



L A N D M A R K S
P R E S E R V A T I O N
C O M M I S S I O N
S T A F F R E P O R T

REFERRAL
SEPTEMBER 7, 2023

2603 - 2611 San Pablo Avenue

Demolition Referral: Use Permit (#ZP2022-0171) to demolish a single-story commercial building constructed in 1923 and a mixed-use residential and commercial building constructed in 1926 (APN: 054-1785-016-00).

I. Application Basics

A. Zoning District: Commercial West Berkeley (C-W) Zoning District

B. Parties Involved:

- Project Applicant Isaiah Stackhouse
Trachtenberg Architects
2421 Fourth Street
Berkeley, CA 94710
- Evaluator Page & Turnbull, Inc.
170 Maiden Lane, 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94010
- Property Owner 2601 SPA, LLC
9101 Burning Tree Road
Bethesda, MD 20817

C. Staff Recommendation: Consider evaluations and take no action.

II. Background

On December 12, 2022, the applicant submitted a Use Permit application to demolish two commercial buildings located at 2603 – 2605 and 2607 - 2611 San Pablo Avenue, and to construct a new, 8-story, mixed-use building with 223 dwelling units. The application is eligible for streamlined review per Senate Bill 330.

The Use Permit application #ZP2022-0171 is under review by the Zoning Officer and the project is not yet scheduled for Zoning Adjustments Board (ZAB) consideration; see link to plans below.

<https://permits.cityofberkeley.info/citizenaccess/Default.aspx>

Pursuant to Berkeley Municipal Code (BMC) 23.326.070.C, any application for a Use Permit to demolish a non-residential building or structure which is 40 or more years old shall be forwarded to the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) for review prior to consideration of the Use Permit for demolition. Given the lack of a current, City-wide comprehensive historic resource survey, the referral requirement is understood to address the potential for the loss of unidentified significant resources.

When such a demolition request occurs under the provisions of Senate Bill 330¹, the City would be divested of the ability to impose conditions related to historic resource preservation upon Use Permit approval. Nevertheless, the study of potential significance and the LPC referral shall be completed in accordance with the BMC requirement.

In considering the proposed demolition of a structure, the Commission will weigh the potential to meet the significance criteria for COB Landmarks and Historic Districts in the City's Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 3), which are relatively specific and appear to align with the California Register. The Commission will also weigh the potential to meet the broader COB Structure of Merit criteria, which can include structures that are neither individually architecturally distinctive nor associated with significant people or events but may qualify as contributors to identified districts, areas, or clusters. The LPC may initiate a designation or take no action based on the significance criteria, but still forward comments regarding potential project conditions such as relocation, salvage, and/or photographic documentation to the Zoning Adjustments Board for consideration in its action on the application.

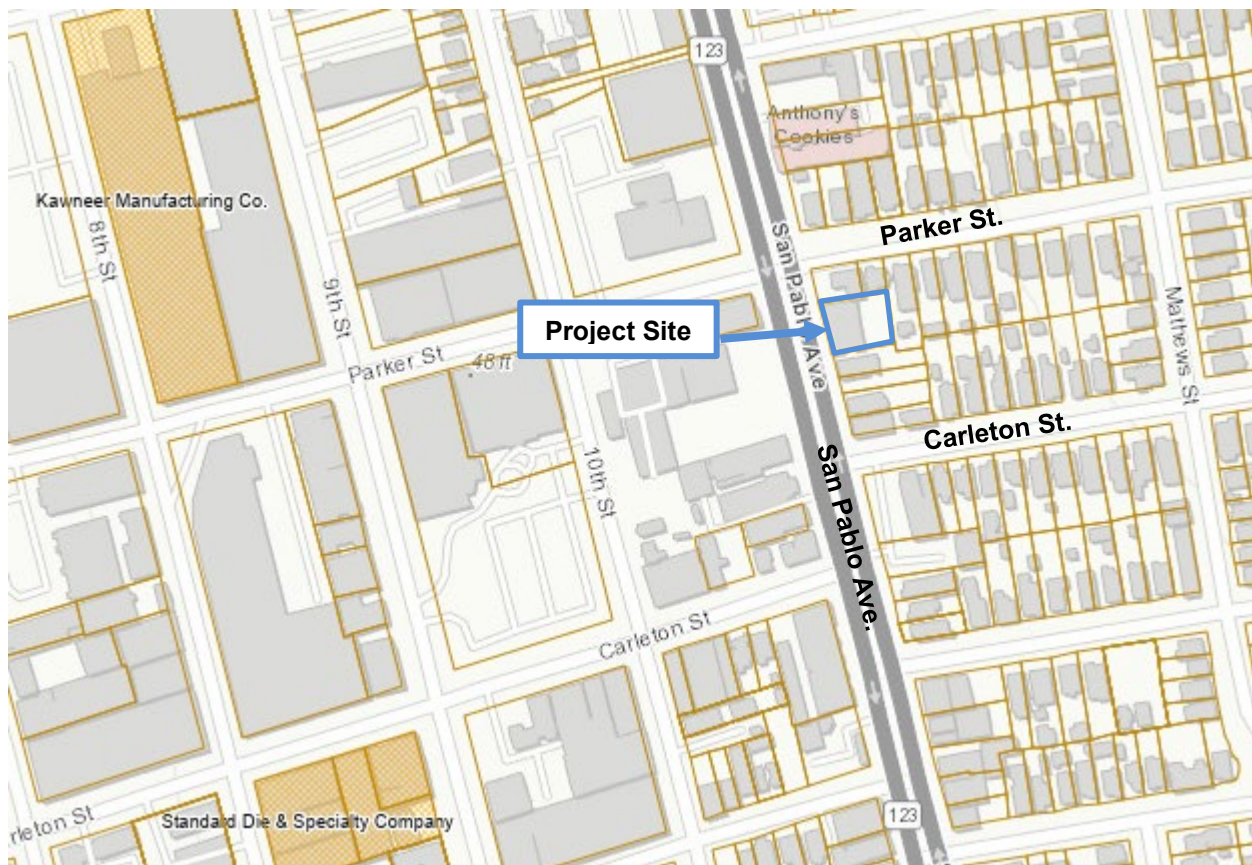
¹ At the time that the Use Permit application was submitted, the subject property was not a locally-designated Landmark site and not subject to BMC Chapter 3.24. If designation status were granted after Use Permit submittal date, then SB 330 would prevent the City from imposing any conditions under BMC 3.24 related to historical resource preservation on the project.

III. Historical Resources

The subject buildings do not appear on the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources or the State Historic Resources Inventory.

The subject property is not adjacent to any City of Berkeley landmark sites. The nearest City of Berkeley Landmarks/Structures of Merit are the Standard Die & Specialty Company, constructed in 1924, located at 2701 – 2721 Eighth Street/934 Carleton Street, and the Kawneer Manufacturing Co., constructed in 1913, located at 2547 Eighth Street, (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Vicinity Map showing historic resources (City of Berkeley GIS, 2023)









	Landmarks / Structure of Merit; LM,		Parcels
	Features		Demolished
	Districts		Partially Demolished

Figure 2: Subject Property, 2603 – 2605 San Pablo Avenue building, current site conditions (Page & Turnbull, 2022)



Figure 3: Subject Property, 2607 – 2611 San Pablo Avenue building current site conditions (Page & Turnbull, 2022)



Figure 4: Subject Property, 2603 – 2611 San Pablo Avenue, historic photograph, c. 1968 (Berkeley Architectural Heritage via Page & Turnbull)



IV. Property Description

The historic resource evaluation (HRE) for the subject property, which consists of two CA Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR) Forms 523 (AL), was completed by preservation consulting firm Page & Turnbull, Inc. on February 6, 2023. An individual form was completed for each of the extant buildings on the subject property and are attached to this report: 2603 – 2605 San Pablo Avenue (Attachment 1) and 2607 – 2611 San Pablo Avenue (Attachment 2). The following description derives from the information contained in the HRE, visual observation, as well as the City’s land use archives and building permit records.

Parcel Description: The subject property is an 80-foot-wide by 100-foot-deep parcel located in West Berkeley on the east side of San Pablo Avenue, north of Carleton St. and south of Parker Street. Adjoining the property at the north is a vacant lot that had formerly housed an automotive use (demolished 2018). Adjoining the property at the south is a vacant single-story commercial building followed by a narrow vacant parcel. The Use Permit project site encompasses the subject property and these three adjacent parcels.

Building Description: The subject property is improved with two commercial buildings – a single-story commercial building at 2603 – 2605 San Pablo Ave., and a two-story mixed use building at 2607- 2611 San Pablo Ave. Together, the two buildings span the width of the property with no front or side setbacks.

The building referred to as **2603 – 2605 San Pablo Avenue** is situated on the northern half of the subject property. It is an Early 20th-Century Commercial style building in a three-part façade with a storefront, transom, and upper parapet. The building is divided into two symmetrical tenant spaces. The ground floor storefronts feature a recessed, angled central entryway with non-original doors, flanked by two storefront plate-glass windows over bulkheads (altered), below a row of rectangular divided clerestory windows (painted over) and an upper parapet wall of stucco with a molded cartouche (damaged over the 2605 storefront). The building is sheathed in stucco and currently painted gray. See Figure 2 above.

A full description of the building is provided in the HRE, Attachment 1 of this report.

The **2607 – 2611 San Pablo Avenue** building is located on the southern half of the lot. It is a two-story Early 20th-Century Commercial style mixed-use building with second-story apartment units above two ground-floor retail tenant spaces with an articulated roofline. The street level features a symmetrical façade design with dual storefronts on either side of a central entry door providing access to the second-floor residences. The storefronts feature a central recessed entryway (modified) flanked by two storefront plate-glass windows over bulkheads (altered), below a row of rectangular divided clerestory windows (painted over). The second story has a single hung window over the central entry, with two tripartite windows on either side consisting of a fixed middle panel with two hung windows on either side. The cap of the building features a broken roofline with a round pediment in the center with a festooned cartouche. The two tripartite windows are capped with a partial red clay barrel tile shed roof. The building is sheathed in stucco and currently painted barn red. See Figure 3 above.

A full description of the building is provided in the HRE, Attachment 2 of this report.

Early Site History & Parcel Development: Property records show that the buildings were originally built between 1923 - 1926 by owner Silvestro Paolini, an Italian-born grocer who lived in the immediate neighborhood of the site. Here Paolini and his wife Argene Pagni operated a fruit store and later a liquor store at the property. The site was occupied by grocery tenants through the 1950s, and later by a variety of commercial, service, and institutional uses. The builder was Oscar F. Lyon, a Swedish-born carpenter. No architect is accredited with the design of the subject buildings. Both buildings have been modified by various tenants through their histories, resulting in altered storefronts and altered or missing façade elements.

V. Evaluation of Significance Criteria

Historic Context²: For the purpose of contextualizing and focusing this discussion of potential historical significance, staff concludes that the period of *potential* significance for the buildings at 2603 - 2611 San Pablo Avenue would have been 1923 - 1926, when they were originally constructed. However, since the buildings are not identified as significant, no period of significance applies.

Owing to the subject buildings' commercial use and location in on a major commercial corridor, this property is linked to a historic context that is best defined as economic development. This evaluation of the property's historical significance therefore, analyzes the significance criteria within the theme of economic development.

Significance Criteria: The subject property is evaluated based on the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources and the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (LPO/BMC 3.24). The existing buildings are over 50 years old and, therefore, may be considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources. Because they are more than 40 years old, BMC Section 23C.08.050 requires that the buildings be evaluated for potential local significance prior to issuance of any demolition entitlement.

In determining the potential significance of this property, Page & Turnbull has analyzed the building's extant features and any associated parties against the criteria of the California Register of Historical Resources (CR). To supplement Page & Turnbull's analysis of the CR, staff has provided an analysis of the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (LPO), BMC Chapter 3.24, which closely aligns to criteria of the CR. The evaluation concentrates on possible associations with events (CR-1, BMC Sections 3.24.110.A.2 and B.2), persons (CR-2, BMC Section 3.24.110.A.4), architectural design (CR-3, BMC Sections 3.24.110.A.1.a-c and B.2.a and c), and information/education (CR-4, BMC Section 3.24.110.A.3). The result of Page & Turnbull's and staff's evaluation is discussed below.

CR and BMC Criteria:

Events – CR Criterion 1/BMC Criterion for *Historical Value*

The HRE concludes that the property at 2603 - 2611 San Pablo Avenue does not meet CR Criterion 1 because it was not found to hold historical significance to the City. Neither this property nor the ordinary store buildings existing on the site were found to have played an important role in the historical patterns of West Berkeley's early-20th century, commercial and industrial development. Therefore, the property has not been found to hold historical significance to the City.

² National Register Bulletin #15, Item V: How to Evaluate a Property within its Historic Context (2002); National Register Bulletin #16A. Section III: How to Complete the National Register Registration – Period of Significance (1997).

Persons – CR Criterion 2/BMC Criterion for *Cultural Value*

The HRE concludes that 2603 - 2611 San Pablo Avenue does not meet CR Criterion 2 because it was not found to be associated with any religious, cultural, governmental, social, and economic developments of the City. No persons associated with the property are of identifiable historical importance or found to have made notable or lasting contributions to their field. This property has not contributed to the movement or evolution of culture in Berkeley and, therefore, does not exhibit cultural significance.

Design – CR Criterion 3/BMC Criteria for *Architectural Merit*

The subject buildings were originally constructed in 1923 and 1926 and are not accredited to an architect. The design of the buildings represents typical early-20th Century commercial block and small mixed-use building types. Both structures have been modified by several tenants throughout their histories and some of the original characteristic architectural features and materials have been altered or removed. The buildings in their current state are modest, non-descript, altered commercial buildings that do not possess architectural merit or contribute to the neighborhood fabric as exceptional architectural examples. Therefore, the subject property does not satisfy the criteria for architectural merit.

Information – CR Criterion 4/BMC Criterion *Educational Force*

The evaluation of this property was limited to above ground and did not involve survey or evaluation of the subject property for the purposes of archaeological information. Further, there have been no recent CA Historical Resource Information System investigation for this parcel or its environs, but previous research concluded that it is not likely to yield archeological information.

National Register – BMC Criterion *National Register*

The subject property is not listed on the National Register and therefore does not satisfy this criterion.

LPO Criteria:

As a potential Structure of Merit (BMC Section 3.24.110.B, Paragraph 2), the subject building does not appear to be worthy of preservation as part of a neighborhood, a block, or a street frontage, or a group of buildings which include City Landmarks because it is:

- Not in close proximity to City Landmark buildings;
- Does not serve as good of architectural design;
- Not comparable to the type/use, design or style of the nearby Landmarks; and
- Not associated with events that are historically significant to the City of Berkeley.

For all of these reasons, Page & Turnbull and staff conclude that the buildings are not eligible for national, state, or local register listing.

VI. Recommendation

1. **Take No Action.** Staff recommends that the Commission consider the extent to which the buildings meet (or do not meet) the criteria for designation as a City Landmark or Structure of Merit, and then **Take No Action** to initiate the property for consideration.

Attachments:

1. California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Primary Record Form 523A/L, 2603 – 2605 San Pablo Avenue, prepared by Page & Turnbull, Inc., recorded February 6, 2023.
2. California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Primary Record Form 523A/L, 2607 – 2611 San Pablo Avenue, prepared by Page & Turnbull, Inc., recorded February 6, 2023.

Prepared by: Reina Kapadia, AICP, Senior Planner; rkapadia@berkeleyca.gov, (510) 981-7485

Reviewed by: Fatema Crane, Principal Planner/LPC Secretary; fcrane@berkeleyca.gov, (510) 981-7410

San F120State of California — The Resources Agency # _____	Primary
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION PRIMARY RECORD	HRI # _____
	Trinomial _____
	NRHP Status Code <u>6Z</u>
Other Listings _____	
Review Code _____	Reviewer _____ Date _____

Page 1 of 13 Resource name(s) or number (assigned by recorder) 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue

P1. Other Identifier: _____

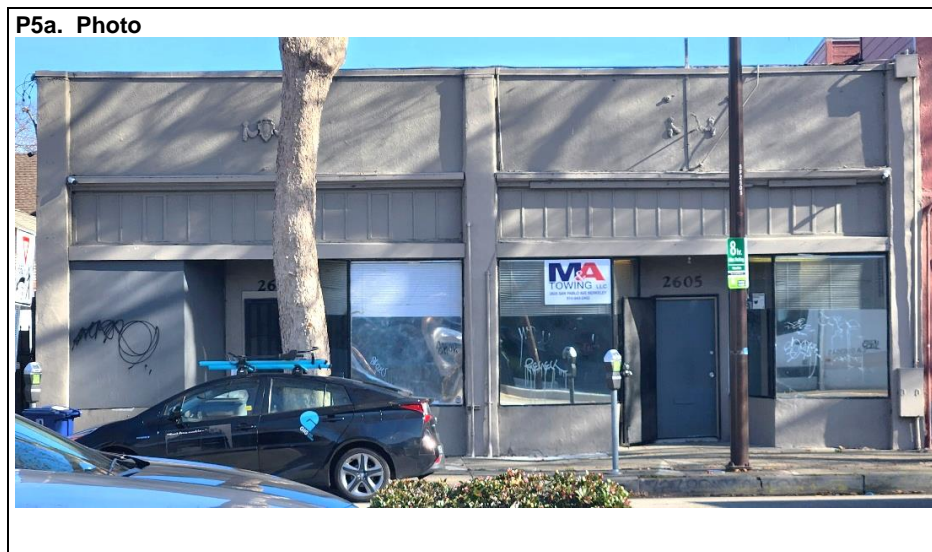
***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted ***a. County** Alameda
***b. USGS 7.5' Quad** Oakland West **Date** 2022
***c. Address** 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue **City** Berkeley **Zip** 94704
***e. Other Locational Data:** Assessor's Parcel Number 54-1785-16

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries.)
 The parcel including 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue (APN 54-1785-16) is located west of downtown Berkeley on the east side of San Pablo Avenue (**Figure 1**). Originally built in 1923, the building was designed by an unknown architect and constructed by contractors Bigley & Walsh for property owner Silvestro Paolini. The building was occupied by various retail and service tenants throughout its history and is currently occupied by an office and garage. The subject parcel contains the one-story wood-frame subject building and a two-story wood-frame commercial building with apartments above. The one-story subject building is immediately north of the two-story mixed-use building, and both have similar rectangular footprints.

The one-story building is built to its west lot line and is constructed primarily of wood. The west façade is divided equally into two nearly identical storefronts and is clad with stucco-covered wood. The west façade features a flat roof, rectangular parapet, and painted-over clerestory windows and centered molded cartouches with festoons over both storefronts. The first story at each storefront features two replacement plate-glass windows over wood and stucco bulkheads flanking the primary entrance which is set within an angled recess. At the north storefront, the north set of windows are covered in painted plywood, and the door is slightly offset to the south to make room for a non-original aluminum mail slot to its north (**Figure 2 and Figure 3**). The north entrance consists of an outer metal gate and a wood inner door, with wood numbering for the address and a single plastic-covered light fixture above. The south entrance is centered between its flanking storefront windows and consists of an outer metal door and an inner wood door, with wood numbering for the address and a single exposed light fixture above (**Figure 4**). The molded cartouche over the south storefront was damaged by the installation of a nonextant sign, and only the festoons remain (**Figure 5**). (Refer to Continuation Sheet, page 2).

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

***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other



P5b. Photo: (view and date)
View of the primary façade, looking northeast, December 15 2022.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** historic
1923 (Original Building Permit)

***P7. Owner and Address:**
2601 San Pablo Avenue, LLC
9101 Burning Tree Rd
Bethesda, MD 20817

***P8. Recorded by:**
Page & Turnbull, Inc.
170 Maiden Lane, 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94010

***P9. Date Recorded:**
February 6, 2023

***P10. Survey Type:** Intensive

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

***Attachments:** None Location Map Sketch 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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Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue

*Recorded by Page & Turnbull, Inc.

*Date February 6, 2023 Continuation Update

***P3a. Description (continued):**



Figure 1. Location of 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue, subject building highlighted yellow.
Source: Google Earth, 2020, edited by Page & Turnbull.



Figure 2: Detail view of north storefront on west façade.
Looking east.



Figure 3: Oblique view of north half of west façade.
Looking east.

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Figure 4: Detail of south storefront on west façade. Looking east.



Figure 5: Detail of damaged cartouche above south storefront at west façade. Looking east.

The north façade of the subject building is clad in horizontal wood siding, and has a single non-original garage door at the east end (Figure 6). The east façade features two nearly identical sets of rear entrances and original wood windows, one for each of the north and south tenant spaces (Figure 7). Each non-original wood door is flanked by a set of original one-lite hung wood windows over ten feet above the foundation. A single filled-in wood window frame lies between the two rear entrances at head height, offset to the north. The south façade is immediately adjacent to the neighboring structure to the south and not visible.



Figure 6: Oblique view of north facade. Looking southwest.



Figure 7: View of east façade. Looking west.

Buildings within the surrounding blocks include early to mid-twentieth century residential properties, commercial buildings, and multi-family residential buildings as well as several multi-story developments completed in the 21st century (Figure 8 to Figure 15). Further north of the subject building contemporary multi-family housing is currently under construction or very recently completed.

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Figure 8: One and two-story commercial buildings south of subject building at 2617 and 2619 San Pablo Avenue. Looking east.



Figure 9: One-story commercial building south of subject building at 2625 San Pablo Avenue. Looking east.



Figure 10: One and two-story commercial buildings south of subject building at 2634 through 2622 San Pablo Avenue. Looking southwest.



Figure 11: One-story church south of subject building at 2618 San Pablo. Looking west.

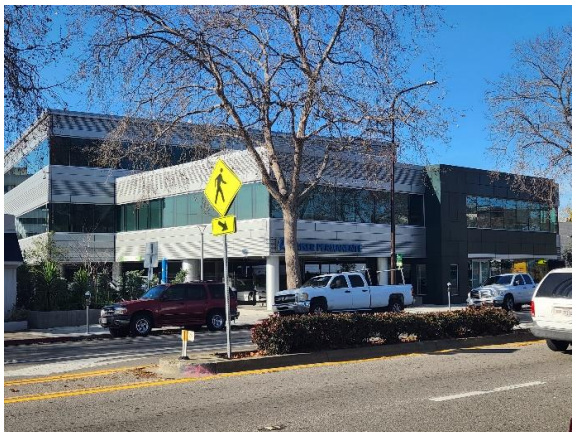


Figure 12: Three-story medical building west of subject building at 2621 Tenth Street. Looking west.



Figure 13: Two-story commercial building west of subject building at 2600 San Pablo Avenue. Looking southwest.

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Figure 14: Two-story commercial building northwest of subject building at 2546 San Pablo Avenue. Looking northwest.



Figure 15: Single-family and multi-family residential buildings north of subject building at 1101 through 1109 Parker Street, with multi-family residential building in background at 2577 San Pablo Avenue. Looking north.

State of California — The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION	Primary # _____ HRI# _____
BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD	

Page 6 of 13 *NRHP Status Code 6Z
 *Resource Name or # 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue

- B1. Historic name: 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue
- B2. Common name: 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue
- B3. Original Use: Commercial
- B4. Present use: Commercial
- *B5. Architectural Style: Early 20th Century Commercial
- *B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue was originally built in 1923 by contractor(s) Bigley & Walsh in the Early 20th Century Commercial style as a two-tenant one-story commercial building. According to the original building permit dated November 5th 1923, the owner of the property was Silvestro Paolini.¹ Renovations by several tenants have altered the original primary (west) and north façade, which currently lacks some original features or has damage to original features. These and other alterations are based on City of Berkeley permit records and are discussed in more detail below and in Table 1. (Refer to Continuation Sheet, page 7)

- *B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____
- *B8. Related Features: No _____ B9a. Architect: Unknown b. Builder: Bigley & Walsh
- *B10. Significance: Theme N/A Area N/A
 Period of Significance N/A Property Type N/A Applicable Criteria N/A
 (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity)

Historic Context – City of Berkeley
Incorporation of Berkeley

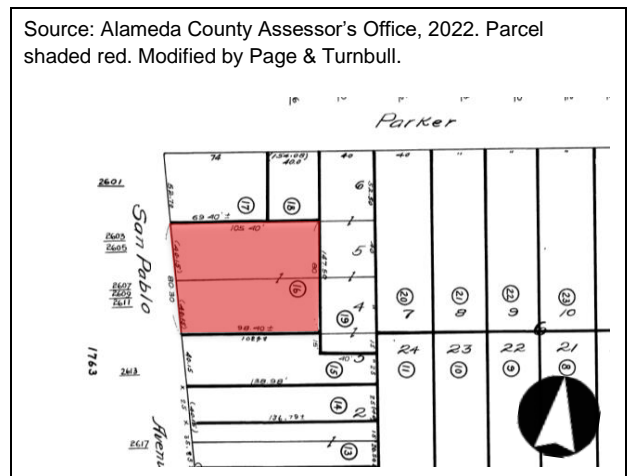
The development of Berkeley proceeded very slowly prior to the establishment of regular rail service between the town and Oakland and San Francisco. In 1873, with the completion of the first buildings at the new campus of the University of California in Berkeley, several local investors formed the Berkeley Land & Town Improvement Association to spur development. This group organized land sales, built stores and wharves, and lobbied for a direct ferry connection to San Francisco. In 1874, the Berkeley Ferry & Railroad Company initiated regular service between San Francisco and Ocean View (now West Berkeley). Also that year, a horse-drawn transit line began operating along Telegraph Avenue between the areas that are now downtown Berkeley and Oakland.² In 1878, the Town of Berkeley incorporated, encompassing both the bayside manufacturing settlement of Ocean View and the small academic village of Berkeley.³

Following Berkeley's incorporation, Shattuck Avenue was already well on its way to becoming the town's main street. This was mostly the result of Francis Kittredge Shattuck's successful efforts to convince the Central Pacific Railroad to run a spur line from Oakland through the middle of his mile-long land holdings located just west of the University of California campus. The spur line ran along Adeline Street and terminated in a station at Stanford Square (later renamed Shattuck Square). The blocks east of Shattuck Avenue contained an eclectic mix of uses and remained in a quasi-rural state for much longer than the land south and west of Shattuck. While Shattuck Avenue served as the main north-south transportation corridor in downtown Berkeley, University Avenue served as the east-west horsecar route, connecting the shoreline community of Ocean View with downtown and the campus. (Refer to Continuation Sheet, page 7)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes)

- *B12. References: Refer to Page 13
- B13. Remarks: None
- *B14. Evaluator: Page & Turnbull, Inc.
- *Date of Evaluation: February 6, 2023

(This space reserved for official comments.)



¹ Permit No. 15446. November 5th, 1923. Accessed by the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.
² Alan Cohen, *A History of Berkeley, From the Ground Up*, Archived on Archive.org, Accessed September 2022, <https://web.archive.org/web/20171014035000/http://historyofberkeley.org/chapters.html>
³ Cohen, *A History of Berkeley, From the Ground Up*.

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***B6. Construction History (continued):**

Alterations to the subject building that are documented by permits on file at the City of Berkeley Building and Safety Division are listed in **Table 1** (below).

Table 1: Alterations to 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue				
Permit #	Year	Owner	Builder/Contractor	Description
15446	1923	S. A. Paolini	Bigley & Walsh	New construction: one story two frame store building
178721	1955	Jennie Paslie	Burnett Roofing & Painting	Reroofing with gravel
98-5384	1998	Claudia Swarn	Taylor Construction	Renovate building façade, replace brick pilasters

Documented alterations include replacing original brick pilasters with stucco and renovations to the storefronts at 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue (**Figure 16**).

Observed alterations not described in permit records include a new opening in the north façade, replacement doors, and damage to the exterior ornamentation due to a sign installation. (**Figure 17**).



Figure 16: 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue, circa 1970. Note the pilasters are unpainted brick. Source: Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.



Figure 17: 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue, April 2011. Note one of the mounting poles from the upper sign penetrates the center of the cartouche, which has been removed in this picture and replaced with red paint within its former silhouette. Source: Google Streetview.

***B10. Significance (continued):**

Historic Context – City of Berkeley
Early Development of West Berkeley⁴

The following overview of West Berkeley’s early history is excerpted from the Historical and Architectural Evaluation of the Macaulay Foundry, five blocks west of the subject property at 811 Carleton Street, by Michael R. Corbett:

West Berkeley began its development as an industrial district in the 1850s when a wharf was built at the foot of what became Delaware Street adjacent to what, up until then, had been grazing land. This wharf and its successors would be used for decades to ship grain, cattle, produce and manufactured goods to San Francisco and around the bay. According to Berkeley historian Charles Wollenberg, for any kind of urban or industrial development at that time, “Access to the bay was crucial, as it was the region’s chief transportation and communication route, linking outlying communities with San Francisco’s urban core.”⁵ About 1853, an inn was built a short distance inland on the Contra Costa Road, which became San Pablo Avenue – a link in the main route from Oakland to San Pablo Bay and the Carquinez Straits. This created a crossroads that, with its community of dwellings and industries, emerged as the settlement of Ocean View.

⁴ Michael Corbett, *Historical and Architectural Evaluation: The Macaulay Foundry 811 Carleton Street*. Prepared for the City of Berkeley Planning and Development Department, 2015.

⁵ Charles Wollenberg. *Berkeley, A City in History* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002), 18.

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In 1873, the Berkeley Land and Town Improvement Association was established “to promote the development of West Berkeley.” This organization laid out a street grid that would later be expanded, supported ferry service to San Francisco, and promoted the area for business, residences, and industry. The new transcontinental mainline of the Southern Pacific Railroad was built along Third Street in the new grid in 1877. With the potential for rail spurs, several new businesses located in the area in the 1870s and 1880s. West Berkeley “developed into a lively working class and agricultural community” with a mix of houses, scattered industries, and open farm land. When Ocean View and the area around the University of California joined as the City of Berkeley in 1878, the population of Ocean View was about 600.⁶

An electric trolley line began operation on San Pablo Avenue in 1891, as new industrial enterprises opened to the west of this thoroughfare.⁷

Early Twentieth Century History of Berkeley

At the turn of the twentieth century, a majority of West Berkeley’s population consisted foreign-born residents, including Finnish and German immigrants, who worked in the areas industries.⁸ Following the 1906 earthquake and fires, industrial and residential growth accelerated as businesses and families relocated to East Bay cities and towns from their devastated homes in San Francisco. Commercial and civic development continued through the 1920s. The blocks between downtown Berkeley and the campus and the more industrial developments around San Pablo Avenue nearer to San Francisco Bay, filled slowly during this time. In the 1920s the blocks surrounding the subject building were occupied by residential uses, with slowly increasing density and infill concentrated along San Pablo Avenue (**Figure 18 and Figure 19**). By the end of the 1920s, 173 manufacturing businesses operated in West Berkeley, including national companies such as Colgate, Heinz, and Durkee Foods.⁹

The Great Depression and World War II

During the Great Depression, Berkeley’s suffering was somewhat minimized by the presence of the University, which continued to provide employment for many citizens, although working-class businesses and residential neighborhoods in West Berkeley experienced more economic strain.

World War II brought a tremendous population boom to the entire Bay Area, and Berkeley was no exception. Wartime housing projects to accommodate military personnel were constructed in Berkeley, and facilities at the University itself were commandeered for military use. Civilian numbers also grew as people relocated to Berkeley for employment at local shipyards like the Moore Drydock on the Oakland Estuary and the Kaiser shipyards in Richmond. Transportation lines and other infrastructure in Berkeley expanded to make these workers’ commutes easier.

Post-World War II

After the war, Berkeley experienced the same out-migration as many other large cities in the country, as families moved to the suburbs to take advantage of G.I. home loans and the increased ease of commuting by automobile. This led to a shift in the demographics of Berkeley, where larger working-class populations developed. G.I. benefits also resulted in soaring enrollment at the University of California, which meant that students flooded available housing around the campus. The large houses that had previously been subdivided to accommodate war workers were well-suited to housing students. By the 1950s, the subject block along San Pablo Avenue was filled in with commercial developments (**Figure 20**).

⁶ Charles Wollenberg. *Berkeley, A City in History* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002), 19-20.

⁷ City of Berkeley, *West Berkeley Area Plan* (Berkeley, 1993), 117.

⁸ City of Berkeley, *West Berkeley Area Plan* (Berkeley, 1993), 118.

⁹ City of Berkeley, *West Berkeley Area Plan* (Berkeley, 1993), 119.

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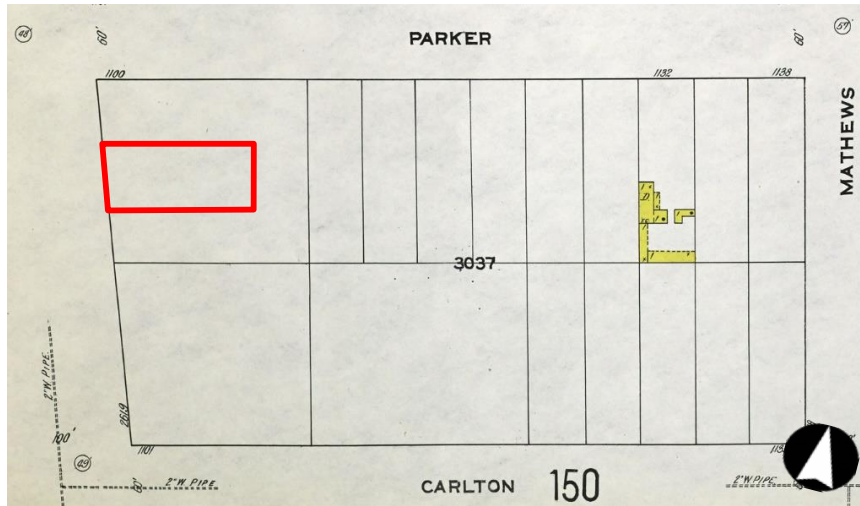


Figure 18. Detail from 1911 Sanborn Insurance Company Map for Berkeley, showing the lack of development near the subject parcel in the early twentieth century. Approximate future subject parcel outlined red.

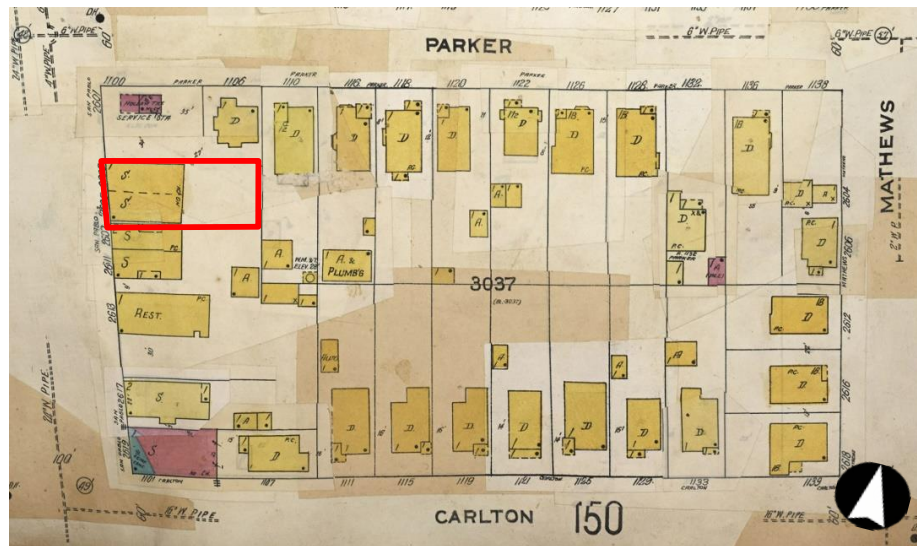


Figure 19. Detail from 1950 Sanborn Insurance Company Map for Berkeley, showing mid-twentieth century commercial and residential development on the subject block. Approximate subject parcel outlined red.



Figure 20. Historic photograph of subject building, left, and adjacent buildings circa 1968.
Source: Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.

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In the decades following World War II, Berkeley's reputation as a liberal stronghold grew, particularly expressed by its Democratic-leaning academic community and African American and working-class populations. Civil Rights became an important topic, leading to struggles over fair-housing and segregation of schools. The Vietnam War affected the city tremendously, as it was heavily populated by young, working-class people and students who were eligible for the draft, spurring protests and demonstrations. Berkeley has remained a politically and culturally outspoken community that largely accepts and promotes progressive thinking. The University of California remains the centerpiece of the city, which is otherwise inhabited by a wide range of social, economic, and ethnic demographics.¹⁰

Builder History: Bigley & Walsh

No information on any contractors operating under the name "Bigley & Walsh," nor any contractors self-employed with those surnames, were uncovered by research.

Owner History

At the time the subject building was constructed in 1923 it was owned by Silvestro Paolini, an Italian-born grocer who lived on the subject block at 1126 Parker Street. Paolini owned the subject building and the building immediately adjacent to its south through at least 1930. The Silvestro Paolini for whom 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue was built was likely the same as was enumerated as Sylvester Paolini at 1126 Parker Street, just around the corner from the subject property, in 1930.¹¹ Paolini was born in Italy in September of 1888, and had come to the United States in 1906. In 1917 Paolini was single, and lived in San Francisco while working for a fruit business and supporting his father.¹² Silvestro married Argene Pagni, recently arrived from Italy, in about 1920. Together the couple operated a fruit store in 1930, though by 1940 Paolini's business was recorded as a liquor store.¹³ Silvestro Paolini died in 1952, and Argene in 1965.

By 1974, the building was owned by Ezel and Claudia Swarn, the former of whom operated a tax service out of 2605 San Pablo Avenue from at least 1980 through 1984. They sold the subject property in 2012 to the current owner 2601 San Pablo Avenue LLC.

Occupancy History

Commercial tenants at the subject property included several grocery stores through the 1950s, after which it was occupied by various institutional and commercial establishments such as lounges, financial services, skills centers, and auto services. Both tenant spaces of the building are currently being used as the office and garage of a towing service addressed 2605 San Pablo Avenue. Many of the tenants of the subject building likely occupied both tenant spaces at the same time, although which businesses did so at which time periods before 2008 was not uncovered through research.

Table 3, below, lists documented commercial businesses at 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue since 1923. Records were assembled through research in Alameda County Directories and historic newspaper archives.

¹⁰ City of Berkeley, *City of Berkeley Landmark Application for the Preservation of All Souls Church, Parish Hall and Courtyard, 2220 Cedar Street, Berkeley, CA*, on file at Berkeley Architectural Heritage.

¹¹ United States Census Bureau, Fifteenth Census of the United States, Population Schedule for Berkeley, Enumeration District 1-281, Sheet 12B, 1930.

¹² U.S. World War I Draft registration card for Silvestro Paolini, June 1917, collection of Ancestry.com.

¹³ United States Census Bureau, Sixteenth Census of the United States, Population Schedule for Berkeley, Enumeration District 1-95, Sheet 8B, 1940.

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Table 3. Occupancy History, Commercial Businesses at 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue			
Address	Year(s) of Occupation	Occupant/Business Name	Use
2603	1924 ca.	J A Milbin	Grocery
	1930 ca.	G W Tripe	Grocery
	1934 ca.	Pillman Grocery	Retail
	1935-1963	Unknown	Unknown
	1964-1970	Wagner Printing	Commercial
	1974-1975	Pleasant Time Social Lodge	Bar & Lounge
	1976	Abrazar Project	Social services
	1984*	Divine Healing Holiness Church	Religious institution
2605	1923-1930	Silvestro Paolini	Retail
	1928-1930	Antonio Panizzera	Retail (Meats)
	1936 ca.	Sacramento Market	Retail
	1950 ca.	Milani & Co. Poultry	Retail
	1951-1971	Unknown	Unknown
	1972 ca.	Bonton Billiard Parlor	Bar & Lounge
	1980-1984	Adda-Tax Service	Financial services
	2008-2011*	Jackson-Hewitt Tax Service	Financial services
	2018-2022*	M & A Towing Service	Auto service

*During several periods including at least 2008-2022 both tenant spaces, when occupied, were used by the same business using the 2605 address.¹⁴

The first tenant of 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue was Paolini's grocery store immediately after construction. Although newspaper advertisements show Paolini made efforts to sell his business in the late 1920s, directories continued to list him operating out of 2605 San Pablo Avenue through 1930. His grocery store was either rebranded or replaced with several other grocers and food suppliers including Pillman Grocery, Sacramento Market, and Milani & Co. Poultry through the 1950s. The neighboring store at 2603 San Pablo Avenue was also occupied by various grocers and was possibly occupied by the tenant of 2605 San Pablo Avenue, but eventually was occupied by Wagner Printing by 1964. From the 1950s until the 1980s the subject building was occupied by a variety of short-term tenants. Briefly in the 1970s and 1980s 2603 San Pablo Avenue was occupied by a Hispanic senior citizens skills center called the Abrazar Project, and a religious institution called the Divine Healing Holiness Church. From the 1980s through 2011, the subject building was occupied by at least two tax services, Adda-Tax Service operated by the property owner Ezel Swarn and the Jackson-Hewitt Tax Service. In 2018 the subject building was occupied by the current tenants, M & A Towing Service.

Evaluation

California Register Evaluation

The property at 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue is not currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) or the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register). The building does not appear in the most recent version available of the State of California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) Built Environment Resources Directory (BERD), issued September 2022, indicating that no record of a previous survey or evaluation is on file at an information center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS).¹⁵ The subject building is not listed as a City of Berkeley Landmark or Structure of Merit.

Criterion 1 (Events)

2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue does not appear to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 1 (Events). The subject property is not associated with events which made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States. The subject building was constructed in 1923 as a commercial building, at a time when commercial development in West Berkeley more broadly, and the blocks around 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue, had been slowly progressing for many years. No significant events are known to have taken place at the subject building that would allow the building to rise to the level of significance necessary to be individually eligible for the California Register.

¹⁴ Google Streetview, 2008-2022.

¹⁵ California State Office of Historic Preservation, Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD), Alameda County, updated March 2020.

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Criterion 2 (Persons)

2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue does not appear to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 2 (Persons). The subject building was constructed for owner Silvestro Paolini as a two-tenant commercial building. Neither Paolini nor subsequent owners or occupants at 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue appear to have made a significant impact on local, state, or national history such that the building could be found significant under Criterion 2.

Criterion 3 (Architecture)

2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue does not appear to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 3 (Architecture) as a building that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. Completed in 1923, erected by contractors Bigley & Walsh, the building is a typical Early 20th Century Commercial style wood-frame construction designed to accommodate commercial occupants. While the structure contains some details once common of buildings in that era, 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue lacks the full expression of character or unique examples of design or workmanship that would be expected of a significant building of this type and period.

Criterion 4 (Information Potential)

2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue does not appear to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 4 (Information Potential). The "potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of California" typically relates to archeological resources, rather than built resources. When California Register Criterion 4 (Information Potential) does relate to built resources, it is relevant for cases when the buildings themselves are the principal source of important construction-related information. The subject property does not appear to be individually significant under Criterion 4 as a building that has the potential to provide information important to the prehistory or history of the City of Berkeley, the state, or the nation. It does not appear to feature construction or material types, or embody engineering practices that would, with additional study, provide important information. Identification or evaluation of archaeological resources is beyond the scope of this study.

City of Berkeley Landmark and Structure of Merit Evaluation

The City of Berkeley maintains a list of properties designated as local Landmarks and Structures of Merit under Chapter 3.24 of the Berkeley Municipal Code. Much like the National and California Registers, the Municipal Code provides criteria that must be met in order for a property to gain Landmark or Structure of Merit designation. Properties may be landmarked if they meet standards of architectural, cultural, educational, or historical significance, or if they are already listed in the National Register. A property may be designated as a Structure of Merit if it does not rise to the level of Landmark status, but has contextual importance and is worthy of preservation as part of a neighborhood, block or street frontage, or group of buildings that includes Landmark properties.

The subject property at 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue does not appear to be eligible as a City of Berkeley Landmark. The subject building was constructed as a two-tenant store in 1923 and has been altered by several tenants. The building is not an early or rare example of its type within the City of Berkeley and therefore does not demonstrate architectural merit such that it would qualify as a landmark. It does not provide architectural value to the surrounding neighborhood, which is characterized by a mixture of commercial and multi-family residential buildings of varied construction dates and architectural styles. 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue was used for retail, service, and institutional uses during a time when this use was already a regular part of Berkeley life, and as such the building would not be eligible as a landmark for its cultural value. 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue does not appear to be eligible as a landmark for its educational value. The subject building does not bear significant historic associations for it to contribute meaningfully to educational curricula. The building also does not appear to be eligible for its historic value as its type and style do not embody the history of Berkeley or the state. Additionally, the subject building is not listed on the National Register.

The subject building does not appear to have contextual importance as part of a neighborhood, block, or street frontage, as the character of San Pablo Avenue between Parker Street and Carlton Street lacks visual, architectural, or historic distinctiveness, cohesiveness, or significance in its mixture of commercial and multi-family residential buildings dating between the early 1900s and 2022. Therefore, 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue is not eligible as a City of Berkeley Structure of Merit.

Conclusion

The commercial building at 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley, California, was built by contractor(s) Bigley & Walsh and completed in 1923 for owner Silvestro Paolino. The building was used for various commercial businesses including retail, service, and briefly institutional uses through the present day. This evaluation is based on a site visit and analysis of available documentation pertaining to the subject building's ownership and occupant history, chronology of construction and alterations, and architectural characteristics. The subject property is not eligible for individual listing in the California Register under any criterion, nor is the subject property eligible for designation as a City of Berkeley Landmark or Structure of Merit. The property does not therefore appear to qualify as a historic resource for the purposes of review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As such, the California Historical Resource Status Code (CHRSC) of "6Z" has been assigned to the building, meaning that it was "Found ineligible for NR, CR or Local designation through survey evaluation."¹⁶

¹⁶ California State Office of Historic Preservation Department of Parks and Recreation, *Technical Assistance Bulletin #8: User's Guide to the California Historical Resource Status Codes & Historical Resource Inventory Directory*, Sacramento, November 2004.

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***B12. References:**

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_____. *Technical Assistance Bulletin #8: User's Guide to the California Historical Resource Status Codes & Historical Resource Inventory Directory*, Sacramento, November 2004.

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Huggins, C.L. Berkeley, California (map). Berkeley, 1904. David Rumsey Map Collection, electronic resource at <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/7s77tm>, accessed April 26, 2022.

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_____. *Insurance Maps of Berkeley, California*. New York, NY: Sanborn Map Company, Volume 1, Sheet 68, 1929.

_____. *Insurance Maps of Berkeley, California*. New York, NY: Sanborn Map Company, Volume 1, Sheet 72, 1911.

San Francisco Examiner, The. San Francisco, CA. Various issues.

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San F120State of California — The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION PRIMARY RECORD	Primary # _____ HRI # _____ Trinomial _____ NRHP Status Code <u>6Z</u>
Other Listings _____ Review Code _____	Reviewer _____ Date _____

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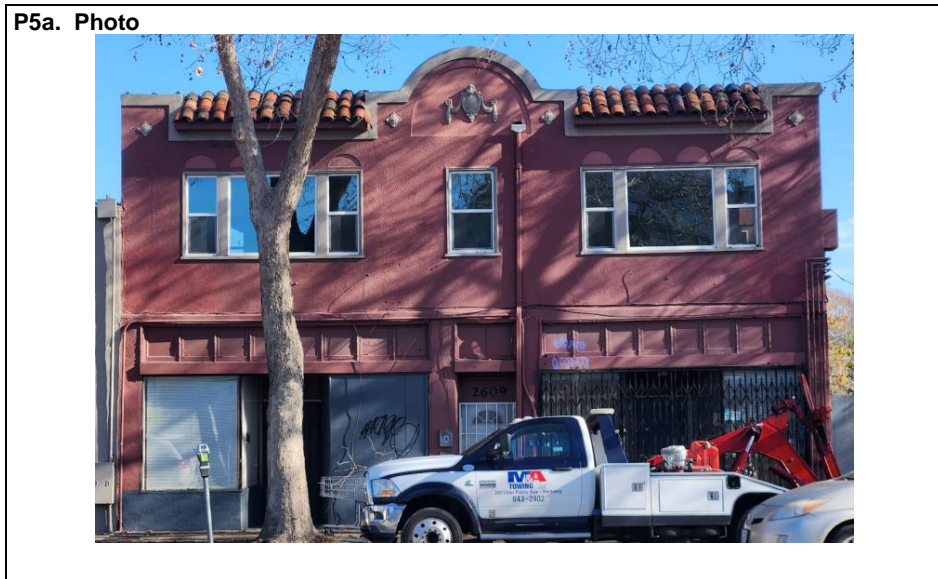
P1. Other Identifier: _____

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted ***a. County** Alameda
***b. USGS 7.5' Quad** Oakland West **Date** 2022
***c. Address** 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue **City** Berkeley **Zip** 94704
***e. Other Locational Data:** Assessor's Parcel Number 54-1785-16

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries.)
 The parcel which contains 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue (APN 54-1785-16) is located west of downtown Berkeley on the east side of San Pablo Avenue (**Figure 1**). Originally built in 1926, the two-story, stucco-clad building was built by O. F. Lyon for property owner Silvestro Paolini. The building includes two ground-floor commercial spaces and two second-floor residential units, and was occupied by various retail, service and apartment tenants throughout its history. It is currently vacant. The subject parcel also contains a one-story wood-frame commercial building, 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue, to the immediate north of 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue.

The wood-frame building at 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue is built to its west (front) lot line. The primary, west façade features two nearly identical storefronts flanking the entrance to the second-story apartments at the center and is stucco-clad. The building features a flat roof, stepped parapet with an arch in the center and red clay roof tiles in the lower portion, and painted-over clerestory windows over both storefronts. The first story at each storefront features replacement plate-glass windows above wood and stucco bulkheads flanking a primary entrance set within an angled recess. At the north storefront, the south set of windows are covered in painted plywood (**Figure 2**). The north entrance consists of an outer metal gate and a wood inner door, with wood numbering for the address above. Between the north and south storefront is the entrance to the apartments at 2609 San Pablo Avenue. The entrance is a wood door with a small fanlight behind a metal outer door with wood numbering for the address above (**Figure 3**). The south storefront is currently behind a retractable metal gate, and the entrance consists of an outer metal gate and a wood inner door with wood numbering for the address above (**Figure 4**). At the second story over each storefront is a tripartite window fixture with a wide fixed window in the middle flanked by two narrow hung windows. At the center, over the entrance to the 2609 San Pablo Avenue apartments, is a single hung window (**Figure 5**). (Refer to Continuation Sheet, page 2).

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (list attributes and codes) HP6. 1-3 story commercial building
***P4. Resources Present:** Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other



P5b. Photo: (view and date)
View of the primary façade, looking northeast, December 15 2022.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** historic
1926 (Original Building Permit)

***P7. Owner and Address:**
2601 San Pablo Avenue, LLC
9101 Burning Tree Rd
Bethesda, MD 20817

***P8. Recorded by:**
Page & Turnbull, Inc.
170 Maiden Lane, 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94010

***P9. Date Recorded:**
February 6, 2023

***P10. Survey Type:** Intensive

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

***Attachments:** None Location Map Sketch 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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***P3a. Description (continued):**



Figure 1. Location of 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue, subject building highlighted yellow.
Source: Google Earth, 2020, edited by Page & Turnbull.



Figure 2: Detail view of the north storefront on the west façade. Looking east.



Figure 3: Detail view of the entrance to the 2609 San Pablo Avenue apartments, at the center of the west façade. Looking east.

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Figure 4: Detail view of south storefront on west façade. Looking east.



Figure 5: Second story windows and ornaments over north storefront on the west façade. Looking east.

On the west façade the building's stepped parapet is symmetrical, and features decorative shed roofs with red clay tiles within the lower sections across the length of both tripartite windows. Immediately over each tripartite window are four low, recessed arches molded into the stucco. The merlons flanking the red clay tile slopes each have medallions for a total of four, and at the center the parapet is arched and features a cartouche with festoons (**Figure 6**).

The north façade is immediately adjacent to the neighboring structure and not visible, though Sanborn maps show there is a light well at the center of the second story that mirrors the visible light well on the south façade.

The east façade is the only façade not covered in stucco, instead clad in horizontal wood siding with a simple parapet roof. At the first story, the east façade has two wood doors at the south end and another door and a fixed aluminum-frame window at the north, all replacement (**Figure 7**). The second story of the east façade is symmetrical, with a set of two double-hung windows at the north and south flanking two doors and a wood deck at the center, providing one set of windows and one rear exit for each internal apartment.

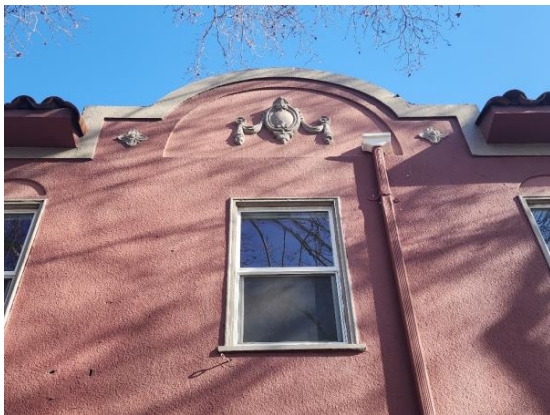


Figure 6: Second story window and ornaments over the entrance to the 2609 San Pablo Avenue apartments. Looking east.



Figure 7: View of east façade. Looking west.

The south façade features no openings at the first story and a light well centered at the second story, mirrored to the north façade (**Figure 8**). Each light well features at least four hung original or replacement windows, one each facing north and south, and two facing out from the north and south façades respectively (**Figure 9**).

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Figure 8: Second story window and ornamentals over the entrance to the 2609 San Pablo Avenue apartments. Looking east.

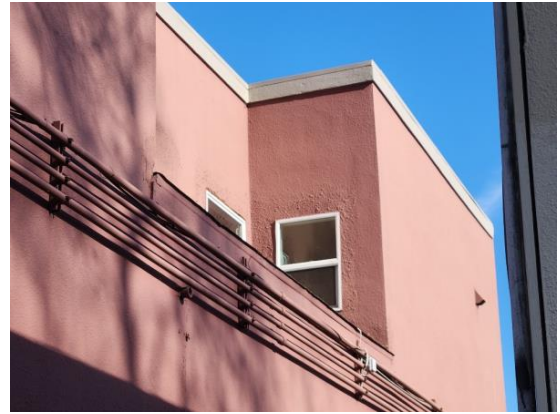


Figure 9: View of east façade. Looking west.

Buildings within the surrounding blocks include early to mid-twentieth century residential properties, commercial buildings, and multi-family residential buildings as well as several multi-story developments completed in the 21st century (**Figure 10 to Figure 17**). Further north of the subject building contemporary multi-family housing is currently under construction or very recently completed.



Figure 10: One and two-story commercial buildings south of subject building at 2617 and 2619 San Pablo Avenue. Looking east.



Figure 11: One-story commercial building south of subject building at 2625 San Pablo Avenue. Looking east.

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Figure 12: One and two-story commercial buildings south of subject building at 2634 through 2622 San Pablo Avenue. Looking southwest.



Figure 13: One-story church south of subject building at 2618 San Pablo. Looking west.



Figure 14: Three-story medical building west of subject building at 2621 Tenth Street. Looking west.



Figure 15: Two-story commercial building west of subject building at 2600 San Pablo Avenue. Looking southwest.



Figure 16: Two-story commercial building northwest of subject building at 2546 San Pablo Avenue. Looking northwest.



Figure 17: Single-family and multi-family residential buildings north of subject building at 1101 through 1109 Parker Street, with multi-family residential building in background at 2577 San Pablo Avenue. Looking north.

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- B1. Historic name: 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue
- B2. Common name: 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue
- B3. Original Use: Commercial
- B4. Present use: Commercial
- *B5. Architectural Style: Early 20th Century Commercial
- *B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue was originally built in 1926 by contractor O. F. Lyons in the Early 20th Century Commercial style as a two-tenant commercial building with apartments above. According to the original building permit dated November 5th 1926, the owner of the property was Silvestro Paolini.¹ Minimal alterations were uncovered through research and observation. These and other alterations are based on City of Berkeley permit records and are discussed in more detail below and in Table 1. (Refer to Continuation Sheet, page 7)

- *B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____
- *B8. Related Features: No _____ B9a. Architect: Not Listed b. Builder: Oscar F. Lyon
- *B10. Significance: Theme N/A Area N/A
 Period of Significance N/A Property Type N/A Applicable Criteria N/A
 (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity)

Historic Context – City of Berkeley
Incorporation of Berkeley

The development of Berkeley proceeded very slowly prior to the establishment of regular rail service between the town and Oakland and San Francisco. In 1873, with the completion of the first buildings at the new campus of the University of California in Berkeley, several local investors formed the Berkeley Land & Town Improvement Association to spur development. This group organized land sales, built stores and wharves, and lobbied for a direct ferry connection to San Francisco. In 1874, the Berkeley Ferry & Railroad Company initiated regular service between San Francisco and Ocean View (now West Berkeley). Also that year, a horse-drawn transit line began operating along Telegraph Avenue between the areas that are now downtown Berkeley and Oakland.² In 1878, the Town of Berkeley incorporated, encompassing both the bayside manufacturing settlement of Ocean View and the small academic village of Berkeley.³

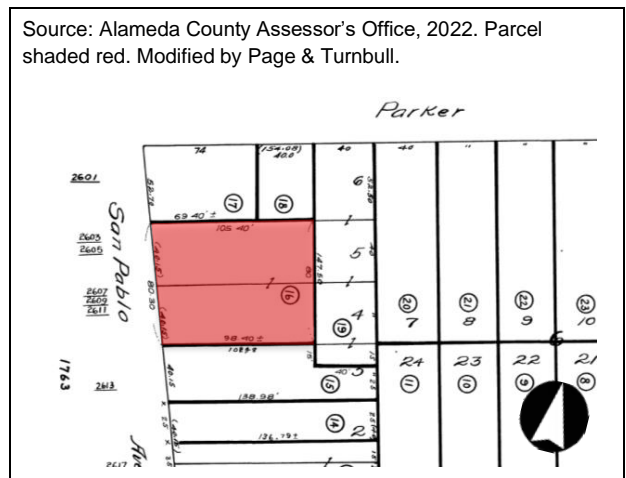
Following Berkeley's incorporation, Shattuck Avenue was already well on its way to becoming the town's main street. This was mostly the result of Francis Kittredge Shattuck's successful efforts to convince the Central Pacific Railroad to run a spur line from Oakland through the middle of his mile-long land holdings located just west of the University of California campus. The spur line ran along Adeline Street and terminated in a station at Stanford Square (later renamed Shattuck Square). The blocks east of Shattuck Avenue contained an eclectic mix of uses and remained in a quasi-rural state for much longer than the land south and west of Shattuck. While Shattuck Avenue served as the main north-south transportation corridor in downtown Berkeley, University Avenue served as the east-west horsecar route, connecting the shoreline community of Ocean View with downtown and the campus.

(Refer to Continuation Sheet, page 7)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes)

- *B12. References: Refer to Page 14
- B13. Remarks: None
- *B14. Evaluator: Page & Turnbull, Inc.
- *Date of Evaluation: February 6, 2023

(This space reserved for official comments.)



¹ Permit No. 23761. January 8th, 1926. Accessed through the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.
² Alan Cohen, *A History of Berkeley, From the Ground Up*, Archived on Archive.org, Accessed September 2022, <https://web.archive.org/web/20171014035000/http://historyofberkeley.org/chapters.html>
³ Cohen, *A History of Berkeley, From the Ground Up*.

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***B6. Construction History (continued):**

Alterations to the subject building that are documented by permits on file at the City of Berkeley Building and Safety Division are listed in **Table 1** (below).

Table 1: Documented Alterations to 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue				
Permit #	Year	Owner	Builder/Contractor	Description
23761	1926	S. A. Paolini	O. F. Lyon	New construction of a two-story, six room building
69274	1951	Alfred J. Rosa	Not listed	Installing interior partitions for barber shop
108036	1967	F. Anderson	James Johnson	Alterations, addition of BBQ pit in the rear
98-5384	1998	Claudia Swarn	Taylor Construction	Renovate building façade (permit includes 2603-2605 San Pablo Avenue)

Documented alterations include replacing original openings at the first floor of the east façade to accommodate a barbeque pit and renovations to the storefronts at 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue.

Observed alterations not described in permit records include replacing windows at the second story of the north and south façade, and renovations to the first story of the east façade. The primary façade has undergone few alterations other than the replacement of original windows at the first and second story (**Figure 18 and Figure 19**).



Figure 18: 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue, right, circa 1970.
 Source: Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.



Figure 19: 2611 San Pablo Avenue storefront, circa 1970. Note divided lites in the second story windows and tile bulkhead, not extant. Image bent at upper left corner. Source: Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.

***B10. Significance (continued):**

Historic Context – City of Berkeley

Early Development of West Berkeley⁴

The following overview of West Berkeley's early history is excerpted from the Historical and Architectural Evaluation of the Macaulay Foundry, five blocks west of the subject property at 811 Carleton Street, by Michael R. Corbett:

West Berkeley began its development as an industrial district in the 1850s when a wharf was built at the foot of what became Delaware Street adjacent to what, up until then, had been grazing land. This wharf and its successors would be used for decades to ship grain, cattle, produce and manufactured goods to San Francisco and around the bay. According to Berkeley historian Charles Wollenberg, for any kind of urban or industrial development at that time, "Access to the bay was crucial, as it was the region's chief transportation and communication route, linking outlying communities with San Francisco's urban core."⁵ About 1853, an inn was built a short distance inland on the Contra Costa Road, which became San Pablo Avenue – a link in the main route from Oakland to San Pablo Bay and the Carquinez Straits. This created a crossroads that, with its community of dwellings and industries, emerged as the settlement of Ocean View.

⁴ Michael Corbett, *Historical and Architectural Evaluation: The Macaulay Foundry 811 Carleton Street*. Prepared for the City of Berkeley Planning and Development Department, 2015.

⁵ Charles Wollenberg. *Berkeley, A City in History* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002), 18.

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In 1873, the Berkeley Land and Town Improvement Association was established “to promote the development of West Berkeley.” This organization laid out a street grid that would later be expanded, supported ferry service to San Francisco, and promoted the area for business, residences, and industry. The new transcontinental mainline of the Southern Pacific Railroad was built along Third Street in the new grid in 1877. With the potential for rail spurs, several new businesses located in the area in the 1870s and 1880s. West Berkeley “developed into a lively working class and agricultural community” with a mix of houses, scattered industries, and open farm land. When Ocean View and the area around the University of California joined as the City of Berkeley in 1878, the population of Ocean View was about 600.⁶

An electric trolley line began operation on San Pablo Avenue in 1891, as new industrial enterprises opened to the west of this thoroughfare.⁷

Early Twentieth Century History of Berkeley

At the turn of the twentieth century, a majority of West Berkeley’s population consisted foreign-born residents, including Finnish and German immigrants, who worked in the areas industries.⁸ Following the 1906 earthquake and fires, industrial and residential growth accelerated as businesses and families relocated to East Bay cities and towns from their devastated homes in San Francisco. Commercial and civic development continued through the 1920s. The blocks between downtown Berkeley and the campus and the more industrial developments around San Pablo Avenue nearer to San Francisco Bay, filled slowly during this time. In the 1920s the blocks surrounding the subject building were occupied by residential uses, with slowly increasing density and infill concentrated along San Pablo Avenue (**Figure 20 and Figure 21**). By the end of the 1920s, 173 manufacturing businesses operated in West Berkeley, including national companies such as Colgate, Heinz, and Durkee Foods.⁹

The Great Depression and World War II

During the Great Depression, Berkeley’s suffering was somewhat minimized by the presence of the University, which continued to provide employment for many citizens, although working-class businesses and residential neighborhoods in West Berkeley experienced more economic strain.

World War II brought a tremendous population boom to the entire Bay Area, and Berkeley was no exception. Wartime housing projects to accommodate military personnel were constructed in Berkeley, and facilities at the University itself were commandeered for military use. Civilian numbers also grew as people relocated to Berkeley for employment at local shipyards like the Moore Drydock on the Oakland Estuary and the Kaiser shipyards in Richmond. Transportation lines and other infrastructure in Berkeley expanded to make these workers’ commutes easier.

Post-World War II

After the war, Berkeley experienced the same out-migration as many other large cities in the country, as families moved to the suburbs to take advantage of G.I. home loans and the increased ease of commuting by automobile. This led to a shift in the demographics of Berkeley, where larger working-class populations developed. G.I. benefits also resulted in soaring enrollment at the University of California, which meant that students flooded available housing around the campus. The large houses that had previously been subdivided to accommodate war workers were well-suited to housing students. By the 1950s, the subject block along San Pablo Avenue was filled in with commercial developments (**Figure 22**).

⁶ Charles Wollenberg. *Berkeley, A City in History* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002), 19-20.

⁷ City of Berkeley, *West Berkeley Area Plan* (Berkeley, 1993), 117.

⁸ City of Berkeley, *West Berkeley Area Plan* (Berkeley, 1993), 118.

⁹ City of Berkeley, *West Berkeley Area Plan* (Berkeley, 1993), 119.

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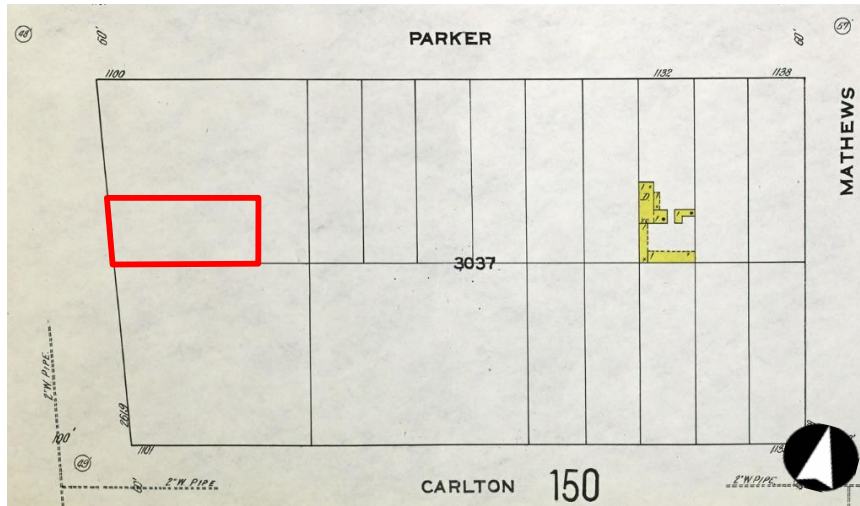


Figure 20. Detail from 1911 Sanborn Insurance Company Map for Berkeley, showing the lack of development near the subject parcel in the early twentieth century. Approximate future subject parcel outlined red.

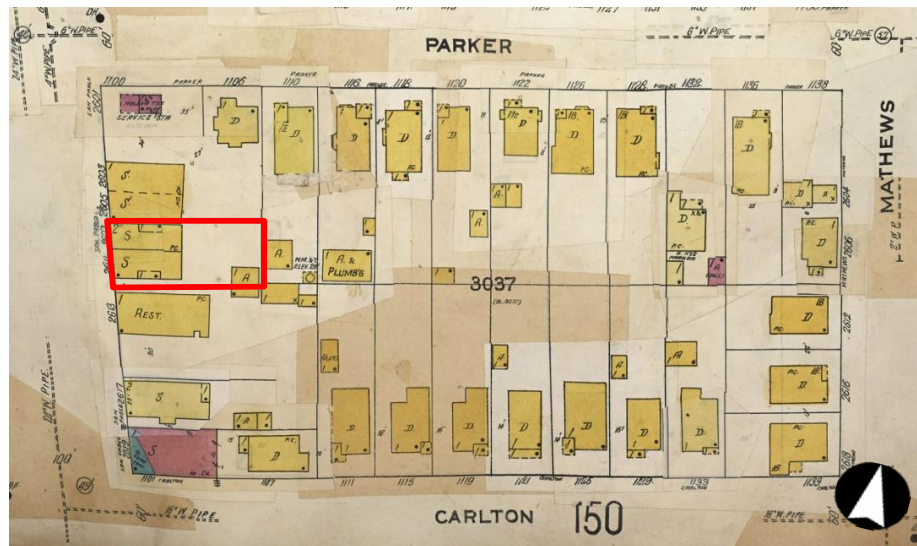


Figure 21. Detail from 1950 Sanborn Insurance Company Map for Berkeley, showing mid-twentieth century commercial and residential development on the subject block. Approximate subject parcel outlined red.



Figure 22. Historic photograph of subject block circa 1968.
Source: Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association.

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In the decades following World War II, Berkeley's reputation as a liberal stronghold grew, particularly expressed by its Democratic-leaning academic community and African American and working-class populations. Civil Rights became an important topic, leading to struggles over fair-housing and segregation of schools. The Vietnam War affected the city tremendously, as it was heavily populated by young, working-class people and students who were eligible for the draft, spurring protests and demonstrations. Berkeley has remained a politically and culturally outspoken community that largely accepts and promotes progressive thinking. The University of California remains the centerpiece of the city, which is otherwise inhabited by a wide range of social, economic, and ethnic demographics.¹⁰

Builder History: Oscar F. Lyon

Oscar F. Lyon (1885-1954) was a Swedish-born carpenter and general contractor in Alameda County. He lived in the Berkeley-Oakland area in the 1920s and 1930, and moved to Hayward by 1950. Little information was uncovered through research on his other works.

Owner History

At the time the subject building was constructed in 1923 it was owned by Silvestro Paolini, an Italian-born grocer who lived on the subject block at 1126 Parker Street. Paolini owned the subject building and the building immediately adjacent to its south through at least 1930. The Silvestro Paolini for whom 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue was built was likely the same as was enumerated as Sylvester Paolini at 1126 Parker Street, just around the corner from the subject property, in 1930.¹¹ Paolini was born in Italy in September of 1888, and had come to the United States in 1906. In 1917 Paolini was single, and lived in San Francisco while working for a fruit business and supporting his father.¹² Silvestro married Argene Pagni, recently arrived from Italy, in about 1920. Together the couple operated a fruit store in 1930, though by 1940 Paolini's business was recorded as a liquor store.¹³ Silvestro Paolini died in 1952, and Argene in 1965.

By 1974, it was owned by Ezel and Claudia Swarn, the former of whom operated a tax service out of 2605 San Pablo Avenue from at least 1980 through 1984. They sold the subject property in 2012 to the current owner 2601 San Pablo Avenue LLC.

Occupancy History

Known commercial tenants at the subject property include grocery stores, retail stores, and various salons. Known tenants of the apartments at 2609 include few long-term tenants, and early on in the building's history included at least one business owner operating out of the first-floor commercial spaces.

Table 3, below, lists documented commercial businesses at 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue since 1926. Records were assembled through research in Alameda County Directories and historic newspaper archives.

¹⁰ City of Berkeley, *City of Berkeley Landmark Application for the Preservation of All Souls Church, Parish Hall and Courtyard, 2220 Cedar Street, Berkeley, CA*, on file at Berkeley Architectural Heritage.

¹¹ United States Census Bureau, Fifteenth Census of the United States, Population Schedule for Berkeley, Enumeration District 1-281, Sheet 12B, 1930.

¹² U.S. World War I Draft registration card for Silvestro Paolini, June 1917, collection of Ancestry.com.

¹³ United States Census Bureau, Sixteenth Census of the United States, Population Schedule for Berkeley, Enumeration District 1-95, Sheet 8B, 1940.

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Address	Year(s) of Occupation	Occupant/Business Name	Use
2607	1932-1943	Natale/Ned Tolomei	Grocery
	1944-1966	Unknown	Unknown
	1967-1970	KC's BBQ	Restaurant
	1974 ca.	George's used Bicycles	Retail
	1984-1994	Brother's TV	Retail
	1995-2007	Unknown	Unknown
	2008-2011	GG African Braiders	Salon
	2012-2023	Vacant	N/A
2611	1928-1930	Louis Moroni	Grocery
	1935-1941	Frank Lanza	Shoe repair
	1942-1963	Unknown	Unknown
	1964 ca.	Frank's Radio & TV Service	Retail
	1966 ca.	Mrs. Campestrini, used furniture	Retail
	1970-1984	Davis Beauty Fair	Salon
	1985-2007	Unknown	Unknown
	2008 ca.	Compliments	Retail
	2011-2018	Red Sea Tobacco & Gifts	Retail
	2019-2023	Vacant	N/A

The first known tenants of 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue were grocery stores a few years after its construction. Little information was uncovered through research on the occupancy of the first-floor tenant spaces from the 1940s through the 1960s, when KC's BBQ restaurant and an electronics sales and repair shop occupied 2607 and 2611 San Pablo Avenue, respectively. In the 1970s and 1980s, 2607 San Pablo Avenue was occupied by a variety of small retail shops while 2611 San Pablo Avenue was occupied by Davis Beauty Fair, a salon, between at least 1970 and 1984. Little information was found through research of occupancy history between 1984 and 2008. Between 2008 and 2023, 2607 and 2611 San Pablo Avenue were occupied by a salon and a corner store, respectively, but were vacant for most of that period through the present.

The two second-story apartments addressed 2609 San Pablo Avenue were occupied by numerous short-term tenants, most of whom only appear for a few consecutive years in any one source. Known long-term tenants include Natale Tolomei, proprietor of a grocery store in 2607 San Pablo Avenue between at least 1932 and 1943, Lillian Broomfield between at least 1964 and 1970, and Olga Roos between at least 1964 and 1975.

Evaluation**California Register Evaluation**

The property at 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue is not currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) or the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register). The building does not appear in the most recent version available of the State of California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) Built Environment Resources Directory (BERD), issued September 2022, indicating that no record of a previous survey or evaluation is on file at an information center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS).¹⁴ The subject building is not listed as a City of Berkeley Landmark or Structure of Merit.

Criterion 1 (Events)

2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue does not appear to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 1 (Events). The subject property is not associated with events which made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States. The subject building was constructed in 1926 as a commercial and residential building, at a time when commercial and residential development in west Berkeley, including the blocks around 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue, had been slowly growing for many years. No significant events are known to have taken place at the subject building that would allow the building to rise to the level of significance necessary to be individually eligible for the California Register.

¹⁴ California State Office of Historic Preservation, Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD), Alameda County, updated September 2022.

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Criterion 2 (Persons)

2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue does not appear to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 2 (Persons). The subject building was constructed for owner Silvestro Paolini as a two-story mixed-use building. Neither Paolini nor subsequent owners or occupants at 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue appear to have made a significant impact on local, state, or national history such that the building could be found significant under Criterion 2.

Criterion 3 (Architecture)

2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue does not appear to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 3 (Architecture) as a building that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. Completed in 1926, erected by contractor Oscar F Lyon, the building is a typical Early 20th Century Commercial style wood-frame construction designed to accommodate commercial and residential occupants. While the structure contains some details once common of buildings in that era, 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue lacks the full expression of character or unique examples of design or workmanship that would be expected of a significant building of this type and period.

Criterion 4 (Information Potential)

2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue does not appear to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 4 (Information Potential). The "potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of California" typically relates to archeological resources, rather than built resources. When California Register Criterion 4 (Information Potential) does relate to built resources, it is relevant for cases when the buildings themselves are the principal source of important construction-related information. The subject property does not appear to be individually significant under Criterion 4 as a building that has the potential to provide information important to the prehistory or history of the City of Berkeley, the state, or the nation. It does not appear to feature construction or material types, or embody engineering practices that would, with additional study, provide important information. Identification or evaluation of archaeological resources is beyond the scope of this study.

City of Berkeley Landmark and Structure of Merit Evaluation

The City of Berkeley maintains a list of properties designated as local Landmarks and Structures of Merit under Chapter 3.24 of the Berkeley Municipal Code. Much like the National and California Registers, the Municipal Code provides criteria that must be met in order for a property to gain Landmark or Structure of Merit designation. Properties may be landmarked if they meet standards of architectural, cultural, educational, or historical significance, or if they are already listed in the National Register. A property may be designated as a Structure of Merit if it does not rise to the level of Landmark status, but has contextual importance and is worthy of preservation as part of a neighborhood, block or street frontage, or group of buildings that includes Landmark properties.

The subject property at 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue does not appear to be eligible as a City of Berkeley Landmark. The subject building was constructed as a two-tenant store with apartments above in 1926 and has been altered by previous tenants. The building is not an early or rare example of its type within the City of Berkeley and therefore does not demonstrate architectural merit such that it would qualify as a landmark. It does not provide architectural value to the surrounding neighborhood, which is characterized by a mixture of commercial and multi-family residential buildings of varied construction dates and architectural styles. 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue was used for retail, restaurant, service, and residential uses during a time when this use was already a regular part of Berkeley life, and as such the building would not be eligible as a landmark for its cultural value. 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue does not appear to be eligible as a landmark for its educational value. The subject building does not bear significant historic associations for it to contribute meaningfully to educational curricula. The building also does not appear to be eligible for its historic value as its type and style do not embody the history of Berkeley or the state. Additionally, the subject building is not listed on the National Register.

The subject building does not appear to have contextual importance as part of a neighborhood, block, or street frontage, as the character of San Pablo Avenue between Parker Street and Carlton Street lacks visual, architectural, or historic distinctiveness, cohesiveness, or significance in its mixture of commercial and multi-family residential buildings dating between the early 1900s and 2022. Therefore, 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue is not eligible as a City of Berkeley Structure of Merit.

Conclusion

The commercial building at 2607-2611 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley, California, was built by contractor Oscar F. Lyon and completed in 1926 for owner Silvestro Paolino. The building was occupied by various residents and commercial businesses including retail, restaurant and service uses through 2018 when the building was vacated by its last tenant. This evaluation is based on a site visit and analysis of available documentation pertaining to the subject building's ownership and occupant history, chronology of construction and alterations, and architectural characteristics. The subject property is not eligible for individual listing in the California Register under any criterion, nor is the subject property eligible for designation as a City of Berkeley Landmark or Structure of Merit. The property does not therefore appear to qualify as a historic resource for the purposes of review under the

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California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As such, the California Historical Resource Status Code (CHRSC) of "6Z" has been assigned to the building, meaning that it was "Found ineligible for NR, CR or Local designation through survey evaluation."¹⁵

¹⁵ California State Office of Historic Preservation Department of Parks and Recreation, *Technical Assistance Bulletin #8: User's Guide to the California Historical Resource Status Codes & Historical Resource Inventory Directory*, Sacramento, November 2004.

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