

# Historical Resource Assessment Report

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Civic Center Master Plan Project, Moorpark, California

**August 2022**

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# Executive Summary

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South Environmental was retained to complete a Historical Resource Assessment Report for the Civic Center Master Plan Project located in the City of Moorpark in Ventura County, California. This study includes the results of a literature review, pedestrian survey of the project site by a qualified architectural historian; building development and archival research; and an assessment of potential impacts to historic built environment resources under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines § 15064.5 for historical resources.

No historic built environment resources over 45 years old were identified within the project site as a result of the background research and pedestrian field survey. One historical resource was identified directly adjacent to the project site: the CRHR-listed Tanner Corner building located at 601 Moorpark Avenue. Although the project does not propose any changes or direct impacts to this resource that would impair its major character-defining features, the building's proximity to proposed demolition and construction activities is considered a potentially significant impact that requires further consideration.

Implementation of recommended mitigation measures 1 and 2 (Section 6) would provide an appropriate level of protection for the Tanner Corner building and reduce impacts to historical resources to a less than significant level. These pre-construction measures include 1) completion of a groundborne vibration analysis in consideration of the building's type and all proposed construction equipment that will be used in the vicinity, and 2) development of a protection plan for the building during demolition and construction activities.

# 1. Introduction

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South Environmental was retained to complete a Historical Resource Assessment Report for the Civic Center Master Plan Project located in the City of Moorpark in Ventura County, California. This study includes the results of a literature review, pedestrian survey of the project site by a qualified architectural historian; building development and archival research; and an assessment of potential impacts to historic built environment resources under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines § 15064.5 for historical resources.

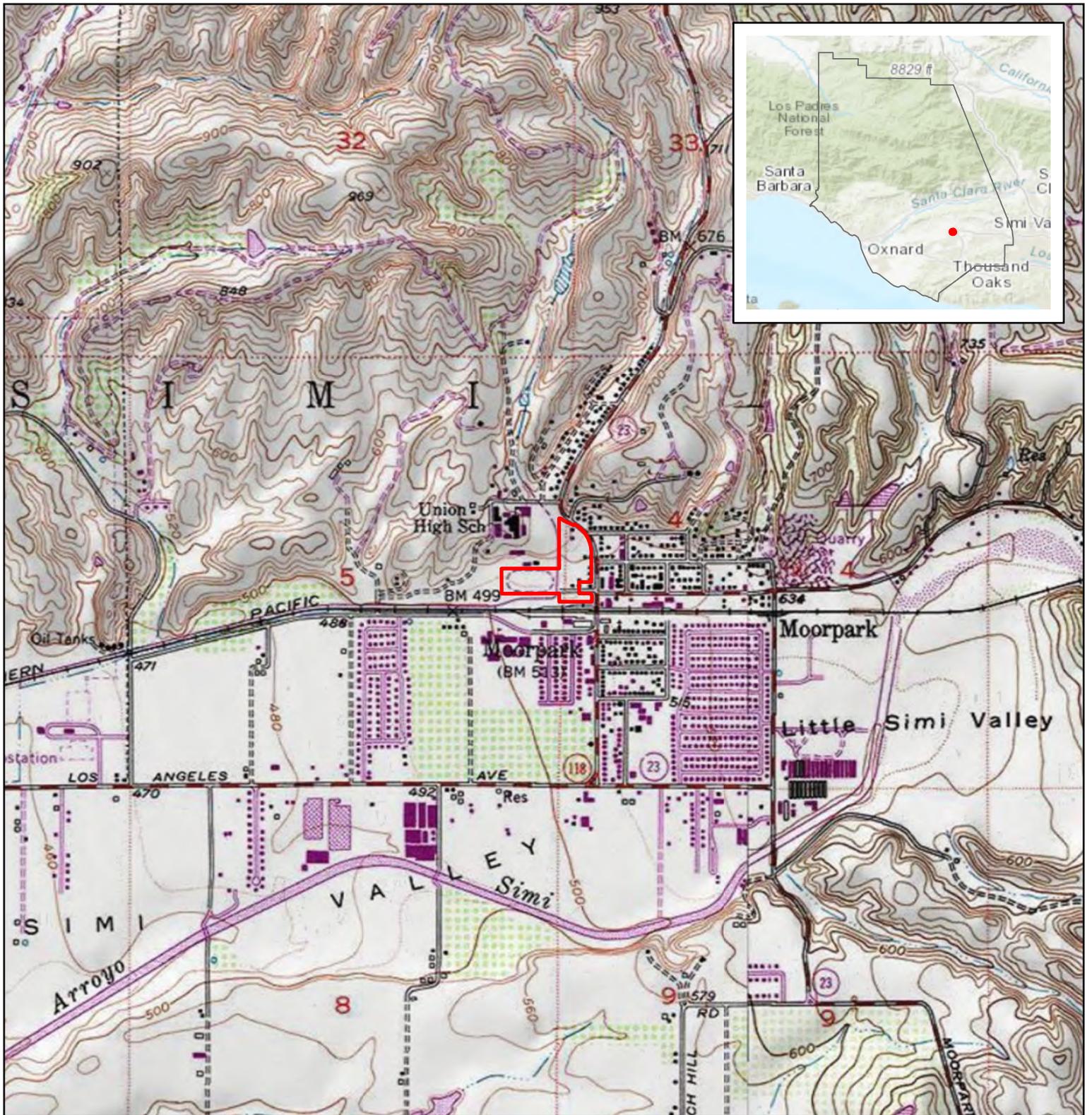
## Project Description

The City of Moorpark is the lead agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Civic Center Master Plan Project (Appendix A). The project would consist of the following phased development of a new City Civic Center within the Project site:

- During Phase 1, a new 18,000 square foot (sf) library with outdoor plaza would be constructed. The existing city hall would be re-purposed as 5,085 sf of office space, and the existing community center would remain as an active adult center. The existing library would be removed at the end of this phase once the library is moved to the new facility.
- During Phase 2, the west commercial site would be developed with approximately 13,000 sf of commercial uses, which would also include the development of a public park.
- During Phase 3, the north site residential area would be developed with approximately 75 units at 25 du/acre. Phase 3 would include the removal of the existing city hall and community center/active adult center buildings.
- During Phase 4, a new 22,000 sf city hall and a mercado/market would be constructed.

## Project Location

The project site encompasses approximately 12.5 acres in the central, downtown area of the City of Moorpark in Ventura County, California. The project site is located west of Moorpark Avenue/Walnut Canyon Road (State Route [SR] 23) (Figure 1, Project Location). Portions of the project site are located on the north and south sides of West High Street (Figure 2, Project Site Detail). The project site currently contains a mix of land uses associated with the existing Civic Center, including city hall, a community center/active adult center, a city library, portable structures, parking areas, and vacant undeveloped areas within the western portion of the project site.



Source: ESRI USA Topo Maps and World Topo Map 2022

Civic Center Master Plan Project

## Figure 1. Project Location Map

Project Site



0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Scale: 1:24,000



Project Site is within the City of Moorpark, California, in Ventura County on the USGS Moorpark 7.5-minute quadrangle map in Sections 4 and 5 of Township 02 North and Range 19 West

Center Coordinate (Decimal Degrees):  
Latitude: 34.2857137N, Longitude: -118.8834995W



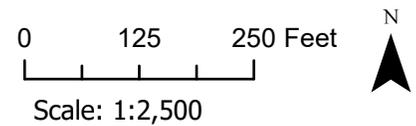


Source: ESRI USA Topo Maps and World Topo Map 2022

Civic Center Master Plan Project

Figure 2. Project Site Detail

- Parcel Boundary
- Project Site



## 2. Regulatory Framework

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### Federal

#### National Register of Historic Places

The NRHP is the United States' official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects worthy of preservation. Overseen by the National Park Service, under the U.S. Department of the Interior, the NRHP was authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended. Its listings encompass all National Historic Landmarks, as well as historic areas administered by the National Park Service.

NRHP guidelines for the evaluation of historic significance were developed to be flexible and to recognize the accomplishments of all who have made significant contributions to the nation's history and heritage. Its criteria are designed to guide state and local governments, federal agencies, and others in evaluating potential entries in the NRHP. For a property to be listed in or determined eligible for listing, it must be demonstrated to possess integrity and to meet at least one of the following criteria:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Integrity is defined in NRHP guidance, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria," as "the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be listed in the NRHP, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the NRHP criteria, but it also must have integrity" (NPS 1990). NRHP guidance further asserts that properties be completed at least 50 years ago to be considered for

eligibility. Properties completed fewer than 50 years before evaluation must be proven to be “exceptionally important” (criteria consideration to be considered for listing).

## State

### California Register of Historical Resources

In California, the term “historical resource” includes but is not limited to “any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which is historically or archaeologically significant, or is significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California” (California Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(j)). In 1992, the California legislature established the CRHR “to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the state’s historical resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change” (California Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(a)). The criteria for listing resources on the CRHR were expressly developed to be in accordance with previously established criteria developed for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), enumerated below. According to California Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c)(1–4), a resource is considered historically significant if it (i) retains “substantial integrity,” and (ii) meets at least one of the following criteria:

- (1) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage.
- (2) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
- (3) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
- (4) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

In order to understand the historic importance of a resource, sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with the resource. A resource less than 50 years old may be considered for listing in the CRHR if it can be demonstrated that sufficient time has passed to understand its historical importance (see 14 CCR 4852(d)(2)).

The CRHR protects cultural resources by requiring evaluations of the significance of prehistoric and historic resources. The criteria for the CRHR are nearly identical to those for the NRHP, and properties listed or formally designated as eligible for listing in the NRHP are automatically listed in the CRHR, as are the state landmarks and points of interest. The CRHR also includes properties designated under local ordinances or identified through local historical resource surveys.

## California Environmental Quality Act

As described further below, the following CEQA statutes and CEQA Guidelines are of relevance to the analysis of archaeological, historic, and tribal cultural resources:

- California Public Resources Code Section 21083.2(g) defines “unique archaeological resource.”
- California Public Resources Code Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a) define “historical resources.” In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) defines the phrase “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource.” It also defines the circumstances when a project would materially impair the significance of an historical resource.
- California Public Resources Code Section 21074(a) defines “tribal cultural resources.”
- California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e) set forth standards and steps to be employed following the accidental discovery of human remains in any location other than a dedicated ceremony.
- California Public Resources Code Sections 21083.2(b)-(c) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4 provide information regarding the mitigation framework for archaeological and historic resources, including examples of preservation-in-place mitigation measures; preservation-in-place is the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to significant archaeological sites because it maintains the relationship between artifacts and the archaeological context and may also help avoid conflict with religious or cultural values of groups associated with the archaeological site(s).

More specifically, under CEQA, a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it may cause “a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource” (California Public Resources Code Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b).) If a site is either listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or if it is included in a local register of historic resources or identified as significant in a historical resources survey (meeting the requirements of California Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(q)), it is a “historical resource” and is presumed to be historically or culturally significant for purposes of CEQA (California Public Resources Code Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)). The lead agency is not precluded from determining that a resource is a historical resource even if it does not fall within this presumption (California Public Resources Code Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)).

A “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource” reflecting a significant effect under CEQA means “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(1); California Public Resources Code

Section 5020.1(q)). In turn, CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(b)(2) states the significance of an historical resource is materially impaired when a project:

1. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; or
2. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, unless the public agency reviewing the effects of the project establishes by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not historically or culturally significant; or
3. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA.

Pursuant to these sections, the CEQA inquiry begins with evaluating whether a project site contains any "historical resources," then evaluates whether that project will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource such that the resource's historical significance is materially impaired.

## Local

### City of Moorpark

#### **General Plan Land Use Element**

The focus of the *Moorpark General Plan Land Use Element* (May 1992, as amended) is on goals and policies for land use development, including population and building densities and intensities for property. Land use categories are used in the Land Use Element to depict the general distribution, location, and extent of public and private use of land. In accomplishing this primary purpose, the Land Use Element fulfills the requirements of Section 65302(a) of the *California Government Code*, which establishes it as a mandated element of a general plan.

#### **Moorpark Downtown Specific Plan**

The *Moorpark Downtown Specific Plan* (October 1998, as amended) promotes the revitalization of the City's downtown area. This Specific Plan encompasses the areas along Moorpark Avenue, High Street, Charles Street, Everett Street, and a portion of Spring Road, within the City's historic

core. This area is developed with older commercial, industrial, public, and residential land uses. The Specific Plan promotes commercial development, economic development and employment through commercial retail, service, and civic uses that would create a business core in the City; be compatible with adjacent civic center, industrial, and residential uses; and create jobs for local residents. In addition, design guidelines, landscape guidelines, and site development standards for each land use category, maintenance and renovation guidelines, circulation and roadway improvements, and other infrastructure and service improvements are provided to guide development within the downtown area and to help create a unified and revitalized downtown.

## **Municipal Code**

### City of Moorpark Municipal Code

Chapter 15.36 of the Moorpark Municipal Code (1994) addresses historic preservation. As set forth in Chapter 15.36, its purpose is to provide for the identification, protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of historic landmarks within the city that reflect special elements of the city's historical heritage and to promote the general welfare by:

- A. Encouraging public knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the city's past;
- B. Fostering civic pride in the beauty and personality of the city and in the accomplishments of the city's past;
- C. Safeguarding the heritage of the city by protecting landmarks which reflect the city's history;
- D. Protecting and enhancing property values within the city and increasing economic and financial benefits to the city and its inhabitants;
- E. Identifying as early as possible and resolving conflicts between the preservation of historical landmarks and alternative land uses;
- F. Preserving historic building materials through maintenance and restoration of existing historical landmarks;
- G. Taking whatever steps are reasonable and necessary to safeguard the property rights of the owners whose building or structure is declared to be a landmark;
- H. Promoting the use of landmarks for the education and enjoyment of the people of the city; and
- I. Promoting awareness of the economic benefits of historic preservation.

As also described in Chapter 15.36 Municipal Code, the City can designate as a landmark, a building, site, tree, or structure which has significant historical significance which meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. It is associated with persons or events significant in local, State, or national history.
2. It reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, State, or local history.
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, style, or period of architecture or of a method of construction.
4. It is strongly identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture, history, or development of the area.
5. It is one of the few remaining examples in the area possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type of specimen.
6. It is a notable work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has significantly influenced the development of the area.
7. It embodies elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represents a significant architectural innovation.
8. It has a unique location or singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the area.
9. It has unique design or detailing.
10. It is a particularly good example of a period of style.
11. It contributes to the historical or scenic heritage or historical or scenic properties of the area (to include, but not limited to landscaping, light standards, trees, curbing, and signs).

## 3. Research and Field Methodology

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### Background Research Conducted

Background research was completed to establish a thorough and accurate historic context, and to confirm the building development history of the project site and surrounding area. The following provides an overview of all background research completed as part of the current study.

#### CHRIS Records Search

A California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) records search of the project site and a one-half mile search radius was requested by Psomas and completed by staff at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) on May 11, 2022. The records search results indicate that one previously recorded historical resource is located within the project site: the Tanner Corner building (P-56-152817) located at 601 Moorpark Avenue on the northwest corner of Moorpark Avenue and High Street. The Tanner Corner building was nominated for listing in the CRHR by its owners in March 2000 and was accepted for listing in the CRHR on November 3, 2000.<sup>1</sup>

The State Historical Resources Commission had approved its listing as a significant resource under criteria 1, 2, and 3, for the period 1913-1953. Under criteria 1, the building is significant because of its association with the events and patterns of development of Moorpark, and for it being the only surviving commercial building from the early days of Moorpark. Under criteria 2, Tanner Corner building is significant for its association with Ira G. Tanner, a resident of Moorpark who contributed greatly to the community's development. The Tanner Corner building is a significant example of commercial architecture and distinctive design that have made it a focal landmark in the town, making it significant under criteria 3. The Tanner Corner building has also retained a high degree of architectural integrity allowing it to convey its association with the history of Moorpark from 1913 to 1953.

One additional resource, Fire Station 42 (P-56-153133), is located within the one-half mile records search radius but is outside the proposed project site. The resource is the former location of a

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<sup>1</sup> Daly, *Draft Historic Resources Assessment Report of Tanner Corner Building*, 16

garage that housed Moorpark's first fire truck. The garage housed the fire truck from circa 1913 to 1942. It was demolished sometime between 2006 and 2011.<sup>2</sup>

## Historical Newspaper Search

South Environmental reviewed historical newspapers covering the Ventura County region to better understand the development of the project site and surrounding areas. Such newspapers included the Los Angeles Times and Ventura County Star.

## Historical Aerial Photographs

Historic aerial photographs of the project site were available from Nationwide Environmental Title Research LLC<sup>3</sup> maps for the years 1947, 1969, 1978, 1980, 1985, 1994, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 and from the University of California, Santa Barbara, FrameFinder Maps<sup>4</sup> for the years 1938, 1945, and 1961. These photographs were reviewed to assess changes to the subject property and surrounding neighborhood overtime.

## Field Methods

Senior Architectural Historian, Samantha Murray, MA, conducted a pedestrian survey of the project site on May 27, 2022. The survey entailed walking the project site and documenting existing buildings, structures, and viewsheds with detailed notes and digital photographs, specifically along Moorpark Avenue and High Street. All field notes and photographs are on file with South Environmental.

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<sup>2</sup> Daly, *Draft Historic Resources Assessment Report of Tanner Corner Building*, 17

<sup>3</sup> Nationwide Environmental Title Research LLC 2022. Accessed online: [www.historicaerials.com](http://www.historicaerials.com)

<sup>4</sup> University California, Santa Barbara. Accessed online:  
[https://mil.library.ucsb.edu/ap\\_indexes/FrameFinder](https://mil.library.ucsb.edu/ap_indexes/FrameFinder)

## 4. Historic Context

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### Historical Overview of Moorpark

During the 1860s, many of the California ranchos were subdivided following the collapse of the cattle industry due to prolonged drought. Rancho land was therefore cheap to purchase, and settlers throughout the country headed west to acquire land. Thomas A. Scott, of the Pennsylvania Railroad, purchased large portions of Ventura County in the 1870s for oil exploration. Scott placed Thomas R. Bard in charge of his holdings, who in turn rented the land to local residents for sheep grazing. One of these early residents was Charles Hoar, who rented the eastern half of Simi Valley. Hoar later went into business with A. W. (Pete) Brown and Mr. Bates (first name unknown), retaining the eastern half of the valley.<sup>5</sup> Hoar and his partners sublet portions of their land to local ranchers and farmers to raise barley and paid Bard one-fifth of their earnings. In turn, they collected one-fifth of the earnings from their renters.<sup>6</sup> Scott died in 1888, and Bard was responsible for closing his estate. In the process of liquidating Scott's holdings, Bard formed the Simi Land and Water Company and subsequently made Charles B. McCoy manager of all 96,000 acres held by the company.<sup>7</sup>

In 1887, Robert W. Poindexter, secretary of the Simi Land and Water Company, was granted the title to what is now the City of Moorpark. It is believed that the town of Moorpark got its name from the Moorpark apricot, which was grown throughout the area. Robert's wife, Madeline Poindexter, plotted and laid out the town.<sup>8</sup> In 1900, one of the first civic improvements was beautification of the town, which included the planting of numerous pepper trees in the downtown area. In the early 1900s, a railroad depot was built on High Street after completion of the Southern Pacific Railroad track between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara in 1904, bringing the railroad through Moorpark for the first time. The original depot was destroyed by a fire in 1909 and rebuilt the following year. The railroad played a significant role in the growth and development of the town. That same year, the community built a telephone office/public library on High Street. Shortly after completion of the railroad, Poindexter sold the townsite to M. L. Wicks, Sr. Wicks continued Poindexter's beautification initiative by planting 1,300 spineless cactus plants in 1914.<sup>9</sup> The railroad depot was demolished in 1964. In 1979, S&K Ranch constructed a

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<sup>5</sup> J.S. Cameron, "Simi Grows Up: The Story of the Simi, Ventura County, California." (Anderson, Ritchie, and Simon, U.S.A. 1963).

<sup>6</sup> J.S. Cameron, "Historical Tour of Simi Valley" (Simi Valley: Alert Letter Shop, 1974).

<sup>7</sup> Cameron "Simi Grows Up"

<sup>8</sup> Craig Chalquist, "Deep California: Images and Ironies of Cross and Sword Along El Camino Real." (Bloomington: iUniversity. 2008).

<sup>9</sup> Norma Gunter, "The Moorpark Story." Moorpark Chamber of Commerce, Moorpark, California 1969.

grain storage facility near the former depot. To help the structure blend in with the surrounding commercial properties, the façade was constructed to mimic the former depot.<sup>10</sup>

Jake Smith purchased a parcel of land on the northwest corner of High Street and Moorpark Avenue in 1900. The parcel was in a prime location, with the railroad located just south of it in 1904. The original building was a wood-framed, gabled building that measured approximately 60 x 40 feet. It is believed that Robert J. Batty, the following owner of the property, added the exterior brick walls and additional buildings in 1913. Ira Gilpin Tanner and his wife Lucy were the next owners of the property and they worked out of that location until his retirement in 1953. While at the subject property, Tanner organized and supervised a volunteer corps of firemen. For years, the only fire truck was parked in a garage that Tanner built for it. Tanner also joined the school board and helped found the first church. Tanner also served as the head of the county water works.<sup>11</sup>

In 1905, Mrs. John E. Smith and her daughter Hope formed the Women's Fortnightly Club, a social club for women in and around the Moorpark area. Mr. Wicks sold the group a lot for \$75 for construction of a formal clubhouse. When the club opened in 1912, the women became the first club in Ventura County to own their own house. The club made many important contributions to the community, including establishment of the Moorpark branch library, renting out the clubhouse as a school for disabled children, naming streets and having street signs installed throughout the town, and even assisting the U.S.O. during both World Wars.<sup>12</sup>

By the 1910s, High Street became the main central commercial center of Moorpark with the construction of the Southern Pacific Milling Company and the Moorpark Hotel. In 1927, the El Rancho was constructed to replace the former silent movie theater. El Rancho was the only "talking movie" theater in the east end of Ventura County. The name later changed to the Moorpark Theater and later ceased operations in the 1950s. It was reincarnated as the Moorpark Melodrama & Vaudeville Company, but eventually closed in 1999. It currently operates as the High Street Arts Center.<sup>13</sup>

Apricots were the first crops to be raised in the Moorpark area, with approximately 1,000 acres of land devoted to their cultivation in 1915. Apricot cultivation reached its prime in the 1920s and 1930s. Moorpark's warm, dry inland climate with limited coastal fog made for an ideal apricot growing climate. Moorpark would eventually become known as the apricot center of Ventura County. While the City's name is thought to have come from the Moorpark variety of apricot, the

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<sup>10</sup> Michele Willer-Allred, "Unveiling Moorpark." *Ventura County Star*, March 20, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> "Mayor of Moorpark 40 Years will Retire." *Los Angeles Times*, August 8, 1953, page 25.

<sup>12</sup> Gunter, "The Moorpark Story." 1969.

<sup>13</sup>"History" *High Street Arts Center*, accessed May 26, 2022, <https://highstreetartscenter.com/info/history/>

Royal variety of apricot actually fared much better and was more common throughout ranches in the area.<sup>14</sup>

Early industrialization in Moorpark is reflected by the establishment of agricultural support businesses like fruit packing plants. After World War II, agricultural industrialization came in the form of large-scale poultry farms. One such example was Julius Goldman's Egg City in 1961, which contained millions of chickens spread out across 36 houses.<sup>15</sup>

Like much of California, Moorpark experienced a boost in industrialization following World War II. One of the most notable industrial presences in the area was the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL). The large site, which today totals 2,850 acres, was used largely for rocket engine testing for many decades during the twentieth century under a variety of corporations starting with Rocketdyne, who later became part of Rockwell International Corporation. Sections of the property were also used as a Liquid Oxygen plant and by the United States Air Force. Today the property is owned by Boeing.<sup>16</sup> According to the California Energy Commission (CEC), the laboratory was also used as the location of the first commercial nuclear power plant and it provided electricity to the area from 1957-1964.<sup>17</sup>

Although there were some significant examples of industrialization with Egg City and the SSFL following World War II, Moorpark did not see large scale commercial, residential, and industrial development until the 1970s and 1980s. This period of growth and development eventually led to a population increase, which resulted in the city moving forward with the incorporation process in the 1980s.<sup>18</sup>

Unknown to many, Moorpark has been the site of many "firsts," including being one of the first towns in California to be planned by a woman, Madeline Poindexter<sup>19</sup>; hosting the first event in the 1932 Los Angeles Olympic games with the cross-country bicycle run, which started at Balcom Canyon on Highway 118 and ended in Santa Monica<sup>20</sup>; and being the first community in the United States to be lighted by nuclear electricity in 1957.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Gunter, "The Moorpark Story." 1969

<sup>15</sup> "History of Moorpark." *Moorpark Historical Society*, accessed January 8, 2018. <http://moorparkhistoricalsociety.org/history/>

<sup>16</sup> "Santa Susana Field Laboratory Environmental Cleanup and Closure." *NASA*, accessed January 8, 2018. <https://ssfl.msfc.nasa.gov/history>

<sup>17</sup> Carlos Lozano, "Moorpark Marks Anniversary of Hour of Nuclear Power: History: On Nov. 12, 1957, a switch was flipped, making the city the first in the nation to use atomic energy." *Los Angeles Times*. November 12, 1993.

<sup>18</sup> "History of Moorpark" Moorpark Historical Society

<sup>19</sup> Chalquist "Deep California"

<sup>20</sup> Gunter "A Diamond for Moorpark" 1975

<sup>21</sup> Gunter "The Moorpark Story" 1969

In March of 1983, Moorpark residents voted to become a city, and on July 7, 1983, Moorpark became the 10th city to be incorporated in Ventura County. A celebration was held at the Moorpark Community Center.<sup>22</sup>

Exciting news was announced on March 29, 2005, when an earthmover operator working on the new Meridian Hills housing development, approximately one mile north of the subject property, uncovered a one-million-year-old mammoth skeleton. Approximately 3,000 pounds of dirt surrounding the bones was removed. The Santa Barbara Museum and the City worked together on preservation of the skeleton (Moorpark Historical Society 2009).<sup>23</sup>

## History of the Project Site

The first available historic aerial photograph of the project site and vicinity is from 1938. At this time, the project site was farmland with buildings present on the west side of Moorpark Avenue and south of Charles Street. The city blocks bound by Charles Street to the north, Magnolia Street to the east, High Street to the south and Moorpark Avenue to the west were developed with several buildings. The area remained largely unchanged until 1961 when the farmland was razed, leaving behind an empty field. More buildings were constructed north of Charles Street east of Moorpark Avenue.

An open field is located west of the Tanner Corner Building, north of the railroad tracks, and south of Walnut Canyon School. Between 1938 and 1947 this land was used as farmland and later cleared. The field became part of Moorpark Union High School, presently Walnut Canyon School. Between 1969 and 1994 the field featured a running track and two baseball but were removed by 2002. The land remains vacant and undeveloped to the present day.

Aerial photographs confirm that construction within the project site began in 1980 with grading for the present Community Center evident in the photograph. By 1985, the Community Center and the Library were constructed. The Administration Building is first visible in 1994. The Development and Community Services trailer was placed north of the Administration Building by 2009. Available information indicates that the library opened in the early 1980s and expanded in 1995; City Hall opened in 1988; and the Active Adult Center opened in 1989.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> "Conejo/Simi/Moorpark" *Los Angeles Times*. 7 July 1983: V-2.

<sup>23</sup> "The Moorpark Mammoth," Moorpark Historical Society, accessed online November 9, 2009  
<http://www.moorparkhistorical.com/>

<sup>24</sup> Hathaway, "Moorpark: A 30-Year Glance 1983-2013"

## 5. Description of Surveyed Resources

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No historic built environment resources over 45 years old were identified within the project site as a result of the background research and pedestrian field survey. The existing buildings and structures within the project site consist of the Administration Building (Photograph 1), Active Adult Center/Community Center (Photograph 2), City Hall (Photograph 3), and Library (Photograph 4), all of which were constructed in the 1980s by unknown architects. Buildings directly adjacent to the proposed project site include the recently constructed post office located at 100 West High Street (built c. 2009) and the CRHR-listed Tanner Corner Building (Photographs 5 and 6) located at 601 Moorpark Avenue, which is an historical resource under CEQA.



**Photograph 1. Administration Building, east elevation, view west**



**Photograph 2. Active Adult Center/Community Center, northeast elevation, view southwest**



**Photograph 3. City Hall temporary building, south elevation, view northwest**



**Photograph 4. Moorpark City Library, east elevation, view southwest**



**Photograph 5. Tanner Corner Building, east elevation, view west**



**Photograph 6. Tanner Corner Building, west elevation, view east**

## Tanner Corner Building

The Tanner Corner building (Photographs 5 and 6) is a one-story commercial building located on the northwest corner of Moorpark Avenue and High Street with an irregular floor plan. It is comprised of a wood framed structural building with a cross-gabled roof. In the 1913, a buff-colored brick façade was added to the south, east, and north elevations featuring a flat parapet wall at the roof. Entrances into each storefront are located on the primary south and east elevations; there is a storefront entrance on the southeast corner of the building that sits at an angle. Storefront entrances feature fabric awnings. Metal fixed windows are located on the primary elevations.

A garage is located to the rear of the Tanner Corner building on the same parcel and first appears in the 1938 historic aerial photograph, indicating it was constructed within the Tanner Corner building's period of significance. It has a concrete masonry unit structural system and is located west of the Tanner building. The garage has a rectangular floor plan, flat roof and two, two-car bays with metal doors. Neither the nomination form nor the most recent documentation of the Tanner Corner building<sup>25</sup> clarify if the rear garage is a contributing feature of the property.

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<sup>25</sup> Daly, *Draft Historic Resources Assessment Report of Tanner Corner Building*

However, given that the garage was constructed within the period of significance identified for the Tanner Corner building, it should be treated as a contributing feature.

The Tanner Corner building (P-56-152817) was evaluated and formally listed in the CRHR on November 3, 2000. The Tanner Corner building is also eligible for the NRHP and as a City of Moorpark landmark. The building is listed in the CRHR under criteria 1, 2, and 3, with a period of significance of 1913-1953. The Tanner Corner building is significant under criterion 1 for its association with the events and patterns of development of Moorpark, and for it being one of the only surviving commercial building from the early days of Moorpark. The building is significant under criteria 2 for its association with Ira G. Tanner, a resident of Moorpark who contributed greatly to the community's development. Finally, the building is also eligible under criterion 3 as a significant example of commercial architecture with a distinctive design that has made it an established visual landmark in downtown. The Tanner Corner building also retains a high degree of architectural integrity from its period of significance.

## 6. Impacts Assessment

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### Identified Impacts

One historical resource was identified directly adjacent to the project site: the CRHR-listed Tanner Corner building located at 601 Moorpark Avenue. Although the project does not propose any changes or direct impacts to this resource that would impair its major character-defining features, the building's proximity to proposed demolition and construction activities is considered a potentially significant impact that requires further consideration.

### Impact 1: Adjacent Demolition and New Construction

The project proposes to demolish the existing City Hall, community center/active adult center, city library building, portable structures, and parking areas located north and west of the Tanner Corner building and proposes construction of new city hall and library buildings directly adjacent to the north and west elevations of the Tanner Corner building. Across High Street to the south, new construction is also proposed for the future Mercado. All of these activities have the potential to impact the Tanner Corner building's physical integrity through groundborne vibration and inadvertent construction damage. Implementation of mitigation measures 1, 2, and 3 (see below) would provide an appropriate level of protection for the building and reduce impacts to historical resources to a less than significant level. The Tanner Corner building is prominently featured on the northwest corner of Moorpark Avenue and High Street such that it would not be possible for the proposed new construction to obscure its major, character-defining features.

### Recommended Mitigation

The following mitigation measures are recommended to reduce project impacts to historical resources (specifically, built environment resources) to a less than significant level.

- 1. Proposed Project Design Review (pre-construction):** Prior to the start of project construction during the final design phase, all designs for proposed new construction shall be reviewed for consistency with the aesthetic requirements outlined in the City's Downtown Specific Plan. This includes consideration of the existing scale, massing, and height of the surrounding commercial and residential buildings, avoiding design choices that would alter the historic character/viewsheds of High Street and the Tanner Building. Prior to public hearings, a photo rendering and site plan of the proposed library building shall be submitted to the Community Development Department for consideration on any elements that are out of scale or could better coordinate the aesthetic design of the library with surrounding structures and setting. Prior to issuance of a building permit, any

architectural changes discussed during public hearings shall be incorporated into a photo rendering to ensure that the changes and design are consistent with the Tanner Building, High Street corridor, and applicable standards in the Downtown Specific Plan.

- 2. Groundborne Vibration Analysis (pre-construction):** Prior to the start of project-related demolition and construction activities, it is necessary to consider potential impacts to the Tanner Corner building resulting from groundborne vibrations due to construction equipment which will be operated in close proximity to the building. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has established thresholds, related to the Peak Particle Velocity (PPV), for groundborne construction vibration that take into account the type of building or structures near the vibration source<sup>26</sup>. The associated noise and vibration analysis for the proposed project shall examine the potential for groundborne vibrations to impact the Tanner Corner building and develop specific requirements for the type of equipment that can safely be used in the vicinity of the building, as appropriate. The results of this analysis shall inform development of the Protection Plan for Demolition and Construction (outlined below).
  
- 3. Protection Plan for Demolition and Construction (pre-construction):** Prior to the start of project-related demolition and construction activities, protection measures shall be developed in a formal plan for the adjacent Tanner Corner building at 601 Moorpark Avenue. Protection measures shall include at a minimum: 1) clear denotation in the project construction plans that portions of the project site are located directly adjacent to an historical resource, marking the location of the Tanner Corner building; 2) a protocol for informing all construction workers of the presence of the historical resource and making them aware of the protocol to avoid and protect it; 3) a list of approved construction equipment/distances in consideration of any identified groundborne vibration impacts; 4) recommendations for specific protective fencing and signage to be implemented during construction; and 5) if determined appropriate based on the results of the groundborne vibration analysis, recommendations for construction monitoring (pre-, post-, and during construction). The protection plan shall be prepared by a qualified architectural historian/historic preservation professional, clearly identify all responsible parties with their contact information, and be appended to the final set of construction plans.

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<sup>26</sup> Caltrans, *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*

## 7. Summary of Findings

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One historical resource was identified directly adjacent to the project site as a result of the background research and pedestrian survey: the CRHR-listed Tanner Corner building located at 601 Moorpark Avenue. Although the project does not propose any changes or direct impacts to this resource that would impair its major character-defining features, the building's proximity to proposed demolition and construction activities is considered a potentially significant impact.

Implementation of recommended mitigation measures 1, 2, and 3 would provide an appropriate level of protection for the Tanner Corner building and reduce impacts to historical resources to a less than significant level. These pre-construction measures include 1) completion of a design review of all proposed new construction to ensure consistency with the City's Downtown Specific Plan and the historic character of High Street; 2) completion of a groundborne vibration analysis in consideration of the building's type and all proposed construction equipment that will be used in the vicinity; and 3) development of a protection plan for the building during demolition and construction activities.

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# Appendix A: Civic Center Master Plan Site Plan

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CIVIC CENTER MASTER PLAN



PROPOSED CITY HALL : 22,000 Sq. Ft

PROPOSED LIBRARY : 18,000 Sq. Ft



SEPTEMBER 03, 2020

