

# CONTINUITY

Volume 36, No. 3

*Preservation Action Council of San Jose*  
*Dedicated to Preserving San Jose's Architectural and Cultural Heritage*

Fall 2025

## COVER STORY

- 1 Hillbrook High Cuts Ribbon at Moir Building

## PAC\*SJ NEWS

- 3 Neon Lights Up 35th Anniversary
- 6 Sponsors and Supporters of 35th Celebration
- 7 PAC\*SJ's Happy Hour at Vahl's
- 7 Sept. Happy Hour, Save Date
- 8 Our Last 13th St. Sale
- 8 Member/Neighbor Morsels

## PRESERVATION ADVOCACY

- 9 Newest Endangered 8 2025 List

## MORE PAC\*SJ

- 13 PAC\*SJ Calendar
- 14 PAC\*SJ SJSU Modernism Walking Tour
- 14 News Flash: MACSA Fire
- 15 Bev Blockie Honored
- 15 Visit "Doors Open California"
- 16 Bit of PAC\*SJ History

## PRESERVATION ISSUES

- 17 City Issues Blighted Properties Report
- 17 PAC\*SJ's Position on Blight
- 19 Membership Form
- 20 Board of Directors, Staff and Advisory Board Rosters

## Hillbrook High Cuts Ribbon at Moir Bldg.

A new life for the City Landmark Moir Building (right) officially began on August 22nd with Hillbrook High School's ribbon cutting and first day of school in the historic structure. The new Hillbrook Upper School was established in downtown San Jose in 2023 at Adobe Headquarters with its second year at the historic Armory at 240 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. The 90th anniversary of its JrK-8th grade Los Gatos private school was also celebrated.

A rehabilitation of the historic Moir structure has transformed it into the Academic and Administration Building for the downtown school. The Moir Building was originally built in 1894 and nicely restored in 2018. The interior has been modernized for high school student classes and staff offices. The exterior has been kept with all its beautiful features such as slanted bay windows, a rounded corner tower, sandstone piers with acanthus capitals, dentil trim, scrollwork and Romanesque arch entrances.



*The 1894 Moir Building, 227 N. 1st Street*

The transformation of the Moir and Armory Buildings into a school adjacent to the St. James Square Historic District brings activity and enthusiasm to the area.

The large crowd of the 106 first-year, sophomore and junior students, staff, parents, officials and the community gathered in the large Armory gym. Mark Silver, Head of School, welcomed all and

*(Cont'd p. 2)*



# Hillbrook High Cuts Ribbon (Cont'd)



received commendations from Mayor Matt Mahan and Supervisor Betty Duong. San Jose Councilmembers Michael Mulcahy and Anthony Tordillos were also present.

Mark Silver explained that an intentional decision was made to “bring the new High School downtown with the idea of the city as the classroom.” The staff and students appreciate the natural light filling the Moir Building, and the historic character and personality of the building which still remains.

After the official remarks, everyone

gathered in front of the Moir Building for the ribbon-cutting and photos.

Then the students departed to their new classrooms for the first time in this building. Students walking between the two buildings (Armory and Moir) each day, pass by the city’s elegant but terribly neglected First Church of Christ, Scientist.

PAC\**SJ* is still fighting the battle to bring the Church back to life, which would make a terrific performing arts center. 🐾



is published quarterly by the  
**PRESERVATION ACTION  
COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE**

The opinions expressed by contributors are not  
necessarily those of PAC\**SJ*.

Editor: Gayle Frank

Please submit your letters/comments to  
[info@preservation.org](mailto:info@preservation.org),  
408-998-8105 or to 42A S. First Street, San  
Jose, CA 95113

© 2025 Preservation Action Council of San Jose  
*PAC\**SJ* is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization*



# Neon Lights Up 35th Anniversary Celebration

On June 27, PAC\*SJ celebrated 35 years of preservation with a lively evening at the historic Hotel De Anza. PAC\*SJ members, partners, and supporters gathered to reflect on decades of advocacy and looked ahead to what's next. Thanks to your generosity, we raised over \$95,000 to continue protecting San José's architectural and cultural heritage and bringing awareness to the importance of historic preservation.

A high point of the evening was the lighting of the hotel's iconic rooftop neon sign, now fully restored and glowing once again, lighting up the skyline in celebration, a fitting symbol of the power and enjoyment of preservation. As the neon was turned on, guests rushed

to the Santa Clara Street sidewalk or quickly rode up the elevator to the roof to see the sign. On the terrace just below the sign, guests had their photos taken with the Hotel De Anza neon glowing above them.

PAC\*SJ member and volunteer extraordinaire, Ron Hagen, commented that photographer Shawno Auwae who was stationed on the De Anza roof "really caught the vibe of the event, graciously and patiently herding the well lubricated cats on the small terrace to take personalized photos of guests with the blazing Hotel De Anza sign on the tip top of the roof." All three photographers, Shawno Auwae, Sylvia Kennedy and Juan Raul Hernandez captured the

*(Cont'd p. 4)*



*PAC\*SJ Board members and staff ready for the "Legacy of Lights" party at Hotel DeAnza on June 27th. From left, Clare Gordon Bettencourt, Sally Zarnowitz, Jennifer Roman, Gratia Rankin, Gayle Frank, Carl Foisy, Patt Curia, André Luthard, Lynne Stephenson, Director Ben Leech, Mike Sodergren, Matthew Massey, Nancy Reynolds, and John Frolli.*



# Neon Lights Up 35th *(Cont'd)*

exciting ambience and joy of the evening. Thank you!

The photo collection of the entire evening is available for viewing at <https://legacy-in-lights.preservation.org>.

Stacy Sirk commented that, "Many people were delighted with the ambience and atmosphere of the event, beyond what they expected." About the renovated hotel sign, she said, "I remember seeing the scaffolding coming down just hours before the party, and the men working on the ground floor neon signs the same day—the hotel did its best to make sure it looked fantastic on our night."

Lovely floral arrangements created and donated by Advisory Board member Stacy Sirk added elegance to the evening. Many thanks to Stacy and to her donors and assistants!

Great music by Campbell's Jazz Soup was enjoyed by guests in the beautiful Hedley Club.

Our evening began with a welcoming from Emcee Sal Pizzaro and PAC\*SJ President Mike Sodergren. Next, Mayor Matt Mahan and State Senator David Cortese gave brief remarks followed by San Jose Councilmember Carl Salas introducing incoming District 3 Councilmember, Anthony Tordillos.

Part of the evening's fun was visiting hotel areas on the first, second, tenth floors, the penthouse and roof terrace. In the Palm Court the appetizers, small bites, desserts and drinks were enjoyed, as well as our Silent Auction and Live Auction items on display.

Our Bazaar was located in the former ballroom on the second floor with interesting items to buy. Guests spent time enjoying the penthouse before and after entering the roof terrace to admire the neon sign.

Our masterpiece printed program illustrated the 35-year timeline of PAC\*S's history and major preservation actions, as well as short descriptions of the Hotel De Anza's earlier attractions such as the Club De Anza Tap Room, Coffee Shop, Danzabar Tiki Bar, Radio KEEN's broadcasting station, San Jose's first hotel swimming pool, and El Capitán. Our 'Hunt for History' directed guests to search for six of these locations and stamp their programs with a unique passport stamp at each location. The first 50 who completed the Hunt received a beautiful Hotel De Anza enamel pin.

The printed program also reminded

us about PAC\*SJ's Sign Restoration Fund. We partnered with the Hotel De Anza to restore and relight the iconic rooftop sign. We thank the hotel's new owners for recognizing the value and craftsmanship of historic neon and for collaborating with PAC\*SJ on a scope of work that avoids LED replacement.

Your tax-deductible donations to PAC\*SJ's Sign Restoration Fund support the preservation of vintage signs across San Jose and assist small business owners with their maintenance.

PAC\*SJ was thrilled to celebrate our "Legacy in Lights" 35th anniversary at the historic Hotel De Anza. The celebration honored PAC\*SJ's 35 years of preservation advocacy, education, and civic engagement. We thank all who worked so very hard to produce this lovely celebration and to our sponsors and supporters who made this grand evening such a success. 🌸

*(More photos p. 5)*





## Neon Lights Up 35th *(Cont'd)*



*Above from left, Councilmember Carl Salas, Councilmember-elect Anthony Tordillos, PAC\*sj Director Ben Leech, Mayor Matt Mahan, and Councilmember Michael Mulcahy.*



*Top, Mayor Matt Mahan, Pattie Cortese, State Senator David Cortese and PAC\*sj President Michael Sodergren. Above on terrace below the hotel's neon sign, Laura and Chris Norris pose for a photo.*



*Board member Nancy Reynolds and Emcee Sal Pizarro calling out drawing winners.*

*Please note our sponsors and supporters on the next page who made this successful event possible.*



---

# Thank You to Our 35th Celebration Sponsors

---

## Diving Diva

Carl & Marianne Salas

## El Capitán

Patt Curia

Gratia Rankin & Jim Thomas

Rotary Club of San Jose

Westbank

## Danzabar

City Council District 3

Page & Turnbull

## Radio KEEN

Jennifer Hembree

History San José

San Jose Water

Jason Silva & Laura Henderson

Swenson

Visit San José

## Club De Anza

Archives & Architecture

Bellarmino College Preparatory

Scott Brown & Alex Fitzpatrick

Sylvia Carroll

Rod Diridon, Sr. & Dr. Gloria Duffy

Gayle Frank

Heckman Financial &

Insurance Services, Inc.

Georgie Huff & Nathan Norberg

Loveseat Homes

André Luthard

LWGraphics

Marilyn Messina

Sandra Moll

David Pandori

John Salas

The Schoennauer Company

Eileen Shydlowski

SJis.cool

Bill and Sally Souders

Strata Design Studio

Urban Catalyst

Sally and Arthur Zarnowitz

## And SPECIAL THANKS TO—

Live Music—Campbell's Jazz Soup

Catering—Mezcal

Desserts—Greenlee's, Peters' Bakery, Sweet-dragon Baking Company

Floral Arrangements—Stacy Sirk

With locally sourced flowers from California Flower Shippers, Grace Hope Flowers—Jessica Sukhy Kaur, Floral Designer,

Juniper Spring Flowers—Liza Head Tiny Footprint Flowers—Don & Julia Watson

Velvet and Green Floral—Beth Brandt

Graphic Design—LWGRAPHICS

Program Text—Heather David & Ben Leech

Historic Photos

Bay Area Radio Museum, History San Jose, Hotel De Anza, SJPL California Room, SJSU Special Collections

Video Montage—Walter Zarnowitz

AV Assistance—Peter Liesenfelt

PAC\*SJ Rummage Sales Squad

Auction Committee

Photography—Shawno Auwae, Sylvia Kennedy, Juan Raul Hernandez



## PAC\*SJ Vahl's Happy Hour

PAC\*SJ's second Legacy Business Happy Hour was held at the nostalgic and popular Alviso bar and restaurant, Vahl's. Eric and Amelia Vahl founded the business in 1941, serving the community ever since. Its classic vintage décor and atmosphere are a pleasant change from today's establishments.

Members and guests enjoyed the Happy Hour camaraderie and appreciate Vahl's and other long-time businesses keeping San José's unique character alive. ♡



## September Happy Hour

Be sure not to miss our next Legacy Business Happy Hour on September 11th at Henry's Hi-Life, 4:30-7:00 pm.



Henry's World Famous Hi-Life (above) has been in business for over fifty years. The restaurant was established in 1960 at a different location, but due to the development of I-280, relocated a few years later to 301 W. St. John Street, the former Torino Hotel in Little Italy. ♡

(Our November Happy Hour will be held at Palermo Italian Restaurant, 791 Auzerais Ave. in San Jose on Nov. 6th.)



*Photo above left, part of the unique décor at Vahl's.*

*Left, Enjoying Happy Hour at Vahl's on July 10th.*



---

## Our Last 13th Street Sale!

---

During the July long weekend of sharing, selling and chatting, PAC\*SJ earned over \$9000 at its "LAST" last sale on South 13th Street. Though we don't yet have a signed lease for our mysterious warehouse, we expect to announce our new retail location soon.

So many people, so many stories: A couple dropped by to say they recently moved out of San Jose and while unpacking in their new apartment, they realized half of their home goods were purchased from PAC\*SJ sales. And the microwave they previously bought here for \$10 was now sold for \$20, a handsome profit after five years of use! They appreciated our yard sales for supporting young professionals, as well as seniors, and thrifters. Some shoppers brought donations with them stating that they had purchased the items at previous PAC\*SJ sales and were now "re-gifting" them! Many neighbors responded to my SOS for ASAP paper bags for the Saturday Bag Sale. Thanks for saving the day. Once we secure our warehouse, please email at [donations@preservation.org](mailto:donations@preservation.org) or call me for an appointment to drop off your donations.

Many thanks to our home owners: Liesenfelt-Wangsness, Curia, Salas, and Mendoza-Mason households. Also, to Audrey Rust, our Thursday Master Chef, for delicious salads that kept our volunteers happy and satiated.

Our volunteers included: Storage Supervisor—Rebecca Smith; Chief movers and shakers—Paul Wedel and Shawn McCarson, with assistance from Stephen Walker, Robert Carter, River Smith and Tim McAuliff; Merchandisers—Rebeca Evans, Efrat Shahar, Connie Foley, Rosie Gallipeau, Ruby Smith, Sara Bruce, Mylene Ansori, Jean Kaelin, Lucinda Lawson, Narges Fakhimi and Lisa Hettler-Smith; Cashiers—Sandy Swirsky, Lyle Merithew, Matt Massey, Alice Gosak Gary and Lisa Rosenblum; Ephemera Magnificos—Ron Hagen, Lisa Wangsness and Heather David. Jewelry Queens—Deborah Mills and Suzanne Morrone, assisted by Joyce Weissman; Linens and vintage clothing Czarinas—Luisa McEwen, Lucille Boone and Leslie Masunaga; Mighty Marvels clean up crew—Curia, Mills, Frolli, Wedel, Wangsness, Pelizzari and County day laborers Onesimo and Israel.

Please stay tuned for news about the next sale and location.

—**Patt Curia, Donations Chair and Big Kahuna**

PS: I lost my list of volunteers so if your name is not here, please forgive me.

---

## Member/Neighbor Morsels

---

Below is a neighbor's nice letter to Patt Curia regarding our last sale:

"It is sad to hear that the next sale might be the last one at your house. Those sales have been an institution for my kids. I can remember my son when he was young gathering up his quarters to go across the street to your sale to buy things all on his own, since I could keep an eye on him from the porch. The sales provided us with so many found treasures and useful, timely bits of period hardware, and of course all the books and dishes! I imagine it will be a welcome change for you to not have to fill your driveway and porch as you prep for each sale, but we will miss the sales. They provided a strong anchor bringing neighbors together and creating a true neighborhood community, especially on our block.

Thank you again! " A Naglee Park Neighbor



PAC\*SJ member and former Board member, Walter Soellner, has just published his book, [Forget Me Not, A Tale of Two Families 1936-1946](#), Book Five of the Kalvarianhof Series. The series is the story of two German families, who were friends for generations: the Catholic Mathais and Jewish Levi families.

The novel is available online through Outskirts Press, Amazon, and Barnes and Noble. Soellner is a retired professor of art and art history, and past PAC\*SJ Board Member



PAC\*SJ members enjoyed a second Alum Rock Walking tour on August 23rd. Weather was beautiful, nature was in full bloom, and the rock formations and springs were a delight to all. Thank you to Matt Massey and County Park Ranger Alix Harada for another great experience in amazing San Jose.

# ENDANGERED 8

## San José's Most Threatened Architectural and Cultural Landmarks of 2025

Sakauye Farmhouse • MACSA Youth Center • SJSU Campus Modernism  
Beach & Bassler-Haynes Buildings • Historic Neighborhood Theaters  
San José's IBM Heritage • First Church of Christ, Scientist • Greyhound Bus Depot

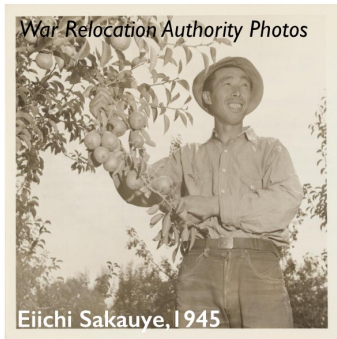


### Sakauye Farmhouse

2620 Seely Avenue • Built c.1935

Threat: Redevelopment

In February 2025, bulldozers razed the 11-acre farmstead and orchards of Eiichi Sakauye (1912-2005), a second-generation Japanese-American farmer and horticulturalist whose incarceration in the Heart Mountain concentration camp during WWII inspired a lifetime of civic leadership and education to redress the injustices of the internment. Preservation advocates negotiated with the City of San José and the developer Hanover Company to temporarily spare one building on the site, the farmhouse that Eiichi built in the 1930s, reclaimed following internment, and lived in for the remainder of his life. However, it must be relocated off-site to History Park by November 2025 or it too will be erased forever. PAC\*SJ is now working closely with History San José and the Japanese-American Museum of San José to raise the estimated \$600,000 still needed to move and restore the house at History Park, where it can host educational programs and exhibits honoring Eiichi Sakauye's legacy as a farmer and educator. Visit [historysanjose.org/get-involved/support/](http://historysanjose.org/get-involved/support/) to donate!



### MACSA Youth Center

660 Sinclair Drive • Built 1995

Threat: Neglect, Demolition

A "Save MACSA" coalition led by the Eastside community organizations SOMOS Mayfair and the Sí Se Puede Collective has twice succeeded in postponing the proposed demolition of this once-vibrant but long-vacant youth center founded in 1995 by the Mexican-American Community Services Agency (MACSA). The coalition is seeking to partner with the site's current owner, the Alum Rock Union School District (ARUSD), to rehabilitate and reopen the distinctively Aztec-inspired building to once again provide vital educational, recreational, vocational, cultural, and healthcare services to the surrounding Mayfair community. However, ARUSD is facing extreme budget deficits and views the vacant structure primarily as a financial liability and safety hazard. Significant philanthropic investment will likely be needed to ensure that the building survives to stand as a beacon of hope for a new generation of East San José youth and families.





# SJSU Campus Modernism

Built 1952-1960s

Threat: Replacement

In May 2025, the California State University Board of Trustees approved a new San José State University campus master plan calling for the demolition of more than a dozen Modernist buildings on campus, including the Music Building (1952), Science Building (1955), Administration Building (1957), Dudley Morehead Hall (1957), and Instructional Resource Center (1957). These buildings, along with others threatened with significant alteration, represent a distinctive era in the postwar evolution of the SJSU campus, with architectural designs inspired by the Bauhaus movement once synonymous with progress and innovation. Just as the SJSU's Spanish and Romanesque Revival-style Tower Hall (1910) was once viewed as obsolete and nearly demolished, these Modernist buildings deserve a second chance to be preserved and incorporated into the next phase of campus growth.



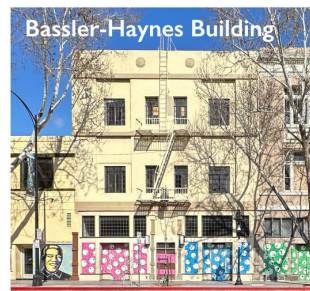
## Beach & Bassler-Haynes Buildings

35-49 E. Santa Clara Street

Built 1876-87; Altered 1913-1936

Threat: Neglect, Redevelopment

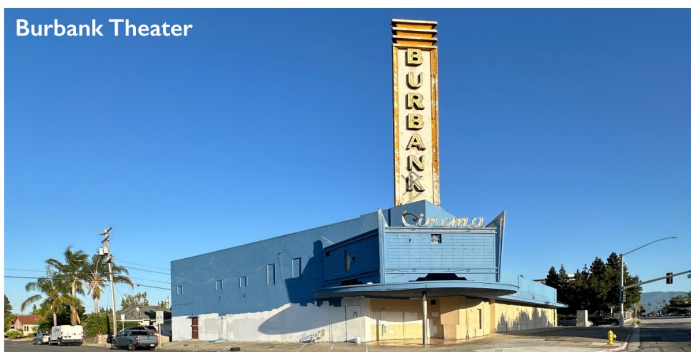
Today known more commonly as the "Dr. Eu Building" after its beleaguered owner since 1986, the Beach and Bassler-Haynes Buildings are actually two distinct structures with equally storied pasts, now both embroiled in legal controversy. The Bassler-Haynes Building, reportedly the first three-story brick building in all of San José, was constructed in 1876 and underwent an Art Moderne remodelling in 1936. Next door, the Beach Building was originally a Victorian-style hotel built in 1887 and remodelled with an Edwardian facade in 1913. Despite a multi-million dollar restoration in 2008 funded in part by the San José Redevelopment Agency, the buildings have been vacant ever since. The City of San José is currently pursuing legal action against the owner and has suggested that ground contamination from the building's previous use as a dry cleaner may require the structures to be leveled.



## ENDANGERED UPDATES: 2022-2024







## SAVED

Diridon Station (2022)\*  
Former City Hall (2022)  
Levi Strauss Factory (2023)

## LOST

Graves House (2022)\*  
Milligan Lot & Forman's Arena (2023, 2024)  
Sakauye Farmstead (2024)

\*Pictured left

# Historic San Jose Movie Theaters

Built 1920s-1960s

Threat: Neglect, Redevelopment

Three historic San José theater buildings remain stuck in development limbo despite strong public support for their reactivation and creative reuse. Designated a City Landmark and protected from demolition in 2014, the Century 21 Dome (3161 Olsen Drive) nevertheless remains empty and awaiting a promised adaptive reuse by Federal Realty, owners of the adjacent Santana Row. Another designated City Landmark, the Towne Theater (1433 The Alameda), has been vacant since 2019. Currently in bank foreclosure and suffering from deferred maintenance, City Lights Theater is hoping to take ownership and convert it for stage productions. The Burbank Theater (560 S. Bascom Avenue) also remains vacant and neglected; plans to replace everything but its tower and marquee with a five-story apartment complex appear stalled. Meanwhile, a coalition of arts advocates is exploring the feasibility of its conversion to a community art center.

# San Jose's IBM Heritage

Threat: Neglect, Redevelopment

When IBM opened its first West Coast factory in San José in 1943, few could have imagined the profound impact the company would have on the city in the coming decades, nor the impact its San José innovations would have on the world. But tangible connections to this important local legacy are increasingly fraught. IBM Plant 4, which printed punch cards in a converted industrial laundry building from 1943 to 1960, will be substantially demolished if an approved housing development proceeds as planned. Long-vacant Building 11 (5677 Lexington Ave) is all that remains of IBM's groundbreaking Cottle Road campus, and its once-towering Hydro Gyro sculpture (1957, Robert B. Howard) sits fallow and disassembled in the nearby Western Digital office park. But not all is at risk: 99 Notre Dame Ave, the City Landmark building where IBM developed RAMAC, the world's first disk drive, is now slated to house a new non-profit arts incubator space featuring offices, galleries, workshops, and rehearsal studio— an exciting future for this long-vacant downtown site.

## STILL AT RISK

San Jose Flea Market (2022)  
Alviso Historic District (2022)  
Downtown Commercial Historic District (2022)  
Sam's Downtown Feed (2023)  
Ban Family Farmstead (2023)  
IBM Building 11 (2023)  
Alum Rock Park Log Cabin (2023)  
Bayside Cannery (2024)\*  
Almaden Winery Cellar (2024)  
Lawrence Hotel (2024)



# First Church of Christ, Scientist

43 E. St. James St. • Built 1905

Threat: Neglect

In March 2025, Mayor Matt Mahan announced that the City would seek to regain ownership of the former First Church of Christ, Scientist through eminent domain, citing the “prolonged neglect” by current owner Z&L Properties. Built in 1905 and designed by famed architect Willis Polk, this Neoclassical gem remains one of the most architecturally significant yet most neglected buildings in the city, and PAC\*SJ strongly supports this new and long-overdue mayoral directive. Yet we remain concerned by the absence of an actionable preservation and adaptive reuse plan should control ultimately transfer to a new owner. City policymakers continue to prioritize new construction on the church’s adjacent acreage over the immediate adaptive reuse potential of the church itself, a failed strategy for the past 30+ years. With Hillbrook School and the Levitt Pavilion both making significant investments in the surrounding St. James Park Historic District, a new vision for First Church’s redevelopment has never been more timely.

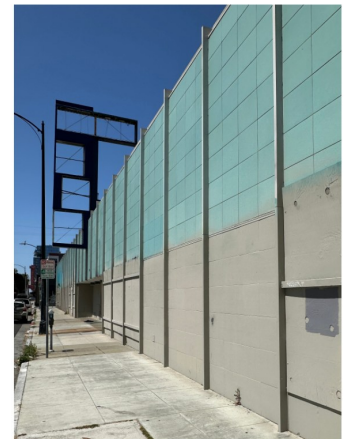


# Greyhound Bus Depot

70 S. Almaden Avenue • Built 1957

Threat: Neglect, Redevelopment

The famed architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill designed San José’s former Greyhound Bus Depot, which served as a gateway to downtown from 1957 until its closure in 2016; its smooth aquamarine terra cotta facade and vertical chrome fins are emblematic of SOM’s midcentury modern output in an era that also produced their renowned Lever House (NYC, 1952), Inland Steel Building (Chicago, 1957), Crown Zellerbach Headquarters (1958), and Air Force Academy Campus (Colorado Springs, 1958-1963). Previously approved for demolition in 2017 for a luxury apartment tower that never broke ground, the building’s adaptive reuse potential as a downtown supermarket, food hall, or other community-serving space should be revisited. This site too is owned by beleaguered developer Z&L Properties, which defaulted on a \$19.5 million loan in February 2025 and now faces bank foreclosure and multiple code violations and fines from the City. The parcel includes a large parking lot that could either serve a new commercial tenant or allow construction of an adjacent higher-density development.



## JOIN PAC\*SJ TODAY! You Make Our Work Possible



Founded in 1990, the Preservation Action Council of San Jose is a dynamic nonprofit 501(c)(3) membership organization dedicated to preserving our unique and diverse architectural and cultural heritage. Through advocacy, education, and civic engagement, we promote historic preservation as an essential tool for fostering equitable, distinctive, sustainable, and prosperous communities.

@pac.sj

/PACSJ

**PRESERVATION ACTION  
COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE**



42A S. First Street  
San Jose, CA 95113  
Phone: 408-998-8105  
[www.preservation.org](http://www.preservation.org)  
[info@preservation.org](mailto:info@preservation.org)



# PAC\*SJ 2025 Calendar

- Sept 7** Sunday, 10 AM-3 PM. Vava Calle. Visit PAC\*SJ Booth on Lincoln Ave. at Meredith Ave.
- Sept 11** Thursday, **Legacy Business Happy Hour at Henry's Hi-Life**, 4:30-7:00 PM. 301 W. St. John Street, San Jose.
- Sept 15** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6:30—8:30 PM. 1211 Park Ave., Suite 203\*
- Sept 20** Saturday, **PAC\*SJ Walking Tour of San Jose State University Modernism**, 10AM-Noon. See page 15 for more details. Reservations required/space is limited.
- Oct 4** Saturday, "Day on the Bay," 10 AM-3 PM at Alviso Marina County Park. Visit PAC\*SJ Booth.
- Oct 5** Sunday, Italian Fest at Little Italy. 11 AM-7 PM. Visit PAC\*SJ Booth.
- Oct 11** Saturday, Martial Cottle Farm Festival. Visit PAC\*SJ Booth.
- Oct 20** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6:30—8:30 PM. 1211 Park Ave., Suite 203\*
- Nov 6** Thursday, **Legacy Business Happy Hour at Palermo Italian Restaurant**, 4:30-7:00 PM. 791 Auzerais Ave, San Jose.
- Nov 17** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6:30—8:30 PM. 1211 Park Ave., Suite 203\*
- Nov 20** Thursday, **Annual Meeting, Board Election, and Holiday Party**. 6:30 PM. Location TBD. RSVP online after Nov. 1.

**\*Call to confirm Board meeting locations at 408-998-8105. Locations or dates may change.**

## PAC\*SJ Committee Meetings

The **Advocacy** Committee meets on Zoom at 6:30 PM on the Thursday before the first Wednesday of the following month.

The **Development** Committee meets at 4 PM on the second Monday of the month at the PAC\*SJ Office, 42A S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. or Zoom.

The **Education & Outreach** Committee meets on Zoom at 6:30 pm on the first Thursday of the month.

Committee meetings are subject to change so if you are interested in participating, please call the office at 408-998-8105 to confirm the date and to receive the Zoom invite.

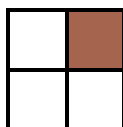
## ADVERTISE IN CONTINUITY!

*Continuity* is distributed to over 400 San Jose preservationists, homeowners and decision-makers. It's a great way to get your message out to your best potential customers! For ads larger than the business card, you must supply camera-ready artwork, or PAC\*SJ can provide it at an additional charge.

**Buy ads in 6 issues and SAVE! Plus, all multiple-issue ads come with a free membership!**



**Business Card**  
Single issue \$50  
3 issues \$120



**1/4 Page**  
Single issue  
\$100



**1/2 Page**  
Single issue  
\$200



**Full Page**  
Single issue  
\$375



# PAC\*SJ SJSU Modernism Walking Tour



**Saturday, Sept. 20, 2025 — 10 AM – 12 PM**

**San Jose State University, 1 Washington Square**

**PAC\*SJ member \$15—Non-member \$20**

Space is limited and advanced reservations are required at [preservation.org](http://preservation.org). The exact meeting location will be shared prior to tour date.

Join tour guide Heather David, author of *Mid-Century by the Bay* and *Motel California*, for this special tour highlighting San Jose State University's under appreciated modernist architectural legacy.

We'll see how international design trends—from the Bauhaus to Brutalism—helped shape San Jose State College's growth in the decades following World War II and created the San Jose State University campus we know today. A newly-adopted Campus Master Plan proposes the future replacement or remodeling of many of these once-groundbreaking buildings, so now is the time to take a closer look at what should be celebrated and what could be lost. ↻

## News Flash: MACSA Fire

At press time PAC\*SJ learned that in the early morning of August 29<sup>th</sup> the MACSA (Mexican American Community Services Agency) Youth Center structure was severely damaged by fire. This heartbreaking news is especially tragic since community plans were progressing to reopen the long-vacant youth center.

PAC\*SJ has been involved in the fight to save this structure by placing the center on our 2025 Endangered 8 list (see page 9), holding a litter-pick-up day, and monitoring meetings with the Alum Rock Unified School District and SOMOS Mayfair. This fire is the latest of continuing fires that makes it absolutely necessary for PAC\*SJ to continue advocating for better responsibility, monitoring, and enforcement of securing vacant buildings. (See page 17 for PAC\*SJ's position on blight in San Jose.)

SOMOS Mayfair and the Si Se Puede Collective organized a community vigil that evening, August 29<sup>th</sup>, at the MACSA building site with a request to bring flowers. The community gathered to "stand strong" and "honor MACSA" with a candlelight vigil "to reflect on the work we have done, the memories we have shared and the movement that we will continue." ↻



**Former MACSA (Mexican American Community Services Agency) Youth Center building after the August 29<sup>th</sup> fire at 660 Sinclair Drive.**

## Bev Blockie Honored

During the California State Assembly's floor session on July 10, 2025, members gathered to honor the lives and legacies of three notable individuals who recently passed away: One of those honored was



**Beverly Blockie  
(1933-2025)**

San Jose's Beverly Blockie. The adjournment in their memory highlighted their significant contributions to their communities and the state.

Bev was remembered as a cherished matriarch and a dedicated community member in San Jose. Born in 1933 in Naglee Park, San Jose, she was deeply involved in civic and religious activities, including serving on the San Jose Women's Club board and helping to preserve historical landmarks. Bev was an active PAC\*SJ member, former Board Member and volunteer for PAC\*SJ for many years. Her legacy is marked by her commitment to family and community, leaving behind five children, nine grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. ❧

## Notable Quotable

***"Personally, I'd still love it if Netflix adopted the domed Century 21, which was designated a city landmark in 2014 and is not far from Netflix's Los Gatos headquarters. The company could transform it into a Mid-Century Modern shrine to movies, as well as using it as a Bay Area location to screen the streaming service's own films."***

--Sal Pizarro/Bay Area News Group

"San Jose State's modernist buildings on latest 'Endangered 8' list"  
Mercury News article, Aug. 18, 2025

## Visit "Doors Open California"

The California Preservation Foundation announced the 4th Annual "Doors Open California," offering exclusive behind-the-scenes tours of historic places statewide. Spanning September weekends, enthusiasts of historic architecture, design, and cultural heritage will have access to over 75 sites across the state on the weekends during the month of September 2025.

For a \$20 flat fee, attendees gain rare access to preserved architecture and enlightening stories across various cities. Each site throughout the state offers visits on specific weekends during September. Below are the two closest historic sites you may want to visit.

### **San Jose--9/20 and 9/21, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM**

Two Eras Collide: Adobe to Victorian: San Jose's oldest building, the Peralta Adobe (1797), stands across from the Victorian Fallon House (1850s). Visitors can compare adobe construction with 19th-century domestic details like gas lighting. Kids can grind corn in the outdoor *cocina* (kitchen), and docents share stories of early California life. Located in Downtown San Jose on W. Saint John Street.

### **Santa Clara----9/20 and 9/21**

Time Layers: 2,000 Years Under SCU. Santa Clara University's campus sits atop a Native American village, Mission-era walls, and 1850s college foundations. This rare tour showcases artifacts from ongoing digs - Ohlone tools, Spanish ceramics, and ROTC relics - stored in the 1888 Ricard Observatory. You may even get to see a 3D-printed replica of a Gold Rush-era pistol found near the Mission gardens!

In the larger Bay Area, historic visits are also offered in Fremont, Niles, Gilroy, Berkeley, Orinda, Oakland, and San Francisco (including Treasure Island and more).

Visit <https://californiapreservation.org/doca/> for details and registration. ❧



# Bit of PAC\*SJ History

While perusing through PAC\*SJ documents for the 35th Anniversary Celebration of PAC\*SJ, I found this clever poem composed by Marti Wachtel, a PAC\*SJ Board member in 2000. This poem was presented as a three-minute success story at the Santa Clara County Heritage Council's Annual Meeting that year. It is an amusing view of the battle waged by PAC\*SJ, SJ Landmarks Commission and the Shasta Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association (SHPNA) to save the Del Monte Plant #51 Building on The Alameda that developers had planned to demolish.

—Editor

## Fruits of the Valley

Long ago in this valley, the peaches grew,  
Pears, plums, prunes, 'cots ---and cherries too.  
The orchardists' work never was done,  
But blessed by good soil and loving sun.  
They reaped and they sowed and they sold them by stand,  
"Til some brilliant soul said, "this fruit should be canned!"

So they built large brick plants and shiny machines,  
The orchardists picked, the canners cleaned,  
They sorted and pitted and sometimes they chopped,  
Or they sliced and they diced those wonderful crops.  
They printed labels, they filled the cans,  
Fruit for America was—in the plans.

Cans were packed, sent off by trains,  
Less frequently ships, but later, planes.  
Communities flourished, the future was bright,  
But something came creeping in the still of the night.  
Where once there were orchards, microchips grew,  
Hardware and software, the Internet too.

More houses, more housed, the orchards gave way,  
To suburban tracts still used today.  
Housing needs kept growing, all the land now quite dear,  
Some nasty developers said, "the acres, we'll clear."  
And what of #51, the cannery gone,

It stood empty and silent, sad and forlorn.  
"Mow it down" said a group of real estate guys,  
We said, "Whoever called developers wise?"  
Hell, no" said the people. "We're all connected,  
To canneries, to fruit, we never expected....  
This history, or legacy to possibly lose,  
Clearly and surely, not the outcome we choose.

Then along came SHHPNA, Landmarks and PAC,  
Who rolled up their sleeves right off the bat.  
Meetings, more meetings for over a year.  
Then Planning jumped in and wrote a letter,  
"Save the building," they said. "We mean it, you better!"

Then came the day. It was Tuesday last week,  
And they returned, and said, 'Here's a peek.'  
'We're saving the building. Your history, we're marking.  
There's condos and lofts and three levels of parking.  
We've done what we could. Your history's back!'  
But the credit is due--SHPNA, Landmarks and PAC!

—By Marti Wachtel

The Plant 51 location was originally home to the Pacific Wine Company, then sold to CalPack, and rebranded as Del Monte. Most of its dried fruit processing and packing were centralized to Plant 51 by 1926. The location was closed in 1990 and operations were moved to Fresno. Historic rehabilitation and residential conversion took five plus years, with 3 owners: Castle Co., Centex Homes, and Farallon of San Francisco, finally opening in 2014 into a 265 unit residential condominium complex. ☞



Plant 51 on The Alameda at Bush St. before closing in 1990.

(Photo: Robert Vasona)

## Blighted Properties Report

A July 9, 2025 memorandum to San Jose Mayor Mahan and the City Council, entitled "Status of Blighted Properties" was prepared by Director Chris Burton of the San Jose Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement Department. It provides an update on the most prominent blighted properties in San Jose with an overview of actions by the City and its desired outcomes.

Attachment A in the report lists, with photos, 31 sites throughout the city in each of the ten council districts that are "Priority Properties as Identified by Council District Staff," with "Key Actions Taken by Code Enforcement, Immediate Next Steps," and the "Desired Outcome."

Attachments B lists, with photos, the 14 "Prominent Blighted Properties in the Downtown" with the following: First Church of Christ Scientist, Lawrence Hotel, Former Woolworth/Ross Building, Old Greyhound Station, Former Sambos/Bo Town, Bank of Italy, Dr. Eu Building; and the Towne Theater.

A number of these properties listed are historic, with many, but not all, citing a "desired outcome" to be restored and activated. For example, the report describes the desired outcome for the First Church of Christ, Scientist on E. St. James as: "Reinforce protective boarding and replace protective covering, declare eminent domain, and restoration/reuse of historic building/site." Five of the above mentioned sites are on the latest 2025 PAC\*SJ Endangered Eight! (See pages 9-12.)

Attachment C lists, with photos, eleven additional "Prominent Vacant Buildings and Storefront Properties Identified by Code Enforcement (Not in Downtown)."

The report also states, "In Fiscal Year 2024-2025, 1,491 blight complaints were resolved within an average of 73 days. By relying on complaints to be submitted by the public, violations may go unaddressed or are brought to a critical point before Code Enforcement is made aware of the issue." The 2010 Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Neglected Vacant or Abandoned Building Ordinance established the Vacant Building Program to reduce the

## PAC\*SJ's Position on Blight

The Preservation Action Council of San Jose strongly supported the August 27th proposed Municipal Code amendments raising the maximum fine for chronic code violations on abandoned and neglected properties from \$100,000 to \$500,000. We likewise support the memorandum from Councilmembers Ortiz, Campos and Tordillos proposing an increased daily maximum fine of \$15,000 and stipulating that the maximum fine of \$500,000 be applied per 365-day period and be renewable indefinitely in cases of chronic non-compliance. We concur that increased penalties are one necessary step in holding absentee property owners accountable for their negligence, discouraging demolition by neglect, and encouraging the reactivation of vacant properties in neighborhoods across the city.

In cases where an affected property is a designated City Landmark, Candidate City Landmark, or contributing structure in a City or National Register Landmark District, PAC\*SJ recommends additional Municipal Code amendments to further discourage and disincentivize unscrupulous negligence. Unfortunately, The Mayor and Council Members are no doubt aware of multiple recent cases where chronically vacant historic resources have been lost to accidental or intentional fire. In these cases, negligent owners must not be allowed to benefit from the "abatement" of outstanding and ongoing code violations via these demolitions by neglect. PAC\*SJ therefore encourages City Council to explore policies requiring in-kind reconstruction and/or the payment of significant compensatory damages into a dedicated preservation fund when a historic property subject to open code violations is lost due to negligence.

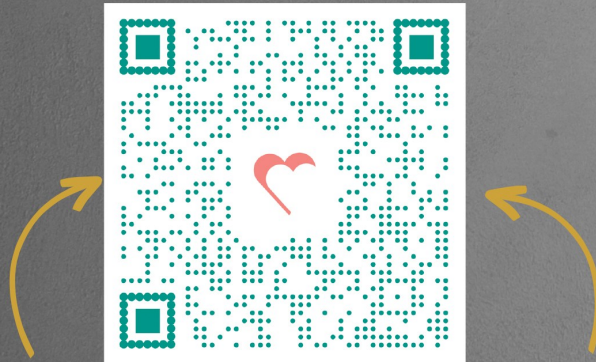


negative impact of neglected vacant buildings through Code Enforcement inspections, proactive monitoring, and enforcement of regulations. The goal is to maintain the safety, security, and appearance of our vacant building inventory. The ordinance also includes specific regulations for vacant City Landmark properties. The San Jose ordinance "reinforces the property owners' responsibility to secure, maintain, and prevent vacant buildings from creating a public nuisance, creating safety hazards, and burdening the community." In 2018, the ordinance was expanded to include vacant storefronts and establish mandatory registration for vacant properties within the Downtown Registration Area.

This "Blighted Properties" report can be viewed at: <https://wwwwww.sanwww.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/123331/638876733586949197>.

**News Flash:** On August 26<sup>th</sup>, the San Jose City Council approved a maximum fine of \$20,000/day with a maximum fine of \$500,000, which is the highest fine in California.





I CAN SELL YOUR HOUSE FOR MORE.  
SCAN TO LEARN MORE.

As a fellow member and proud resident of a 117-year-old historic home in San Jose, I share your passion for preserving our city's architectural heritage. With over 160 homes sold and \$235M in real estate experience, I specialize in helping clients buy and sell homes from every decade.

Whether you're looking to make a move or simply want to connect with a like-minded neighbor who supports preservation of historic properties, I'm here as a resource.

Let's continue preserving what makes San Jose timeless —together.

(408) 888-1260  
LoveseatHomes.com



# PAC\*SJ Membership Application or Renewal

## Preservation Action Council of San Jose Membership Application or Renewal

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

*Provide email address to receive timely notices of news, events and announcements. PAC\*SJ will not release your contact details.*

New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewing Member \_\_\_\_\_

**Please circle the level at which you wish to join:**

Individual	\$40
Family	\$55
Student or Senior (over 65)	\$25
Non-profit or School	\$25
Contributor	\$100
Patron	\$250
Lifetime Member	\$1,000

Join at the \$100 level or above and receive one or more special premiums listed below.

Please check if you would like to receive

1 premium for Contributor Level ☐

2 Premiums for Patron Level or higher ☐

No Premium ☐

Select your chosen Premium(s) below.

I am enclosing \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for PAC\*SJ membership and/or donation.

(Or visit us online at [www.preservation.org](http://www.preservation.org) to renew or join)

I am interested in working with the following committee volunteer opportunities (*please circle*):

Advocacy

Fundraising

Membership

Newsletter

Programs/Education

Events

Board Member

Public Relations

**Complete and return with your check to:**

Preservation Action Council of San Jose

42A S. First Street, San Jose, CA 95113

Phone: (408)-998-8105

[info@preservation.org](mailto:info@preservation.org)

## PAC\*SJ LIFETIME MEMBERS

Suzanne Avila\*

Rob Bettencourt

Terry Christensen and Ray Allen

Dennis Cunningham\*

Rod Diridon, Sr. & Dr. Gloria Duffy

Gayle Frank

Robert Guillot\*

Sherry Hitchcock

Deborah Hudson

The Richard Kogura Family

Chloe Leinwand

Catherine Marlatt

Sandra Moll (& the late Rick Holden)

Bonnie Montgomery

Kelli Nakamura & Eric Lee

Deborah Norberg

Gratia Rankin & Jim Thomas

Carl and Marianne Salas

Mary and Jim True

Krista Van Laan

Rosaleen Zisch

*\*(New Life Members)*

### Honorary Lifetime Members

Ken Fowler

Greg Casella

Tom Simon

Keith Watt

## Member Premiums

Choose 1 Premium for Contributor level;  
Choose 2 Premiums for Patron level or above.

☐ Diridon Station Pin Set

☐ Hotel De Anza Pin Set

☐ Architectural Guidebook to SF and the Bay Area

☐ Sunset Poster of your choice

☐ No Premium—my membership will fully support PAC\*SJ programs.





1990-2025 CELEBRATING 35 YEARS

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT 384  
SAN JOSE, CA

Or Current Resident

Preservation Action Council  
of San Jose  
42A S. First Street  
San Jose, CA 95113



Like Us On Facebook!

## 1990-2025 CELEBRATING 35 PAC\*SJ YEARS



The Preservation Action Council of San Jose is a dynamic nonprofit membership organization dedicated to **preserving our unique and diverse architectural and cultural heritage**. Through advocacy, education, and civic engagement, we promote historic preservation as an essential tool for fostering equitable, distinctive, sustainable, and prosperous communities.

We believe that **historic preservation is good for our quality of life, good for business, and good for the environment**. We aspire to integrate a strong commitment to historic preservation into the land use and development decisions of the City of San Jose that affect historic resources, as well as into the private decisions of property owners and developers. We try to bring owners and developers together to create historically sensitive projects that make economic sense.

### PAC\*SJ 2025 Board

Michael Sodergren, *President & Advocacy Chair*  
Patt Curia, *V.P. Fundraising*  
John Frolli, *Treasurer*  
Lynne Stephenson, *Secretary & Immediate Past President*  
Clare Gordon Bettencourt  
Scott Brown

Carl Foisy  
Gayle Frank  
Jennifer Hembree  
André Luthard  
Gratia Rankin  
Nancy Reynolds  
Sally Zarnowitz

**Staff:** Ben Leech, Executive Director  
Jennifer Roman, Office Associate  
Matthew Massey, Outreach Associate

### Advisory Board

Bonnie Bamburg  
Marvin Bamburg, AIA  
Paul Bernal, Esquire  
Heather David  
Rod Diridon, Sr.  
April Halberstadt

Franklin Maggi  
Tony May  
Margie Matthews  
Craig Mineweaser, AIA  
Stacy Sirk