detail of the two metal multi-light windows near the eastern end of the north elevation of the 1926 building, facing southwest.



Figure 31: East elevation of the rear wing, facing north-northwest.



Figure 32: East elevation of the main building form, with the south elevation of the rear wing visible at far right, facing northwest.

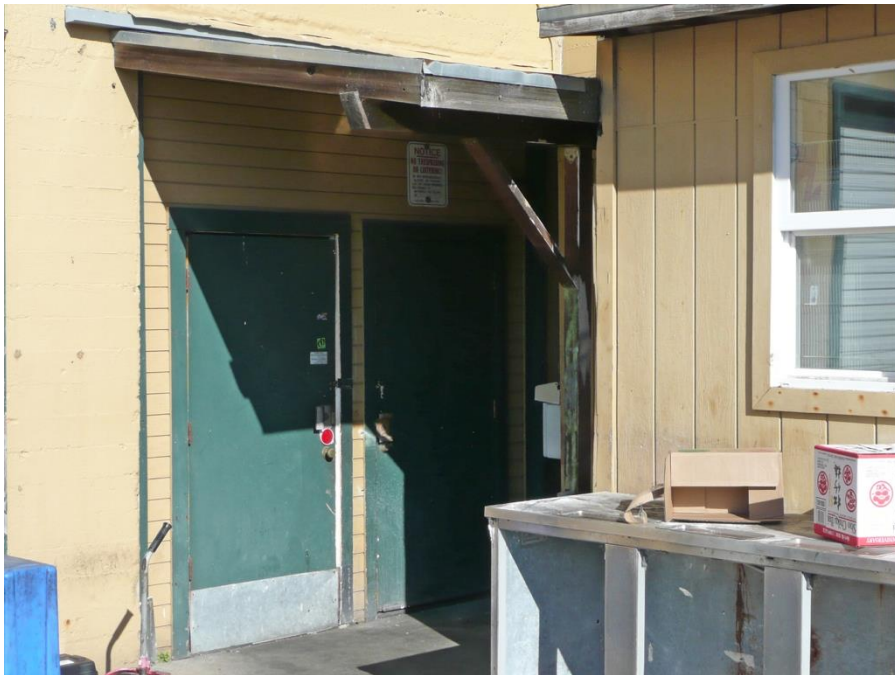


Figure 33: Detail of rear entry doors at the east elevation of the main building form, facing northwest. The contemporary shed-roof addition at the south elevation of the rear wing is also visible at right.



Figure 34: A portion of the east elevation of the main building form, showing one of the two multilight windows at left, the roll-up garage door at center, the infilled garage door with window at right, facing northwest.

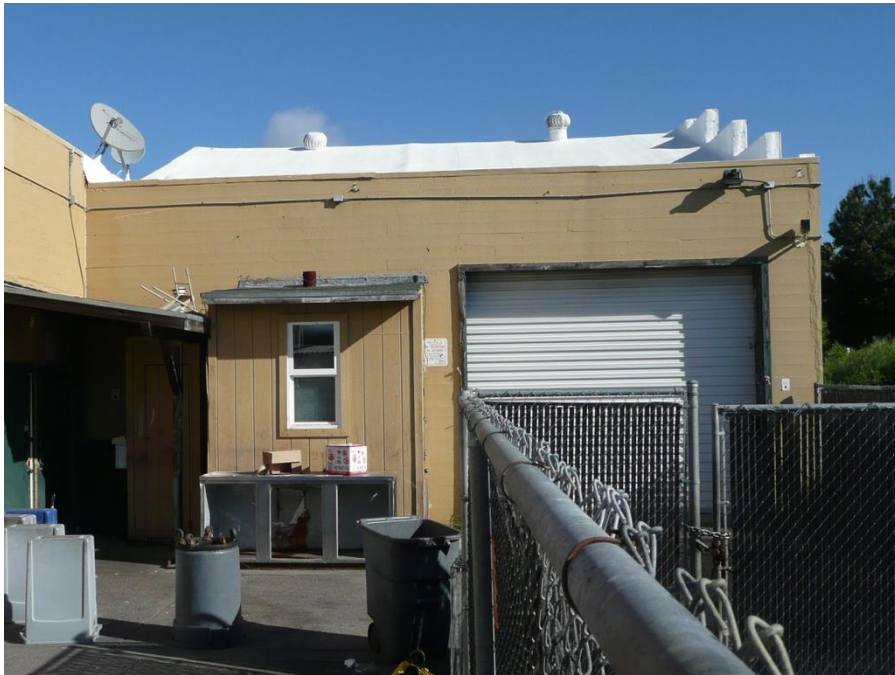


Figure 35: South elevation of the rear wing, facing north, also showing the east elevation of main building form visible at left.



Figure 36: South elevation of the 1926 building, facing northwest.

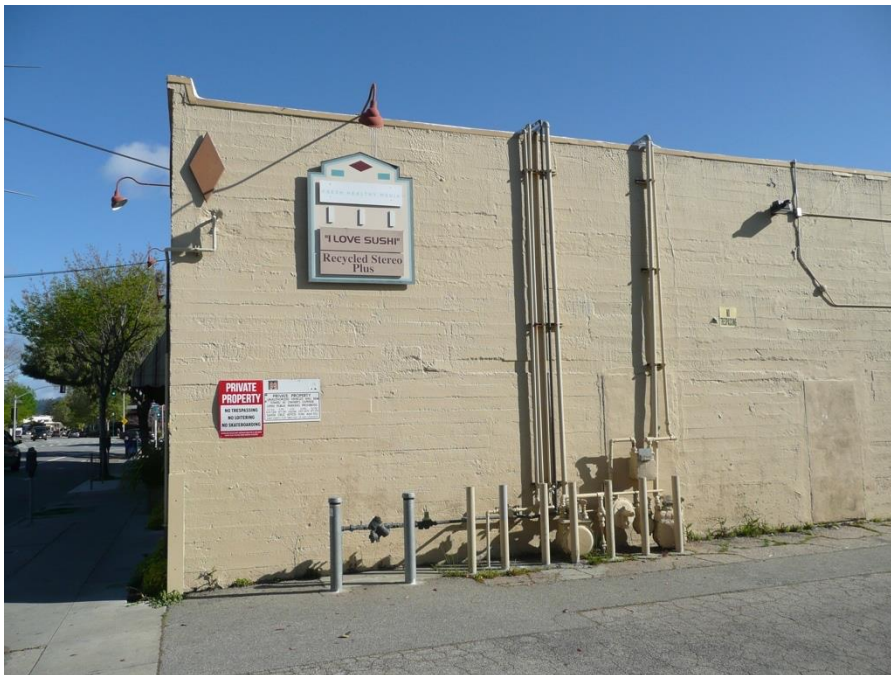


Figure 37: Western corner of the south elevation of the main building form, facing north.

Contemporary Buildings

There are three contemporary buildings within the Property that were constructed in ca. 2007. While these buildings do not reach the 50-year age criteria for CRHR-eligibility, they are nevertheless documented below for clarification of the extant built-environment at the Project Area.

ca. 2007 Shed 1

This rectangular plan shed-roof building is located to the southeast of the 1926 building, with the south elevation directly abutting the neighboring commercial building at 512 Front Street (Figure 38 and

Figure 39). The building is situated on a poured concrete foundation, with an exterior clad in vertical wood siding, and a roof consisting of corrugated metal. The only fenestration occurs at the north elevation, and consists of a large opening with corrugated metal double doors that provides access to refuse dumpsters stored at the interior.



Figure 38: North and west elevations of the ca. 2007 Shed 1, with the neighboring building at 512 Front Street visible at right, facing southeast.

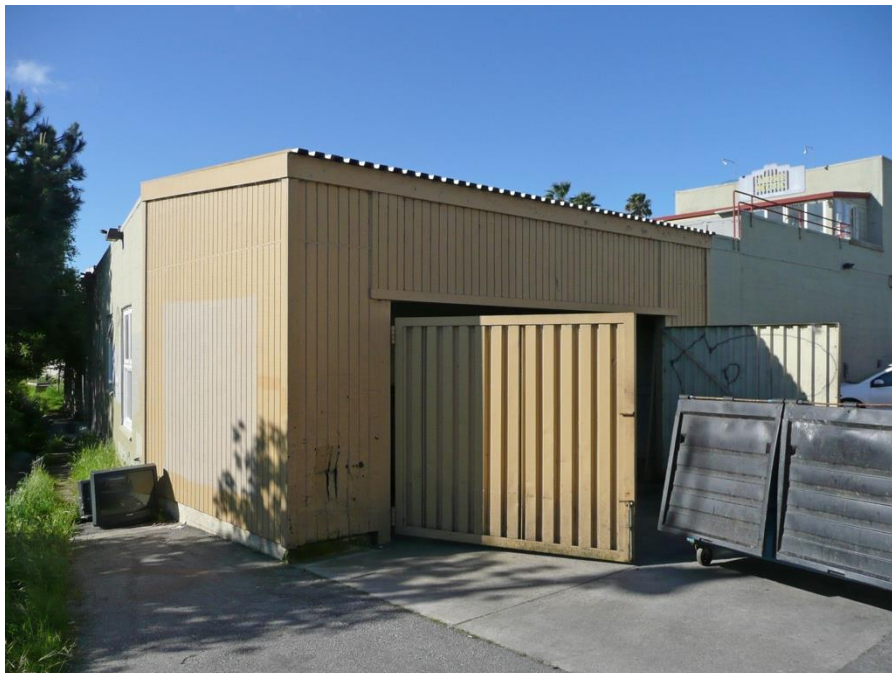


Figure 39: East and north elevations of the ca. 2007 Shed 1, with the neighboring building at 512 Front Street visible at left and right of the ca. 2007 Shed 1, facing southwest.

ca. 2007 Shed 2

This rectangular plan building is located to the northeast of the 1926 building, and has a metal chainlink fence attached to its south elevation (Figure 40). The building is situated on a poured concrete foundation, with an exterior clad in vertical wood siding. The roof was not visible at the time of the survey, but appears to be nearly flat, with wood fascia that wraps around all elevations. The only fenestration consists of a metal slab door at the north elevation.



Figure 40: North and west elevations of the ca. 2007 Shed 2, facing southeast.

Previous Documentation (2013 Archives and Architects)

In 2013, the 1926 building was identified by Archives & Architects as eligible for local designation as part of the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013). The property was identified with the following description:

“Front Street was a major hub of the evolving automobile sales and services commercial sector for the Santa Cruz area beginning in the 1920s. This vernacular commercial building was constructed in 1927, with its primary tenant being an Oakland and Pontiac auto dealership. Originally Hutchings & Dodson, the dealership quickly changed to Kirby Motor Co. and then Ward & Thrash. By 1935, Sylvan Thrash had taken over as sole proprietor of the dealership at this location, and he remained at this site until building a new showroom across the street at 429 Front Street in 1948. Other mostly auto-related tenants occupied this building over subsequent years. In the early 1980s, the building was renovated for pedestrian-oriented retail uses, as it exists today.”⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Archives & Architecture, Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey – Volume III, 52.

2013 Resource Details:

<i>Resource Name:</i>	<i>Ward & Thrash Oakland Pontiac</i>
<i>Architect:</i>	<i>Unknown</i>
<i>Builder:</i>	<i>Unknown</i>
<i>Significance Theme:</i>	<i>Commercial Development</i>
<i>Period of Significance:</i>	<i>1927-1948</i>
<i>Applicable Criterion:</i>	<i>None</i>

2013 Significance and Recommendation for Local Listing:

Although the 2013 DPR records completed by Archives and Architects state there is no “Applicable Criterion” and the Significance Theme of “Commercial Development” is not a fully developed theme within the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013),⁷⁹ the findings of the Historic Building Survey were accepted by the Santa Cruz City Council as part of Resolution NS-28,621, which included a provision allowing specific property owners to “opt-out” of listing in the Historic Building Survey. As part of this Resolution, the property owner of 514-518 Front Street elected to “opt-out” of local listing in the Historic Building Survey and is currently not considered to be a locally designated resource. As such, while the 1926 building was previously determined to be eligible for local designation, it does not appear that based on the discrepancies within the 2013 evaluation, it would qualify as a Historical Resource under CEQA. In addition, EDS suggests that based on the clause in resolution NS-28,621 that allows for owners to “opt-out” of a local listing, and disqualify the Property from being “subject to the City historic preservation regulations” (Resolution No. NS-28.621).

However, the City of Santa Cruz can still consider the to 1926 building a historical resource according to CCR § 15064.5 if the following applies,

“A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in PRC § 5020.1(k) or identified as significant in a historical resource survey meeting the requirements PRC § 5024.1(g), shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.”

As such, the 1926 building may still qualify as a historical resource under CCR § 15064.5, though local historic preservation regulations would not apply. EDS also recognizes the fact that a resource is not listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the CRHR, not included in a local register of historical resources pursuant to PRC § 5020.1(k) or identified in a historical resources survey meeting the criteria in PRC § 5024.1(g) does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be a historical resource as defined in PRC § 5020.1(j) or § 5024.1.

As such, for the City of Santa Cruz (as the lead agency) to conclude that the 1926 building is a locally significant resource would have to be based on substantial evidence, which has not been provided by the

⁷⁹ The significance theme defined within Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey that this building would be associated with appears to be “Economic Development 1850-1950” and

city.

In April 2022, the city requested that EDS provide a “local” re-evaluation of the 1926 building, which is included in the evaluation section of this report.

EVALUATION OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Project Area as a whole, which includes the 1926 building and the two ca. 2007 sheds, and the 1981 commercial building were surveyed, and the 1926 building and the two ca. 2007 sheds were documented and evaluated for eligibility for listing in the CRHR. The 1926 building is the only building within the Project Area that meets the age requirement for CRHR-eligibility and was determined to warrant evaluation. The ca. 1926 building is evaluated for individual eligibility for listing in the CRHR. The following section provides an overview of historic significance of the built environment resources within the Project Area.

An Archaeological Study was also completed by EDS that encompasses the entire Project Area.⁸⁰

California Register of Historical Resources

The CRHR is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed in the CRHR through several methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register-listed properties are automatically listed in the CRHR. Properties can also be nominated to the CRHR by local governments, private organizations, or citizens.

To qualify for listing in the CRHR, a property must possess significance under one of the four criteria and have historic integrity. The process of determining integrity consists of evaluating seven variables or aspects that include location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. According to the OHP, the criteria for evaluation for eligibility for listing in the California Register are based upon National Register criteria and include seven characteristics are defined as follows:

- **Location** is the place where the historic property was constructed.
- **Design** is the combination of elements that create the form, plans, space, structure and style of the property.
- **Setting** addresses the physical environment of the historic property inclusive of the landscape and spatial relationships of the building(s).
- **Materials** refer to the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern of configuration to form the historic property.
- **Workmanship** is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history.
- **Feeling** is the property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.
- **Association** is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

⁸⁰ Sally Evans, M.A. and Gilbert Browning, M.A., Results of an Archaeological Study for the Proposed Project at 516 Front Street, Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County, California, Evans & De Shazo, Inc. 2019.

The following section examines properties eligibility for listing on the CRHR.

CRHR Evaluation

The following section evaluates the 1926 building for eligibility for listing in the CRHR under four applicable CRHR criteria, utilizing significant themes that were found to be potentially associated with the 1926 building. The Project Area was evaluated for site-specific historical significance, as well as under the following themes and associated periods of significance: development of Front Street as “Automobile Row” from ca. 1920 to ca. 1945, and architecture as it relates to an Automobile Showroom property type constructed during the Interwar Period, 1918-1939, between the end of World War I and the beginning of the United States’ involvement in World War II, with a period of significance associated with the 1926 date of construction.

The ca. 2007 sheds, 1981 building, and vacant parking lot were not evaluated for historical significance.

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

The 1926 building is associated with the development of the Front Street “Automobile Row” from ca. 1920 to ca. 1945, where automobile showrooms and repair garages were constructed between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Street. The development along this section of Front Street with businesses associated with automobiles was indicative of the rise of the automobile in the culture of America that began in early 1920s with the mass production of automobiles and availability of new affordable cars such as the Ford Model-T. This type of development was widespread through most large and medium sized cities in California, as well as the U.S., and although the rise of the automobile resulted in the create of numerous businesses, including gas stations. Motels, roadside attractions, automobile repair shops, and automobile showrooms, as well as infrastructure such as bridges, and highways, the 1926 building alone within the Project Area does not have the ability to convey this significance them. As such, although the 1926 building reflects these larger development trends in California and in Santa Cruz along Front Street, the 1926 building does not appear to convey significance under this theme to warrant individual eligibility in the CRHR. Additionally, there are very few buildings remaining on Front Street from the development period of ca. 1920 to ca. 1945 that are related to the automobile, and it does not appear that there would be sufficient extant contributors to collectively embody this significant theme as an historic district.

Therefore, the 1926 building does not appear eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criterion 1.

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

Despite extensive research, it does not appear that the Project Area as a whole, nor the 1926 building, are associated with the lives of individuals or families that are important to local, California, or national history to warrant eligibility under the CRHR. There is no information was found to show that any owners of the building or owners of the businesses associated with the 1926 building made important, identifiable contributions to local, State, or National history in a way that is directly associated with the Project Area.

Therefore, the 1926 building does not appear eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criterion 2.

3. (Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.)

The 1926 building is a fairly good example of an Automobile Showroom property type designed in the Interwar Period between 1918-1939, with a period of significance tied to its date of construction of 1926. The 1926 building exhibits the typical one-story, three-bay plan of the automobile showrooms of the 1920s, which were sometimes indistinguishable from repair garages of the same period and took on the plan and general design of livery stables. The 1926 building was designed as a typical automobile showroom of the 1920s, with the typical large central opening flanked by display windows to showcase the automobiles located inside, as well as the automobile repair and service functions operating at the rear of the building. While the 1926 building has undergone alterations over time, including converting the automobile showroom to four separate businesses in separate retail bays, the building continues to display the distinctive characteristics of the automobile showroom property type of the 1920s. However, despite retaining integrity to its date of construction, the 1926 building is not eligible for individual listing in the CRHR, as the building does not appear to be “an important example (within its context) of building practices of a particular time in history” and does not demonstrate “an important phase of the architectural development of the area of community in that it had an impact as evidenced by later buildings.”⁸¹

Therefore, the 1926 building appears does not appear eligible for individual listing in the CRHR under Criterion 3.

4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criterion 4 most commonly applies to resources that contain or are likely to contain information bearing on an important archaeological research question. While most often applied to archaeological sites, Criterion 4 can also apply to buildings that contain important information. For a building to be eligible under Criterion 4, it must be a principal source of important information, such as exhibiting a local variation on a standard design or construction technique can be eligible if a study can yield important information, such as how local availability of materials or construction expertise affected the evolution of local building development.

The 1926 building does not have the ability to convey information that is unique or unknown in regard to an architectural style, as such, it does not appear eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criterion 4. In addition, the property was evaluated for archaeology, and the associated report⁸² provides details related to information potential associated with archaeological resources.

⁸¹ United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources Division, *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 1990, revised 1997), 18.

⁸² Sally Evans, M.A. and Gilbert Browning, M.A., Results of an Archaeological Study for the Proposed Project at 516 Front Street, Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County, California, Evans & De Shazo, Inc. 2019.

Integrity

The following section provides details that specifically address the integrity of the 1926 building. While the 1926 building was found ineligible for listing in the CRHR under any criteria, it appears to be most associated with the automobile showroom property type, with a period of significance reflective of its date of construction and was previously locally listed but removed from listing. To ensure due diligence, the integrity of the 1926 building is assessed to provide an understanding of changes to the property since its 1926 construction.

- **Location.** The 1926 building has not been moved since its original construction.

Therefore, the 1926 building retains integrity of location.

- **Design.** The 1926 building was designed as a three-bay plan automobile showroom, with a large central entrance flanked by large display windows and parapets typical of California architecture of the 1920s. While the design of the 1926 building was altered during changes in the 1980s to convert the building to four separate retail uses, most of the design elements remain from the date of construction, including the three-bay plan, parapets, clerestory windows, and large central opening. While other elements have been altered, including the retail doors at the end bays and adjacent windows and transoms, the 1926 building retains its general design to represent an automobile showroom property type constructed in the 1920s.

Therefore, the 1926 building retains integrity of design.

- **Setting (Setting refers to the physical environment of a historic property)** The setting along this block of Front Street has changed over time, with the construction of several buildings and the demolition of other buildings since 1926. While the area retains some of the buildings that were extant in 1926 and continues to retain the general low-rise commercial and industrial nature of the area, the setting appears to remain sufficiently intact from the 1926 building's date of construction though the area has changed.

Therefore, the 1926 building retains some integrity of setting, but not to its date of construction.

- **Materials.** The 1926 building experienced several alterations when converted in the 1980s to accommodate four retail storefronts, which necessitated the replacement of several original materials and the introduction of contemporary materials, including new retail doors, new transom windows, and exterior cladding within the recessed main entrance. Despite these changes, the 1926 building appears to retain the general material palette from its date of construction, including the board-formed concrete at the side elevations, the stucco cladding at the front and west elevation, and wood-frame windows that face the front street.

Therefore, the 1926 building retains integrity of materials.

- **Workmanship.** The 1926 building shows workmanship in various design elements, including the board-formed concrete at the side elevations, stucco-clad exterior at the west elevation, and the wood-frame clerestory windows. Despite the changes over time, the 1926 building retains these elements that represent the general craftsmanship of the period.

Therefore, the 1926 building retains integrity of workmanship.

- **Feeling.** Feeling is the quality that a historic property has in evoking the aesthetic or historic sense of

a past period. The 1926 building retains the general design elements and materials that evoke an automobile showroom property type constructed in the 1920s, despite alterations in the 1980s that converted the building for four retail uses.

Therefore, the 1926 building retains integrity of feeling.

- **Association.** The 1926 building was constructed as an automobile showroom during a period of development of Front Street between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Street where businesses were increasingly associated with automobile sales and service. As the 1926 building continues to evoke the characteristics of the automobile showroom property type from the 1920s, the 1926 building appears to retain the association with this property type.

Therefore, the 1926 building retains integrity of association.

Although the 1926 building was not found to be eligible under any CRHR criteria, however, its integrity was nevertheless assessed to the building's date of construction to present an understanding of the impact that alterations to the Property and surrounding environment have had over time. As such, the 1926 building appears to retain some aspects of integrity.

Local Review and Evaluation

The following section provides a review of the 2013 documentation and evaluation for local listing completed by Archives and Architects and the re-evaluation by EDS for local listing.

2013 Archives and Architects - 1926 Building Evaluation (DPR page 4 of 5)

In 2013, Archives and Architects documented and evaluated the 1926 building on DPR 523 forms for local significance. According to Archives and Architects, "When considered for listing within the Historic Building Survey of the City of Santa Cruz, the property [sic 1926 building] meets the following criteria:

1. The building is a significant example of the built environment heritage of the city as a representative of late 1920s buildings constructed to serve the **emerging auto service industry**;
and
7. The **building retains sufficient integrity** to accurately convey its significance.

EDS Analysis and Recommendations:

1. The local significance theme appears to be – "emerging auto service industry" – though this is not a significance theme defined within the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013). In addition, the BSO DPR form completed in 2013 states the significance theme is "Commercial Development".
7. The 2013 CRHR and Local integrity "analysis" conflict significantly with what each states within the DPR forms.

2013 CRHR Significances Evaluation (DPR page 4 of 5)

"The building is not individually significant to the development of the downtown area, and although it was one of a number of auto-oriented uses along Front Street, the important pattern of development of this portion of the downtown has lost much of its historic setting, thus would not appear to be eligible under Criterion (1). The personages

*associated with the original auto body shop on this property are not known to be historically significant, therefore the property would not appear to be eligible under Criterion (2). The **building is not a distinctive representative of its time, as a vernacular commercial building of Mission Revival design and has also been altered throughout the years, and does not appear eligible under Criterion 3.***

EDS Review and Recommendations:

EDS suggests that Archives and Architects should have considered the significance findings and integrity for the CRHR, as the local significance findings and integrity vary considerably, as detailed in the following section. In addition, the 2013 DPR 523 records completed by Archives and Architects state there is no “Applicable Criterion” for significance for the CRHR under the theme of “Commercial Development from 1927 to 1948”. Also, the theme “Commercial Development” is not a fully developed theme within the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013),⁸³ which is the context from which significance is derived. However, the theme of “Economic Development” is detailed in the context report. As such, a sub-theme under Economic Development should have been included – such as the “early automobile industry” or “commercial development related to the automotive industry”.

Unfortunately currently the 2013 DPR evaluation of significance theme does not connect to a theme within the context from the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013).⁸⁴ In addition, EDS suggests there is an “Applicable Criterion”, which is Criteria 1.

2013 Integrity Analysis by Archives & Architects (DPR page 5 of 5)

“The property maintains most, but not all, of its historical integrity as per the National Register's seven aspects of integrity. It maintains its original location on Front Street, in downtown Santa Cruz at the edge of the San Lorenzo River; it is still surrounded by much, but not all of its apparent historic setting, including surrounding commercial buildings of similar age, scale and design and parcels with similar setbacks, parking, and streetscape. It retains its Interwar era commercial scale and feeling and continues, through its form, massing and materials, to illustrate its associations with minor patterns of commercial design in the twentieth century. Although altered, the front facade retains its integrity with the vernacular Mission Revival commercial style, including the shaped parapet and symmetrical design. The storefronts include what appear to be original character-defining doors, and although it has been altered, the basic integrity of the subject property appears to have been preserved.”⁸⁵

⁸³ The significance theme defined within Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey that this building would be associated with appears to be “Economic Development 1850-1950” and

⁸⁴ The significance theme defined within Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey that this building would be associated with appears to be “Economic Development 1850-1950” and

⁸⁵ Archives and Architects, “Ward & Thrash Oakland Pontiac” (DPR 523 records), 2013.

EDS Review and Recommendations:

The integrity analysis completed within the 2013 DPRs was completed to support the local listing significance theme; however, it is not supported by the context within the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013), or the historical context within the 2013 DPR 523 forms. In addition, the significance findings associated with setting and design (assuming materials and workmanship though not called out) and for local listing, the 1926 building 2013 integrity analysis conflicts with the CRHR integrity analysis, as detailed below.

2013 Archives and Architect CRHR and Local Evaluation - Conflicting Details

- **CRHR** (2013 DPR page 4 of 5) - *“although it was one of a number of auto-oriented uses along Front Street, the important pattern of development of this portion of the downtown has lost much of its historic setting, thus would not appear to be eligible under Criterion (1).”*
- **Local** (2013 DPR page 5 of 5) - *“it is still surrounded by much, but not all of its apparent historic setting, including surrounding commercial buildings of similar age, scale and design and parcels with similar setbacks, parking, and streetscape.”*
- **CRHR** (2013 DPR page 4 of 5) – *“The building is not a distinctive representative of its time, as a vernacular commercial building of Mission Revival design and has also been altered throughout the years, and does not appear eligible under Criterion (3).”*
- **Local** (2013 DPR page 5 of 5) – *“Although altered, the front facade retains its integrity with the vernacular Mission Revival commercial style, including the shaped parapet and symmetrical design. The storefronts include what appear to be original character-defining doors, and although it has been altered, the basic integrity of the subject property appears to have been preserved.”*

EDS suggests that integrity should not change based on its evaluation ‘level’, either federal, state, or local. Also, EDS could not find anywhere within the City of Santa Cruz ordinances that would state there was something other than the NRHP guidelines is utilized to complete a local integrity analysis in support of local significance findings.

EDS Additional Review and Recommendations

The architecture noted within the 2013 DPR 523 form (page 5 of 5) states the 1926 building is a “Vernacular Mission Revival commercial style”, but this “style” does not coincide with the local Santa Cruz design called out in the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013),⁸⁶ which states the 1926 building is a “Commercial Vernacular”

First, “Vernacular Mission Revival commercial style” is not a known architectural style and is not a known local vernacular in Santa Cruz or the Region, and is not defined within any city context or within the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013).⁸⁷ Although Archives and Architects may be implying the design is a vernacular form (i.e., commercial building) with Mission Revival elements, the

⁸⁶ The significance theme defined within Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey that this building would be associated with appears to be “Economic Development 1850-1950” and

⁸⁷ EDS also recommends that the use of the term vernacular within the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013) has been mis-used or over-used and suggests a review of the Vernacular Architectural Forum and in the future, update this document accordingly.

term vernacular is not correctly understood or utilized within the 2013 DPRs.

Therefore, due to discrepancies and conflicting statements within the 2013 DPRs as detailed within this section, EDS completed a re-evaluation of the 1926 building for local significances to provide recommendations to the city on its current eligibility for listing on the City of Santa Cruz Registry. The re-evaluation was completed based on current City of Santa Cruz historic preservation guidelines and requirements for a local listing, as detailed in the section below.

2022 EDS Local Re-Evaluation

The 1926 building was considered under local significance categories 1 through 5 (listed below) utilizing the adopted historical context documents (2000 and 2013) written on behalf of the City of Santa Cruz that identify important resources and historical themes.

1. Recognized as a significant example of the cultural, natural, archaeological, or built heritage of the city, state, or nation

EDS Analysis and Recommendation: There is no evidence presented with the EDS HRE, the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013),⁸⁸ within additional documentation provided by the city, or found as part of the research, survey, or evaluation that the 1926 building is a significant example of built heritage that should be recognized by the city, state, or nation.

2. Associated with a significant local, state, or national event

The following context was taken from pages 17 and 18 of the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013) under “Front Street” sub-heading.

“While initial development of the city center was near the Santa Cruz Mission and the plaza, after 1853 Main Street (later Front Street) developed as the main business street. The prominence of Main Street was short lived, and by 1866, with the Foreman & Wright survey, the name was changed to Front Street and it was designated as a secondary street. Front Street did not initially connect to the wharves, but eventually connected to Pacific Avenue at the bottom of Beach Hill in 1932. The Foreman & Wright survey also changed the name of Willow Street to Pacific Avenue and designated it as the primary business street. Businesses began to move to Pacific Avenue and newly vacant buildings along Front Street were occupied for a time by the Chinese ethnic community. The Front Street Chinatown was the largest in the city and lasted until 1894 when it was destroyed by fire. After the 1894 fire, the displaced Chinese community moved closer to the San Lorenzo River. They continued to reside in this area until the December 1955 flood.

The north end of Front Street had served as a municipal center providing the then site for the county jail and the extant Hall of Records in the late nineteenth century, as well as Santa Cruz City Hall, Fire Department, and Bell Tower. Later, as the automobile became increasingly prevalent in urban centers during the interwar period, commercial sales and services clusters began to appear in Santa Cruz, primarily on Front Street. Prominent local architects such as Lee Dill Esty and C. J. Ryland designed buildings for

⁸⁸ The significance theme defined within Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey that this building would be associated with appears to be “Economic Development 1850-1950” and

clients in the automobile business, including auto repair shops (Huston & Weymouth Garage, 418 Front Street) and auto showrooms (Thrash Pontiac Motors, 429 Front Street). In 1936 the nineteenth-century county jail was replaced with a Modern edifice designed by Albert Roller (now the Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center, 725 Front Street). Today, Front Street has lost most of its auto related businesses and continues to serve as a secondary street to Pacific Avenue. However, it retains many structures associated with commercial development during the first half of the twentieth century.

EDS Local Re-Evaluation

Based on the City of Santa Cruz' Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013),⁸⁹ and survey and research completed as part of the EDS HRE, it was determined that the 1926 building is associated with the development of Front Street as "Automobile Row" from the 1920s through the 1940s and the automobile industry related to the economic development of Santa Cruz. As such, these are the significance themes.

To assess these significance themes, EDS utilized the adopted historical context documents (2000 and 2013) written on behalf of the City of Santa Cruz that identify important resources and historical themes. The section below provides of analysis of the context documents that should support these themes for local listing.

Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013)

There is little historical context within the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013), that supports the following significance themes, **development of Front Street as "Automobile Row" from the 1920s through the 1940s and the automobile industry related to the economic development of Santa Cruz.**

However, the theme of "Economic Development 1850-1950" is identified as important to the City of Santa Cruz, which includes a small section entitled "Front Street", which states it is an area that developed "Later, as the automobile became increasingly prevalent in urban centers during the interwar period, commercial sales and services clusters began to appear in Santa Cruz, primarily on Front Street."

Unfortunately, this statement is not enough to support the significance theme. Furthermore, within the context written in 2013, there is little mention of the importance of the automobile industry in Santa Cruz or on Front Street

"Historic Context Statement", City of Santa Cruz (2000)

EDS also reviewed the "Historic Context Statement" for the City of Santa Cruz (2000),⁹⁰ to ascertain any historical context related to the automobile industry or the importance of Front Street as part of an automobile row that would be important to the city. EDS found that the automobile is discussed in

⁸⁹ The significance theme defined within Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey that this building would be associated with appears to be "Economic Development 1850-1950" and

⁹⁰ Susan Lehmann, "Historic Context Statement", City of Santa Cruz (October 20, 2000), <https://www.cityofsantacruz.com>, accessed May 10, 2022.

relation to tourism in Chapter 3, the “Economic Development of the City of Santa Cruz, City 1850-1950”. However, this does not support the local significance.

Analysis of Integrity

The significance of a local resource must also be supported by integrity, which is often posed by asking a question, such as **does the 1926 building retain enough integrity to convey significance associated with the development of Front Street as “Automobile Row” from the 1920s through the 1940s and/or the automobile industry related to the economic development of Santa Cruz?**

EDS Integrity Analysis: Although the building does retain some integrity, alterations to the 1926 building have affected the materials and workmanship of the building and the setting has changed from an automobile row to a commercial area with large swaths of parking lots due to the demolition of buildings, which has affected the overall integrity of setting to support the significance statement.

EDS Local Evaluation Recommendations: *The 1926 building does not have the integrity to be considered a “significant local, state, or national event” associated with the development of Front Street as “Automobile Row” from the 1920s through the 1940s or the automobile industry related to the economic development of Santa Cruz.*

Therefore, the 1926 building does not appear to qualify for local listing under this category.

3. Associated with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state, or nation; and/or

EDS Analysis and Recommendation: There is no evidence presented with the EDS HRE, the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013), within additional documentation provided by the city, or found as part of the research, survey, or evaluation that the 1926 building is associated with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state, or nation.

4. Associated with an architect, designer, or builder whose work has influenced the development of the city, state, or nation; and/or

EDS Analysis and Recommendation: There is no evidence presented with the EDS HRE, the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013), within additional documentation provided by the city, or found as part of the research, survey, or evaluation that the 1926 building is associated with an architect, designer, or builder whose work has influenced the development of the city, state, or nation.

5. Recognized as possessing special aesthetic merit or value as a building with quality of architecture and that retains sufficient features showing its architectural significance; and/or

EDS Analysis and Recommendation: The 1926 building is associated with Automobile Showroom design. Though it is not a locally recognized architectural type and is miscategorized as “vernacular Mission Revival commercial style”, it does not appear to possess special aesthetic merit or value as a building with quality of architecture, and that retains sufficient features showing its architectural significance. In addition, there is no evidence presented with this document or provided by the city or found as part of the research, survey, or evaluation that the 1926 building qualifies under this category.

6. Recognized as possessing distinctive stylistic characteristics or workmanship significant for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of native materials; and/or

EDS Analysis and Recommendation: There is no evidence presented with the EDS HRE, the Santa Cruz

Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013), within additional documentation provided by the city, or found as part of the research, survey, or evaluation that the 1926 building has the distinctive stylistic characteristics or workmanship significant for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of native materials to be listed under this category.

Summary of Local Re-Evaluation

Based on the local evaluation completed by Archives and Architects in 2013, the City of Santa Cruz had previously recommended that the 1926 building is eligible for local listing for on a local level for its association with development of Front Street from the 1920s through the 1940s as automobile row. However, based on the lack of local context to support this previous recommendation for local listing and discrepancies in the integrity analysis, EDS completed a re-evaluation of the 1926 building for local eligibility. Based on the current context adopted by the City of Santa Cruz in 2013, and context within the HRE completed by EDS, it does not appear 1926 building is eligible for local listing.

However, this determination is a decision by the City of Santa Cruz and as such, to consider the 1926 building as a historical resource would require the lead agency to find the building historically significant *“if supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record,”* even if the resource is not listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the CRHR (PRC 5024.1), or in a local register of historical resources (PRC 5020.1(k)).

CONCLUSIONS

In compliance with CEQA regulations and guidelines, and the City of Santa Cruz’s historic preservation policies and ordinances, EDS Principal Architectural Historian Stacey De Shazo, M.A. and EDS Senior Architectural Historian Brian Matuk, M.S. conducted research and a survey to evaluate the built environment that is at least 45 years in age, recommended by the OHP as a threshold, within the Project Area to determine if any of the built environment qualifies for listing on the CRHR.

The CRHR includes resources listed in or formally determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, as well as some California State Landmarks and Points of Historical Interest. Properties of local significance that have been designated under a local preservation ordinance (local landmarks or landmark districts) or that have been identified in a local historical resources inventory may be eligible for listing in the CRHR and are presumed to be significant resources for purposes of CEQA unless a preponderance of evidence indicates otherwise (PRC § 5024.1, 14 CCR § 4850).

The Project Area consists of three adjacent parcels, including one parcel at 514-516 Front Street, within Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 005-151-37, which includes the 1926 building, and two parcels at 530 Front Street, within APNs 005-151-47 and 005-151-44, which include a 1981 commercial building and paved parking lot, located within the City of Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County; however, only the Property that includes the 1926 building was evaluated as part of this HRE, as it is the only building within the Project Area that is at least 45 years of age, and in accordance with the OHP Instructions for Recording Historical Resources, it was determined by EDS not to warrant evaluation.

The results of the HRE determined that the 1926 building is not eligible for listing in the CRHR under any criteria. In 2013, the 1926 building was determined to be a historical resource eligible for local listing. But, currently, the 1926 building is not locally designated or listed as the property owners elected to “opt

out”⁹¹ of local listing. Furthermore, due to discrepancies within the 2013 evaluation, the city requested EDS complete an updated local evaluation. Based on city guidelines, OHP guidelines, and NRHP guidelines for evaluating cultural resources, EDS recommends that the 1926 building is not eligible for local listing.

In summary, the 1926 building at 514-518 Front Street is not individually eligible for listing in the CRHR and is recommended not eligible for local listing. As such, neither the 1926 building nor any other built environment resources located within the Project Area qualify as historical resources under CEQA.

⁹¹ City Council Resolution No. NS-28,621 (passed and adopted March 2013).

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- Deed of Trust between Russell R. Samuels and Kathleen T. Samuels (Trustor) and K. D. Daubenbis and Bruce L. Sharpe (Trustee), dated March 23, 1940.
- Joint Tenancy Deed between Walter A. Huston, L. Fern Huston, Alvin L. Weymouth, and Lois A. Weymouth (Grantor) and Benjamin F. Kelley and Alice B. Kelley (Grantee; Joint Tenants), dated May 24, 1946.

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Appendix A:

DPR Forms

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*Resource Name or #: 514-518 Front Street

P1. Other Identifier: Ward & Thrash Oakland and Pontiac Sales

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

- *a. County Santa Cruz County and
- *b. USGS 7.5' Quad Santa Cruz, Calif. Date 1994 T 11S; R 1W; of of Sec 12; MD B.M.
- c. Address 514-518 Front Street City Santa Cruz Zip 95060
- d. UTM: Zone 10S, 586860 mE/ 4092271 mN
- e. Other Locational Data:

The property is located on the east side of Front Street between Soquel Avenue and Cathcart Street, just west of the Santa Cruz Riverwalk and the San Lorenzo River in the City of Santa Cruz, within Assessor Parcel Number 005-151-37.

*P3a. **Description:** The 1926 building is a one-story commercial building designed as an "Automobile Showroom" property type (see *Continuation Sheet, Page 20* for context). The 1926 building is constructed of reinforced concrete, with an L-shape plan that appears to be defined by a main rectangular building form with a gabled wing near the northern end of the east elevation (rear wing). The building has stepped parapets at all elevations, and aerial photographs suggest that the main building form has a very low pitch front-gable roof, with the rear wing has a moderate pitch front-gable roof. It appears that both roof forms are clad in a modified bitumen roof. The exterior appears to consist of stucco at the front, west elevation, and painted board-formed concrete at the north, east, and south elevations, with painted concrete masonry units at the east elevation of the rear wing. The building's west elevation (Primary Façade) is defined by three distinct bays facing Front Street, with a parapet that displays a low-pitch gable above the center bay. The stucco exterior displays diamond- and rectangular-shape appliques attached to the west elevation parapet just below the coping, which appear to be constructed of painted wood. (See

Continuation Sheet, Page 2)

P5a. Photograph or Drawing



- *P3b. **Resource Attributes:**
 HP6 – 1-3 story commercial building
- *P4. **Resources Present:** Building
 Structure Object Site District
 Element of District Other
- P5b. Description of Photo: West elevations, 4/9/2019
- *P6. **Date Constructed/Age and Source:**
 Historic Prehistoric Both
1926; Santa Cruz Sentinel
- *P7. **Owner and Address:**
Withheld by owner

- *P8. **Recorded by:**
Brian Matuk, M.S., Evans & De Shazo, Inc., 1141 Gravenstein Highway South, Sebastopol, CA 95472
- *P9. **Date Recorded:**
4/9/2019

*P10. **Survey Type:** Intensive

*P11. **Report Citation:** Stacey De Shazo, M.A. and Brian Matuk, M.S. (2019): Historic Resource Evaluation For The Property Located At 514-518 Front Street, Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County, California

- *Attachments: NONE Location Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record
 Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record
 Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List): _____

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(Continued from Primary, Page 1)

The west elevation has four contemporary signs marking each business currently in the building—with one sign centered at each end bay, and two signs at the center bay. Contemporary gooseneck lights attached to the parapet hang down to illuminate the contemporary signage along this west elevation. The three distinct storefront bays are denoted by changes in the pitch of the parapet along the front, west elevation, and are each denoted with separate addresses—514, 516, and 518 Front Street from south to north. The two end bays (514 and 518 Front Street) appear to be identical in size, and flank the larger center bay (516 Front Street). The southernmost bay consists of a central pair of contemporary glazed wood double doors that are flanked on either side by contemporary wood-frame plate-glass storefront windows. Two wood-frame plate-glass transom windows are located above the doors, but within separate frames. Spanning the width of the southernmost bay is a wood-frame multilight clerestory window, located above the storefront and transom windows. The center bay currently has two businesses within the bay, and is defined by a deep-recess entrance that is slightly off-center from the otherwise nearly symmetrical composition of the west elevation. All fenestration at this center bay is topped by contemporary, traditional-shape fabric awnings with valances. The recessed entrance appears to have been altered in 1982, and is located within what appears to be an original wood-frame archway that has a transom consisting of a pair of single-light windows within the same frame, with a four-light clerestory window located above the transom. Within the recess is a set of contemporary glazed wood double-doors facing north, a wood-frame plate-glass storefront window facing west, and another set of contemporary glazed wood double-doors facing south. The exterior within the recess is clad in contemporary horizontal droplap wood siding, and the floor consists of what appears to be contemporary concrete tile flooring. Flanking either side of the recessed entry are pairs of wood-frame plate-glass windows with six-light wood-frame clerestory windows located above. There is an additional pair of wood-frame plate-glass windows and clerestory at the northern end of this center bay. The northernmost bay is located within a slight recess from the remainder of the elevation, and consists of what appears to be a set of contemporary glazed metal doors, with a pair of transom windows located above; however, the transom windows are located within individual wood-frames. Flanking either side of the double doors are wood-frame plate-glass windows. Above both plate-glass windows and the pair of transom windows are three sets of three-light clerestory windows, which appear to all be in individual frames.

The **north elevation** consists of a painted board-formed concrete exterior, with a parapet that steps downward toward the east. Near the western end of this elevation is a single diamond-shaped applique, and a contemporary sign attached to the exterior with a gooseneck light attached to the parapet that hangs down for illumination. Further east on this north elevation is a circular painted mural, which is located adjacent to a contemporary sign affixed to the exterior from 1993 that states the title of the artwork, “Bioregional mural project of Santa Cruz Mural #2”, as well as a description of the purpose and contributors of the piece. There is a cluster of 75 ribbed glass blocks located near the

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center of the north elevation that appear to not be original, given the visible repairs to the concrete that surround the cluster. Near the eastern end of this north elevation are what appear to be two metal multi-light windows with operational awning sashes.

The **east elevation of the rear wing** appears to be constructed of concrete masonry units, and consists of a stepped parapet, and no fenestration. There is a contemporary chain link fence located near the northern end of this east elevation of the rear wing, and appears to serve as a partial enclosure for mechanical equipment. The **east elevation of the main building form** consists of a rear entry, located within the corner where the rear wing meets the main building form, and consists of two metal-clad slab doors situated in different frames, and sheltered by a wood frame awning. To the south of this rear entry is a contemporary sliding sash window that appears to have been installed in a previous door opening that has been partially infilled with horizontal wood siding. The original wood door frame that bordered this previous opening is still extant. To the south of this window is a contemporary metal roll-up garage door within what appears to be an original wood frame—similar in shape to that which has been partially infilled directly to the north. To the south of this roll-up garage door are two aluminum multilight windows that appear to have operational awning sashes.

The **south elevation of the rear wing** consists of a large metal roll-up garage door within a wood frame. Directly to the west of the garage door is a contemporary shed-roof addition that is clad in vertical wood siding with asphalt shingle roofing. The east elevation of this addition has a six-panel wood door, while the south elevation has a single-hung vinyl window. Under the awning at the corner where the main building form meets the rear wing, there appears to be a slight bump-pout that is clad in vertical wood siding, and consists of a narrow door—likely providing access to mechanical equipment, given the metal ventilation pipe that extends above the awning at this location. The **south elevation of the main building form** consists of a board-formed concrete exterior with a set of metal-clad double-doors that are nearly centered on the elevation. Toward the western end of this elevation is an area that appears to have been a door opening, which has since been infilled. To the west of this infilled door is utility equipment with conduits attached to the building exterior, leading to the roof. This utility equipment is protected by nine metal bollards. At the very western edge of this south elevation is a contemporary business sign that is identical to that on the north elevation, which is similarly illuminated by a gooseneck lamp affixed to the parapet, with a diamond-shape applique affixed to the exterior just below the parapet.

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The west elevation of the 1926 building, facing east.



The west elevation at the southernmost bay, facing northeast.

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Detail of the contemporary doors and transom windows at the southernmost bay of the 1926 building.



Detail of clerestory at the southernmost bay of the 1926 building, along the west elevation, facing southeast.

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The center bay at the west elevation, facing east.



Detail of transom windows and clerestory windows above the recessed entrance in center bay on the west elevation.

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Detail of recessed opening within the center bay, showing the south-facing double doors and plate-glass window, facing northeast.



Detail of recessed opening within the center bay, showing the plate-glass window and north-facing double doors facing southeast.

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Detail of the pair of plate-glass windows located to the north of the recessed entry within the center bay of the 1926 building, facing southeast.

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Detail of clerestory window above plate-glass storefront window at center bay of the 1926 building.



The northernmost bay at the west elevation of the 1926 building, facing north-northeast.

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Detail of the contemporary metal double doors at the northernmost bay of the 1926 building.



The western portion of the north elevation of the 1926 building, facing southeast.

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Detail of the diamond appliques on both the north and west elevations, with the contemporary business sign and gooseneck lamp at the north elevation visible at left.



Detail of the contemporary painted mural at the north elevation of the 1926 building, facing south.

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Detail of the signage associated with the contemporary painted mural at the north elevation of the 1926 building, facing south.



Center portion of the north elevation of the 1926 building, showing the contemporary painted mural at right, and the cluster of glass blocks at center, facing southeast.

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Detail of the cluster of glass blocks at the north elevation of the 1926 building, facing south.



Detail of the two metal multi-light windows near the eastern end of the north elevation of the 1926 building, facing southwest.

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East elevation of the rear wing, facing north-northwest.



East elevation of the main building form, with the south elevation of the rear wing visible at far right, facing northwest.

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Detail of rear entry doors at the east elevation of the main building form, facing northwest. The contemporary shed-roof addition at the south elevation of the rear wing is also visible at right.



A portion of the east elevation of the main building form, showing one of the two multilight windows at left, the roll-up garage door at center, the infilled garage door with window at right, facing northwest.

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South elevation of the rear wing, facing north, also showing the east elevation of main building form visible at left.



South elevation of the 1926 building, facing northwest.

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Western corner of the south elevation of the main building form, facing north.

Contemporary Buildings

There are three contemporary buildings within the Property that were constructed in ca. 2005. While these buildings do not reach the 50-year age criteria for CRHR-eligibility, they are nevertheless documented below for clarification of the extant built-environment at the Project Area.

ca. 2007 Shed 1

This rectangular plan shed-roof building is located to the southeast of the 1926 building, with the south elevation directly abutting the neighboring commercial building at 512 Front Street. The building is situated on a poured concrete foundation, with an exterior clad in vertical wood siding, and a roof consisting of corrugated metal. The only fenestration occurs at the north elevation, and consists of a large opening with corrugated metal double doors that provides access to refuse dumpsters stored at the interior.

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North and west elevations of the ca. 2007 Shed 1, with the neighboring building at 512 Front Street visible at right, facing southeast.



East and north elevations of the ca. 2007 Shed 1, with the neighboring building at 512 Front Street visible at left and right of the ca. 2007 Shed 1, facing southwest.

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ca. 2007 Shed 2

This rectangular plan building is located to the northeast of the 1926 building, and has a metal chainlink fence attached to its south elevation. The building is situated on a poured concrete foundation, with an exterior clad in vertical wood siding. The roof was not visible at the time of the survey, but appears to be nearly flat, with wood fascia that wraps around all elevations. The only fenestration consists of a metal slab door at the north elevation.



North and west elevations of the ca. 2007 Shed 2, facing southeast.

Previous Documentation

In 2013, the 1926 building was identified by Archives & Architects as eligible for local designation as part of the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (Historic Building Survey). The property was identified with the following description:

“Front Street was a major hub of the evolving automobile sales and services commercial sector for the Santa Cruz area beginning in the 1920s. This vernacular commercial building was constructed in 1927, with its primary tenant being an Oakland and Pontiac auto dealership. Originally Hutchings & Dodson, the dealership quickly changed to Kirby Motor Co. and then Ward & Thrash. By 1935, Sylvan Thrash had taken over as sole proprietor of the dealership at this location, and he remained at this site until building a new showroom across the street at 429 Front Street in 1948. Other mostly auto-related tenants occupied this building over subsequent

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years. In the early 1980s, the building was renovated for pedestrian-oriented retail uses, as it exists today.”¹

The findings of the Historic Building Survey were accepted by the Santa Cruz City Council as part of Resolution NS-28,621, which included a provision allowing specific property owners to “opt-out” of listing in the Historic Building Survey. As part of this Resolution, the property owner of 514-518 Front Street elected to “opt-out” of local listing in the Historic Building Survey, and is currently not considered to be a locally designated resource. As such, while the 1926 building was previously determined to be eligible for local designation, it was not previously determined to qualify as an Historical Resource for the purposes of CEQA.

AUTOMOBILE SHOWROOM PROPERTY TYPE

The following context regarding the Automobile Showroom property type is quoted from the SurveyLA historic context statement related to the theme “Commercial Development and the Automobile, 1910-1970”. While this historic context was prepared for the City of Los Angeles, its description of the property type and historic events that led to its popularity apply to automobile showrooms throughout California. For these reasons, this historic context regarding the automobile showroom property type is relevant to the 1926 building, and is used to evaluate the significance of the building for its architecture. Specific excerpts that are local-specific have been removed from this section, as they do not apply to the 1926 building.

“Buying an automobile was first done through a livery stable, carriage dealer, or bicycle shop. These early car vendors were businessmen who obtained a license to sell a particular brand of auto. Once purpose-built automobile dealerships began to appear, just before the First World War, they fit into the existing pre-automobile streetscape. They were essentially storefronts on a commercial street with a large entrance door and windows to show the product.”²

Unlike the service station, the showroom retained throughout the 1920s a central business district location and a traditional relationship to the street. The auto manufacturers chose to remain urban and to adopt the historicist styles that characterized the elite architecture of the city. Most potential customers did not yet own cars and therefore relied on public transportation to reach a dealership; the impressive revivalist architecture assured them of a reputable vendor.

The auto manufacturers first experimented with building what one historian has referred to as ‘object-lesson’ salesrooms in certain cities to show locally-owned dealerships what could be

¹ Archives & Architecture, *Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey – Volume III*, 52.

² Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 75-76.

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*done. These corporate-sponsored buildings were designed to resemble banks and first-class office buildings, clad in traditional styles. 'Exteriors often sported bas-reliefs, grand ornamental cornices, and entrance porticoes, while inside cars were sold in elegant surroundings in large, opulent sales salons.'*³

During the early twenties these urban dealerships began combining auto servicing and repair with sales. To fit onto their city sites, they constructed multi-storied buildings complete with ramps and auto-sized elevators for access to the upper levels. The facades sported historicist detailing; generally, the only feature on the street front that identified the building as an auto-service facility was the use of factory sash for the large windows on the upper floors."

"Along with the multi-level downtown dealerships, the car companies built smaller outlets in outlying business districts. These more suburban showrooms continued the traditional pattern of being set hard against the street and of clothing themselves in historicist garb. The common façade composition consisted of an elaborate center entrance and symmetrically flanking show windows. These smaller showrooms were in essence single-story versions of the multi-story central business district dealerships, and maintained a footprint much like that of the earlier livery stable."

*"By the mid-1930s, the auto showroom adopted the Streamline Moderne. In an attempt to encourage flagging sales during the Depression, some of the older downtown showrooms replaced their historicist ornament, at least at the showroom level, with abstract lines, curves, and circles. More important, however, was a rethinking of location for those few new dealerships that were built in the 1930s. Most potential customers already owned cars, so there was no need to be close to streetcar lines. Now ease of auto access and adequate parking were needed."*⁴

*The auto showroom moved to the strip. Instead of remaining on a tight lot in the central or local business district, it placed itself on an arterial road that allowed it to spread horizontally. The common arrangement was a showroom in the front, complete with large expanses of glass, service bays to the rear, and adequate parking alongside for used cars and customer circulation. The showroom itself, with its expanses of glass, maintained its position directly on the street, without a setback. It was dressed in Streamline Moderne detailing, with an integral sign featuring the name and emblem of the brand sold within."*⁵

"Though construction of new dealerships ceased during the Second World War, anticipating a surge of new car customers, the auto companies studied the problem of designing attractive

³ Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 79.

⁴ Ibid, 86-88.

⁵ Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 86-88.

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facilities. As early as 1944, before the end of the war, there appeared Post-War Housing and Facilities for Studebaker Dealers by that now vanished brand. In 1945 Ford published Plans for New and Modernized Sales and Service Buildings. That same year General Motors held a "Design Competition for Dealer Establishments" and three years later issued Planning Automobile Dealer Properties based on the submissions to the competition.⁶

These planning manuals carefully considered issues of location and design. Not only should dealerships be placed along arterials on large plots of land, a common practice since the 1930s, manuals decreed, but they should sit on the far side of an intersection on the homeward-bound side of a commuter route. Potential customers could have full view of the showroom while waiting for red lights and then, with free time after work, pull in and inspect the autos on display. There should be a procession of visual delights to greet customers: first the new cars, seen through a glare-free expanse of glass, and then the service wing, providing potential customers with the assurance of care in the future. The final element should be the used car lot, arranged with the best models in front.⁷

Much of this advice came from studying the few dealerships that were built in the 1930s. But there were a number of subtle and not so subtle changes. A subtle change was the shrinking size of the showroom, with just a few of the best looking models on display, and the growing respectability of the parts and service department, with attractive counters and waiting areas. A not so subtle change was in the dealership's primary identifying sign. The sign in the 1930s, while an important design element, tended to be integrated into the architecture. By the 1950s the sign often detached itself from the building and became a free-standing, and increasingly dominant, element.⁸

"During the first years of construction, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, auto showrooms were typically subdued Mid-Century Modern designs, with flat roofs and plain surfaces. The mammoth glass windows showing off the cars provided character."

"Over the next fifteen years the most important design development was the separation of the sign from the structure. The detached sign occasionally took on Googie-like extravagance to attract attention, but generally the need to exhibit the brand emblem and name had precedence. The detached sign, enormous by earlier standards, was generally limited to serving as a giant billboard for the corporate logo.

This reticence extended to the showroom structure itself. The Googie style could occasionally be seen in an exaggerated roof line or a canopy extended over the service drive but this was

⁶ Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 88.

⁷ Ibid, 88-89.

⁸ Ibid, 88-90

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relatively rare. The point was to call attention to the cars on sale and not to the architecture. The same was true when New Formalism, with its classicizing proportions and details, began to appear in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Again, the architecture was secondary to the merchandise and thereby kept subdued.

From the mid-1950s onward the most common architectural approach was to treat the showroom as a minimalist Mid-Century Modern container.”

“As with other auto-related building types, the auto showroom underwent a change after the mid-1960s in response to both growing conservatism and, more importantly, the changing nature of the automobile industry. To be sure, the showroom remained the place to purchase and service a car but increasingly as a structure showrooms retreated from the road, behind parking lots, and became less visible. Instead, motorists were greeted by row upon row of new cars parked outside, displayed like cans of soft drinks on a supermarket shelf.

This mode of selling required great amounts of space. Most of the existing dealerships simply were not large enough. The result was the abandoning of locations that, in 1950, seemed quite adequate for vast lots on the outskirts of development. This was accompanied by a massive reduction in the number of dealerships as American-made brands disappeared and those few remaining consolidated facilities. The showroom and the service bay took on a utilitarian form and only the dealer sign, free-standing and standardized for the brand, attracted attention.”^{9 10}

CRHR Evaluation

The following section evaluates the 1926 building for eligibility for listing in the CRHR under four applicable CRHR criteria, utilizing significant themes that were found to be potentially associated with the 1926 building. The Project Area was evaluated for site-specific historical significance, as well as under the following themes and associated periods of significance: development of Front Street as “Automobile Row” from ca. 1920 to ca. 1945, and architecture as it relates to an Automobile Showroom property type constructed during the Interwar Period, 1918-1939, between the end of World War I and the beginning of the United States’ involvement in World War II, with a period of significance associated with the 1926 date of construction.

The ca. 2007 sheds, 1981 building, and vacant parking lot were not evaluated for historical significance.

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

The 1926 building is associated with the development of the Front Street “Automobile Row”

⁹ Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 90-93.

¹⁰ City of Los Angeles, *Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement, Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980, Theme: Commercial Development and the Automobile, 1910-1970*. Prepared for SurveyLA, August 2016, 35-39.

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from ca. 1920 to ca. 1945, where automobile showrooms and repair garages were constructed between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Street. The development along this section of Front Street with businesses associated with automobiles was indicative of the rise of the automobile in the culture of America that began in early 1920s with the mass production of automobiles and availability of new affordable cars such as the Ford Model-T. This type of development was widespread through most large and medium sized cities in California, as well as the U.S., and although the rise of the automobile resulted in the create of numerous businesses, including gas stations. Motels, roadside attractions, automobile repair shops, and automobile showrooms, as well as infrastructure such as bridges, and highways, the 1926 building alone within the Project Area does not have the ability to convey this significance them. As such, although the 1926 building reflects these larger development trends in California and in Santa Cruz along Front Street, the 1926 building does not appear to convey significance under this theme to warrant individual eligibility in the CRHR. Additionally, there are very few buildings remaining on Front Street from the development period of ca. 1920 to ca. 1945 that are related to the automobile, and it does not appear that there would be sufficient extant contributors to collectively embody this significant theme as an historic district.

Therefore, the 1926 building does not appear eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criterion 1.

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

Despite extensive research, it does not appear that the Project Area as a whole, nor the 1926 building, are associated with the lives of individuals or families that are important to local, California, or national history to warrant eligibility under the CRHR. There is no information was found to show that any owners of the building or owners of the businesses associated with the 1926 building made important, identifiable contributions to local, State, or National history in a way that is directly associated with the Project Area.

Therefore, the 1926 building does not appear eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criterion 2.

3. (Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.

The 1926 building is a fairly good example of an Automobile Showroom property type designed in the Interwar Period between 1918-1939, with a period of significance tied to its date of construction of 1926. The 1926 building exhibits the typical one-story, three-bay plan of the automobile showrooms of the 1920s, which were sometimes indistinguishable from repair garages of the same period and took on the plan and general design of livery stables. The 1926 building was designed as a typical automobile showroom of the 1920s, with the typical large central opening flanked by display windows to showcase the automobiles located inside, as well

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as the automobile repair and service functions operating at the rear of the building. While the 1926 building has undergone alterations over time, including converting the automobile showroom to four separate businesses in separate retail bays, the building continues to display the distinctive characteristics of the automobile showroom property type of the 1920s. However, despite retaining integrity to its date of construction, the 1926 building is not eligible for individual listing in the CRHR, as the building does not appear to be “an important example (within its context) of building practices of a particular time in history” and does not demonstrate “an important phase of the architectural development of the area of community in that it had an impact as evidenced by later buildings.”¹¹

Therefore, the 1926 building appears does not appear eligible for individual listing in the CRHR under Criterion 3.

4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criterion 4 most commonly applies to resources that contain or are likely to contain information bearing on an important archaeological research question. While most often applied to archaeological sites, Criterion 4 can also apply to buildings that contain important information. For a building to be eligible under Criterion 4, it must be a principal source of important information, such as exhibiting a local variation on a standard design or construction technique can be eligible if a study can yield important information, such as how local availability of materials or construction expertise affected the evolution of local building development.

The 1926 building does not have the ability to convey information that is unique or unknown in regard to an architectural style, as such, it does not appear eligible for listing in the CRHR under Criterion 4. In addition, the property was evaluated for archaeology, and the associated report provides details related to information potential associated with archaeological resources.

City of Santa Cruz - Local Evaluation

The 1926 building was considered under local significance categories 1 through 5 (listed below) utilizing the adopted historical context documents (2000 and 2013) written on behalf of the City of Santa Cruz that identify important resources and historical themes.

1. Recognized as a significant example of the cultural, natural, archaeological, or built heritage of the city, state, or nation

EDS Analysis and Recommendation: There is no evidence presented with the EDS HRE, the Santa Cruz

¹¹ United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources Division, *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 1990, revised 1997), 18.

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Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013),¹² within additional documentation provided by the city, or found as part of the research, survey, or evaluation that the 1926 building is a significant example of built heritage that should be recognized by the city, state, or nation.

2. Associated with a significant local, state, or national event

The following context was taken from pages 17 and 18 of the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013) under “Front Street” sub-heading.

“While initial development of the city center was near the Santa Cruz Mission and the plaza, after 1853 Main Street (later Front Street) developed as the main business street. The prominence of Main Street was short lived, and by 1866, with the Foreman & Wright survey, the name was changed to Front Street and it was designated as a secondary street. Front Street did not initially connect to the wharves, but eventually connected to Pacific Avenue at the bottom of Beach Hill in 1932. The Foreman & Wright survey also changed the name of Willow Street to Pacific Avenue and designated it as the primary business street. Businesses began to move to Pacific Avenue and newly vacant buildings along Front Street were occupied for a time by the Chinese ethnic community. The Front Street Chinatown was the largest in the city and lasted until 1894 when it was destroyed by fire. After the 1894 fire, the displaced Chinese community moved closer to the San Lorenzo River. They continued to reside in this area until the December 1955 flood.

The north end of Front Street had served as a municipal center providing the then site for the county jail and the extant Hall of Records in the late nineteenth century, as well as Santa Cruz City Hall, Fire Department, and Bell Tower. Later, as the automobile became increasingly prevalent in urban centers during the interwar period, commercial sales and services clusters began to appear in Santa Cruz, primarily on Front Street. Prominent local architects such as Lee Dill Esty and C. J. Ryland designed buildings for clients in the automobile business, including auto repair shops (Huston & Weymouth Garage, 418 Front Street) and auto showrooms (Thrash Pontiac Motors, 429 Front Street). In 1936 the nineteenth-century county jail was replaced with a Modern edifice designed by Albert Roller (now the Museum of Art & History at the McPherson Center, 725 Front Street). Today, Front Street has lost most of its auto related businesses and continues to serve as a secondary street to Pacific Avenue. However, it retains many structures associated with commercial development during the first half of the twentieth century.

¹² The significance theme defined within Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey that this building would be associated with appears to be “Economic Development 1850-1950”.

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EDS Local Re-Evaluation

Based on the City of Santa Cruz' Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013),¹³ and survey and research completed as part of the EDS HRE, it was determined that the 1926 building is associated with the development of Front Street as "Automobile Row" from the 1920s through the 1940s and the automobile industry related to the economic development of Santa Cruz. As such, these are the significance themes.

To assess these significance themes, EDS utilized the adopted historical context documents (2000 and 2013) written on behalf of the City of Santa Cruz that identify important resources and historical themes. The section below provides of analysis of the context documents that should support these themes for local listing.

Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013)

*There is little historical context within the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013), that supports the following significance themes, **development of Front Street as "Automobile Row" from the 1920s through the 1940s and the automobile industry related to the economic development of Santa Cruz.***

However, the theme of "Economic Development 1850-1950" is identified as important to the City of Santa Cruz, which includes a small section entitled "Front Street", which states it is an area that developed "Later, as the automobile became increasingly prevalent in urban centers during the interwar period, commercial sales and services clusters began to appear in Santa Cruz, primarily on Front Street."

Unfortunately, this statement is not enough to support the significance theme. Furthermore, within the context written in 2013, there is little mention of the importance of the automobile industry in Santa Cruz or on Front Street

"Historic Context Statement", City of Santa Cruz (2000)

EDS also reviewed the "Historic Context Statement" for the City of Santa Cruz (2000),¹⁴ to ascertain any historical context related to the automobile industry or the importance of Front Street as part of an automobile row that would be important to the city. EDS found that the automobile is discussed in relation to tourism in Chapter 3, the "Economic Development of the City of Santa Cruz, City 1850-1950". However, this does not support the local significance.

Analysis of Integrity

¹³ The significance theme defined within Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey that this building would be associated with appears to be "Economic Development 1850-1950" and

¹⁴ Susan Lehmann, "Historic Context Statement", City of Santa Cruz (October 20, 2000), <https://www.cityofsantacruz.com>, accessed May 10, 2022.

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*The significance of a local resource must also be supported by integrity, which is often posed by asking a question, such as **does the 1926 building retain enough integrity to convey significance associated with the development of Front Street as “Automobile Row” from the 1920s through the 1940s and/or the automobile industry related to the economic development of Santa Cruz?***

EDS Integrity Analysis: Although the building does retain some integrity, alterations to the 1926 building have affected the materials and workmanship of the building and the setting has changed from an automobile row to a commercial area with large swaths of parking lots due to the demolition of buildings, which has affected the overall integrity of setting to support the significance statement.

***EDS Local Evaluation Recommendations:** The 1926 building does not have the integrity to be considered a “significant local, state, or national event” associated with the development of Front Street as “Automobile Row” from the 1920s through the 1940s or the automobile industry related to the economic development of Santa Cruz.*

Therefore, the 1926 building does not appear to qualify for local listing under this category.

3. Associated with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state, or nation; and/or

EDS Analysis and Recommendation: There is no evidence presented with the EDS HRE, the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013), within additional documentation provided by the city, or found as part of the research, survey, or evaluation that the 1926 building is associated with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state, or nation.

4. Associated with an architect, designer, or builder whose work has influenced the development of the city, state, or nation; and/or

EDS Analysis and Recommendation: There is no evidence presented with the EDS HRE, the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013), within additional documentation provided by the city, or found as part of the research, survey, or evaluation that the 1926 building is associated with an architect, designer, or builder whose work has influenced the development of the city, state, or nation.

5. Recognized as possessing special aesthetic merit or value as a building with quality of architecture and that retains sufficient features showing its architectural significance; and/or

EDS Analysis and Recommendation: The 1926 building is associated with Automobile Showroom design. Though it is not a locally recognized architectural type and is miscategorized as “vernacular Mission Revival commercial style”, it does not appear to possess special aesthetic merit or value as a building with quality of architecture, and that retains sufficient features showing its architectural significance. In addition, there is no evidence presented with this document or provided by the city or found as part of the research, survey, or evaluation that the 1926 building qualifies under this category.

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6. Recognized as possessing distinctive stylistic characteristics or workmanship significant for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of native materials; and/or

EDS Analysis and Recommendation: There is no evidence presented with the EDS HRE, the Santa Cruz Historic Building Survey, Volume III (March 2013), within additional documentation provided by the city, or found as part of the research, survey, or evaluation that the 1926 building has the distinctive stylistic characteristics or workmanship significant for the study of a period, method of construction, or use of native materials to be listed under this category.

