

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name San Jose Water Works Building

other names/site number San Jose Water Company Building

2. Location

street & number 374 West Santa Clara Street

city, town San Jose

state California

code CA

county Santa Clara

code 085

zip code 95196

☐ not for publication

☐ vicinity

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

☒ private

☐ public-local

☐ public-State

☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

☒ building(s)

☐ district

☐ site

☐ structure

☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

1

1

2

Noncontributing

2 buildings

 sites

 structures

 objects

2 Total

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

commerce/business

industry/waterworks

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

commerce/ business

industry/waterworks

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Modern movement: Moderne

Late 19th and 20th century revivals:

Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Concrete

Stucco

roof Terra Cotta

other Iron

Steel

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

(See Continuation Sheet for Section Number 7)

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Industry

Architecture

Period of Significance

1888-1939

1913;1934

Significant Dates

N/A

1934;1913;1940

Cultural Affiliation

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Curtis, Ernest N. (Binder and Curtis)/

Thomas, Charles A.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

(See Continuation Sheet for Section Number 8)

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Published Materials

Arbuckle, Clyde. Clyde Arbuckle's History of San Jose. San Jose, Smith & McKay Printing Co., 1985.

California History Center. Water in the Santa Clara Valley: A History. San Jose, De Anza College, 1981.

Herrmann, F. C., and Elliot, G. A. Report on the Appraisal of Properties of the San Jose Water Company. San Francisco, 1914.

SJW Corp. Annual Report, 1988.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State historic preservation office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.96

UTM References

A 10 597720 41320000
Zone Easting Northing
C _____

B _____
Zone Easting Northing
D _____

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Assessor's Parcel Number 259-38-128, as indicated by dashed boundary line on sketch map.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes all associated buildings and structures of the San Jose Water Works Building. Although the San Jose Water Co. now owns the entire block, the remainder of the land (constituting a separate Assessor's Parcel) is utilized primarily for parking and is not integral to the historic significance of the property.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Woodruff C. Minor/ Architectural Historian

organization c/o Basin Research Associates

street & number 14731 Catalina Street

city or town San Leandro

date 13 September 1989

telephone (415) 357-0566

state California zip code 94577

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DESCRIPTION

The San Jose Water Works Building (indicated as "A" on sketch map) is an excellent local example of a 1930s office building combining elements of the Moderne and Spanish Colonial Revival styles. A prevailing sense of order and symmetry imparts a classical feeling to the design. The two-story, rectangular-plan building, built in two phases in 1934 and 1940, is of reinforced-concrete construction. End wings have hip roofs clad in red terra-cotta tile. Original, steel-sash windows are set in bays demarcated by fluted piers. Cast-stone ornament includes a Moderne frieze band and a sculptural pediment over the entry. Some windows have ornamental cast-iron panels and wrought-iron grilles. The building's exterior retains a high degree of integrity. The interior has been largely altered, although original detailing survives in the vestibule and main public space. The property also includes two buildings which serve as rear wings or annexes. The attached pump house and transformer house ("B" and "C" on sketch map) were built in 1913 in the Mission Revival style. The Data Processing Building ("D"), as well as an entry lobby and breezeway ("E" and "F"), were built in 1984-85; the latter serve to link all three buildings together into a single complex. The pump house has been remodeled to blend with the stucco-and-tile styling of the 1980s additions, while the transformer house retains its original appearance. Finally, there is a detached, concrete cistern ("G"), dating from ca. 1920 - ca. 1940. The site includes a manicured lawn west of the main building, plantings of shrubbery, and an asphalt parking lot on the south.

The San Jose Water Works Building has a rectangular plan. Its ground dimensions are approximately 68 feet by 122 feet, with the long axis perpendicular to West Santa Clara Street. (Although the long axis is oriented roughly northwest by southeast, for convenience the respective elevations shall be referred to as "north," "east," "south," and "west.") The front facade faces north to West Santa Clara Street. The very similar but not identical side elevations face east to the Guadalupe River and west to a landscaped area consisting of lawn and trees. The rear elevation faces south to the pump house/transformer house and Data Processing Building. Low hedges and shrubs flank the building.

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The reinforced-concrete structural system of the building includes the foundation, partial basement, floors, interior posts, and exterior walls. The roof system combines reinforced-concrete beams and steel trusses. The hipped portions of the roof are capped with three-inch concrete slabs and exterior walls are clad in a three-inch coating of concrete. Roofs are clad in red terra-cotta tile. Interior partitions are primarily hollow-metal studs and plaster, with ceilings also finished in plaster.

Although the building was built in two phases, both phases were designed by the same architect and the resulting structure appears to have been built in a single phase. The front, or north, two-story section and the first story of the central section were built in 1934; the rear, or south, two-story section and the second story of the central section were built in 1940. The overall composition is balanced, consisting of two-story, hip-roofed end sections joined by a slightly lower two-story central section with shed-roofed parapets concealing a flat roof.

The symmetrical front elevation displays five equal bays which are slightly recessed and separated by fluted piers. The central bay contains the entry--with original glass-panelled wood doors, sidelights and transoms--which is reached by a short flight of stairs flanked by fluted concrete cheeks. Each of the remaining bays contains a large, tripartite window with operable casements and transoms at the first-floor level, with paired casement windows at the second-story level of every bay. Mullions and sash are steel.

Each of the very similar side elevations exhibits a three-part horizontal composition consisting of end sections flanking the central section. Each end section contains three bays separated by fluted piers, with the central bay narrower than the flanking bays. The first story of the central section is divided into three bays by smooth, pilaster-like elements, while the second story, which steps back slightly, contains a continuous fenestration band. Windows, all with steel sash and mullions, are of three types: those on the first story of the north end section are identical to first-story windows on the front elevation; those on the second story of the end sections are identical to second-story windows of the front elevation; and those in the central section and on the first story of the south

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end section are thin-mullioned steel casements. The major differences between the side elevations are in certain details of the west elevation, all original: The middle bay of the north end section has larger windows (lighting an interior stairwell), while its south bay contains no windows (interior lavatory and stairs); the first-story middle bay of the central section contains a small transomed doorway (originally leading to the foreman's office), while its south bay contains no window (interior vault); finally, the first story of the south end section originally contained an open loggia at its southwest corner (since altered, discussed below).

The rear (south) elevation displays a row of thin-mullioned, steel-sash casement windows on the second story. A total of twelve windows are arranged in three groups of four, each group joined by a continuous sill.

Exterior ornament is primarily of molded concrete, also known as cast stone. This includes a Moderne-style frieze band of rondels and chevrons running along the top of the piers on the front and side elevations; Moderne-style diamonds with flanking chevron panels projecting above the frieze band in the end sections and above first floor windows in the central section; undulating molding over the entry and the ground-floor windows of the north end section; and a sculptural pediment over the entry in the form of a ship's prow. Tripartite cast-iron panels over ground-floor windows in the north end section exhibit a replicated bas-relief pattern on the theme of water (clouds, raindrops and waves). Wrought-iron grilles over the sidelights and transom of the entry, and at the base of ground-floor front windows, display curved and wavy patterns. Signage consists of painted letters above the frieze band of the central section on the east and west elevations, reading "SAN JOSE WATER COMPANY."

Exterior alterations are minor. A recessed signage panel over the frieze band on the front elevation, containing the words "SAN JOSE WATER WORKS" in Moderne-style concrete lettering, has been covered over with concrete. A ground-level loggia at the southwest corner of the building, dating from 1940, was enclosed with steel-sash windows in 1952-53. Two first-story windows on the east elevation, located in the middle bay of the north end section and the north bay of the south end section, have been

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enclosed with concrete. Otherwise the building appears as it did following its enlargement in 1940.

The interior is used primarily for administration, accounting and customer service; secondary uses include a meeting room for the board of directors, a small library, an employees' lounge and kitchen, storage rooms and lavatories. A small vestibule at the north entrance leads to a second set of doors with sidelights and transoms opening into the major space of the interior: a large hall with six free-standing piers. The front portion of this hall serves customers (walk-in payments and inquiries). Offices are grouped along the walls around this central space. A rear corridor leads to the south entrance (a recent addition, discussed below). Two stairways, on the east and west sides, lead to the second story, where offices and corridors are grouped around a small light court. A partial basement, beneath the central section of the building, contains boilers for heating and space for storage. Original ceiling heights on the first floor were eleven feet (offices) and thirteen feet six inches (customer-service hall), with a uniform ceiling height of ten feet on the second story.

The interior has been altered continually as programmatic needs, tastes and technologies have changed. Alterations have taken the form of reconfigured spaces (old partitions removed, new ones built), dropped acoustic-tile ceilings, the removal of decorative trim, and the addition of new hardware, fixtures and flooring. Significant original detailing and trim include diamond-pattern beige-aggregate terrazzo flooring (vestibule and front portion of customer-service hall); plaster cornice molding and corbelled ceiling panels (vestibule); smooth plaster ceilings (front offices); and wood wainscot (north wall of hall). An ornamental plaster cornice, partially obscured by a dropped ceiling, extends around the perimeter of the north portion of the customer-service hall; it consists of reeded and fluted bands incorporating two identical plaster panels (on the north and south), each depicting a stylized fountain of water.

The pump house ("B" on sketch map), originally built in 1913, is a wood-frame, rectangular-plan building with concrete foundation, containing one story with an attic. A continuous hipped parapet is clad in red terra-cotta tile. Walls are

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sheathed in stucco. Three fixed-pane windows are at the north end of the east wall, with two small louvered vents on the south wall. Ground dimensions are 24 feet by 61 feet, with the long axis parallel to that of the main office building. The interior is partitioned into two rooms: the larger, to the south, contains three electric booster pumps in a concrete pit; the north room is used for storage. A low extension and an entry/lobby addition connect the building to the main office building on the north. Originally designed in the Mission Revival style, with a gable roof and parapets identical to the transformer house (see below), this building has undergone two major alterations: the first (ca. 1920s) extended the walls to the height of the parapets and replaced the gable roof with a flat roof, creating a boxy structure with an added attic space; the second (1984-85) modified the exterior and roof to harmonize with the entry/lobby addition and the Data Processing Building, both built at that time (see below).

The transformer house ("C" on sketch map), built in 1913, is a small rectangular structure projecting off the south wall of the pump house, with ground dimensions of nine feet by 17 feet. It is of reinforced-concrete construction, buttressed along the base, with a gable roof clad in red terra-cotta tile. A single set of double wood doors is set into the south end of the west wall. The south facade, incorporating a round louvered vent and a plaque bearing the date "1913," flares out at the level of the eaves and terminates in a stepped, Missionesque parapet with heavy coping. Originally housing an electrical transformer, the building is now vacant and used for occasional storage. It is intact except for the enclosing of two openings on the west side and the addition of terra-cotta tile to the roof (originally clad in asbestos shingles).

The Data Processing Building ("D" on sketch map) was built in 1984-85, replacing an 1895-96 brick building that originally housed steam-powered Holly Pumps. It is a one-story, wood-frame, rectangular-plan building with a flat-topped hip roof clad in red terra-cotta tile. Ground dimensions are 48 feet by 112 feet, with the long axis parallel to that of the main office building. Walls are clad in stucco. The principal entry is set in a recessed glass vestibule on the north wall, with a secondary entry and three fixed-pane windows on the west wall. A loading

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dock with double metal doors and a dumpster bay project from the south wall. The building houses the company's computers and its meter-reading and billing departments, as well as its mail room.

The entry/lobby addition ("E" on sketch map) and breezeway ("F"), both built in 1984-85, provide an entrance to the main office building from the parking lot and a covered passageway linking the three primary buildings of the property. The entry/lobby addition projects from the south wall of the main building, adjoining the pump house. Of wood-frame construction, with stucco veneer and a hip roof clad in red terra-cotta tile, it has fixed-pane windows and two sets of glass doors, one facing west to the parking lot, the other facing south, on-axis with the breezeway. The breezeway, extending south from the entry/lobby addition to the main entry to the Data Processing Building, is wood-framed with a veneer of stucco; it consists of round columns supporting a flat roof which is concealed by a fascia-parapet.

The suction basin ("G" on sketch map), dating from ca. 1920-1940, is a round, reinforced-concrete cistern seven feet high and 17 feet in diameter, with a capacity of 52,000 gallons. A stairway projects to the south. The ribbed metal roof is recent, and the structure is obscured by a high hedge. Its function is to collect well water which is then sucked out by booster pumps.

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SIGNIFICANCE

The San Jose Water Works Building appears to be eligible for the National Register under criterion A, for its association with the oldest privately owned water utility in California, and under criterion C, as an excellent example of a distinctive type of office building of its period. The property embodies the theme of water utilities in the San Francisco Bay Area, of paramount importance in the urban development of the region. The San Jose Water Company, established in 1866 to provide water to San Jose and neighboring communities, remains in business under private ownership--highly unusual for a water utility. The impoundment and distribution system, initially developed between the 1870s and the 1890s, represents an ambitious and highly successful undertaking. The site of the San Jose Water Works Building has been occupied by a well field and pumping station since ca. 1880, and the company's offices have been located there since 1888. The present office building, built in two stages in 1934 and 1940, represents a melding of the Moderne, Spanish Colonial Revival and vestigial classicism in a distinctive manner that is characteristic of the period and region. Its exterior retains a high degree of integrity. The architect, Ernest N. Curtis of the firm of Curtis & Binder, was perhaps San Jose's leading architect between the 1920s and the 1950s. The building serves an important urban-design function as a "gateway" structure to downtown San Jose--a dignified monument at the principal west entrance to the city proper. Finally, the significant date of 1940 will be 50 years in the past within several months of this writing.

The primary historic context of the property concerns the development of municipal water supplies in the San Francisco Bay Area in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The secondary historic context relates to the design qualities of the San Jose Water Works Building, a distinctive regional blending of the Spanish Colonial Revival and the Moderne styles in a spirit of classical order, appropriate for public-oriented office buildings. A corollary to this secondary context is the local prominence of the architect, who was representative of a recurring pattern in medium-size American cities prior to World War II, in which one or two prominent architectural firms handled most major commissions of a civic and commercial nature.

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The residents of the burgeoning towns and cities of the Bay Area in the 1850s depended on private wells, springs, creeks and small rivers for their water supply. Water companies began to be organized in the 1860s to meet the demand of rapidly expanding populations. The Spring Valley Water Company built reservoirs and flumes to bring water from San Mateo County into San Francisco. Anthony Chabot's Contra Costa Water Company created a reservoir in the East Bay hills to serve the city of Oakland. By 1900, San Francisco's water system was municipally owned, and East Bay cities began being served by the East Bay Municipal Utility District in 1923. The Marin Municipal Water District and the Contra Costa Water District are also long-established public utilities. The complexity and cost of supplying water to major population centers have led almost universally to the creation of public entities. The privately-owned San Jose Water Company is a rarity in this regard; it has the further distinction of being the oldest private water utility remaining in California.

The San Jose Water Company had its origin in a small waterworks established in 1864 by Donald McKenzie, owner of a local foundry. McKenzie's artesian well and two wooden tanks, located at First and San Antonio streets, supplied water to the city's fire cisterns. In 1865, McKenzie secured a franchise to supply the entire city with water. Prior to this, inhabitants of the area obtained water from private wells.

McKenzie and three partners--John Bonner, Peter Carter and Anthony Chabot--incorporated the San Jose Water Company on November 21, 1866, with a capitalization of \$100,000. McKenzie was made president; Chabot was a prominent and experienced figure in such enterprises, having established Oakland's first water system in the 1860s, as he would Vallejo's in the 1870s. Artesian wells soon proved inadequate to meet the demand, and the company was reincorporated on December 12, 1868, with a capitalization of \$300,000, in order to enhance its water supply. In 1869-70, water rights were purchased on Los Gatos Creek north of Los Gatos; the first of a series of dams, reservoirs, flumes and conduits were constructed in 1870-71. Expansion of the system continued steadily through the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s. By 1900, the company's assets exceeded \$1,000,000; it owned over 4,000 acres of watershed in the Santa Cruz mountains, maintained

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four mountain lakes impounding over 280,000,000 gallons, and operated a distribution system of seven intermediary reservoirs, conduits and mains. The supply was supplemented by nine artesian-well pumping stations in San Jose. The service area included the cities of San Jose, Los Gatos, Saratoga and Alma.

The system has expanded in tandem with the growth of the metropolitan area. Major additions include a reservoir and distribution system east of San Jose, installed in the 1920s, and the construction of Austrian Dam south of the city in 1951, creating Lake Elsan. The increase in service connections reflects the systems dramatic growth: 400 (1866); 14,000 (1920); 23,000 (1930); 132,800 (1967); 201,000 (1988). A rising water table since the 1930s, due to the extensive conservation program of the Santa Clara Valley Water District, has resulted in a shift in water supply sources. Today the San Jose Water Company supplies a 134-square-mile area of metropolitan San Jose with water from the following sources: groundwater pumped from wells (55%), water imported from the Sierra Nevada (38%), and surface water extracted from reservoirs in the Santa Cruz mountains (7%).

The site of the San Jose Water Works Building has served three primary functions over the years: since ca. 1880, as a pumping station fed by artesian wells, pumping directly into the San Jose distributing system; since 1888, as the business office of the water company; and from the 1880s to the early 1980s, as the storage and maintenance facility for the company. As such, the overall site is commonly referred to by its traditional name of "Main Station." The name given for the purposes of this nomination, however, is the "San Jose Water Works Building." This is because the primary property being nominated is the office building, not the entire site; in addition, the "San Jose Water Company" was officially known as the "San Jose Water Works" between the 1920s and the 1970s, the period in which the building was built and first named.

In 1877, a portion of the site of the San Jose Water Works Building was purchased, comprised of a narrow strip of land between the Guadalupe River and a cul-de-sac called Avy Avenue. By 1884, this parcel contained (from north to south) a repair shop, a pump house with a capacity of 960,000 gallons/day, two elevated water tanks, six artesian wells, and a pipe yard. The

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site was expanded to the north, south and west in 1886; a new pump house was built on the south which more than doubled the capacity of the station; Avy Avenue became a private drive serving the waterworks. In 1888, a one-story wood-frame building was built on the West Santa Clara Avenue frontage of the property to house the water company's offices. The pump house was replaced in 1895-96 with a substantial brick structure housing boilers and steam-driven Holly Pumps with a capacity of 5,000,000 gallons/day, and additional wells were bored. A new pump house with attached transformer was built in 1913, housing four electric pumps with a capacity of 6,000,000 gallons/day; the Holly pump house reverted to reserve status.

By 1915, the complex comprised (from north to south) the West Santa Clara Street office building, a small parking shed and a carpentry shop (all three attached); the electric pump house with attached transformer house; the Holly pump house, with two interior wells and an exterior cistern adjoining on the west; and ten wells on the southern and western portions of the site. By 1917, the site was expanded west to Delmas Avenue, where a reinforced-concrete shop building was constructed; it was enlarged in 1923 with a meter-room addition. Parking sheds were built along the southern and eastern perimeters of the property. The present office building was built in 1934, enlarged in 1940, on the site of the old office building. By 1943, the existing cistern west of the electric pump house was in place, and the Holly pump building was being used primarily for storage.

By 1950, the San Jose Water Works occupied the entire block bounded by West Santa Clara Street, Delmas Avenue, West San Fernando Street, and the Guadalupe River, with the exception of a row of houses along West San Fernando Street and several business structures at the northwest corner of the block, west of the office building. Between 1980 and 1985, the site underwent considerable change. All non-company buildings were demolished, as were the shop building and parking sheds; that portion of the block west of the office building was landscaped with lawn and trees, with the remainder of the block paved in asphalt for parking. The Holly pump house was demolished and replaced with the existing Data Processing Building; the electric pump house was remodeled to match, and a new breezeway and entry built linking these buildings to the front office building. This is

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the present status of the site. For the purposes of this nomination, the nominated site includes only that portion of the block containing the San Jose Water Works Building and associated buildings and structures (assessor's parcel number 259-38-128, indicated by a dashed boundary line on the sketch map).

Construction began on the San Jose Water Works Building in March 1934. It was completed at a cost of approximately \$50,000, opening for business on December 10, 1934. During construction, the company offices were housed in temporary quarters at 315 West Santa Clara Street. The architect was Ernest N. Curtis of the firm of Binder & Curtis (discussed below). General contractor was Charles A. Thomas, a San Jose builder who was associated with Curtis on a number of important projects, including the San Jose Civic Auditorium of 1934-36. In 1940, the building was doubled in size, based on the designs of Curtis; minor alterations in 1952-53, including the enclosing of a loggia, were also designed by Curtis.

The firm of Binder & Curtis, and its partners, William Binder and Ernest N. Curtis, were dominant forces in the practice of architecture in the San Jose area from the turn of the century until the 1950s. The senior partner, William Binder (1871-1953), was born in San Francisco and came to San Jose as a youth. He began an apprenticeship as an architect in San Jose in 1890, establishing his own practice several years later. By 1910, he was one of San Jose's most prominent architects. Among his many local buildings were the Carnegie Library Building and the seven-story Garden City Bank Building (1906), one of the city's first skyscrapers. His work embraced schools, theaters, hotels, apartment buildings and commercial structures; his practice extended to neighboring communities like Gilroy, Milpitas, Palo Alto and Pleasanton. He helped introduce reinforced-concrete construction to San Jose in the period after the earthquake of 1906. Binder retired from active practice by 1930.

Ernest N. Curtis (1888-1956), a native of San Jose, was the son of Frederick A. Curtis, a leading San Jose contractor of the period ca. 1890-1906. He apprenticed in the office of San Jose architect William Page for about five years before going to work for William Binder in 1910 (his father had built several buildings designed by Binder, including the Carnegie Library).

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The firm of Binder & Curtis was formed by 1918 and remained in existence until Curtis' death in 1956. With Binder's retirement from active practice in the 1920s, Curtis became the firm's designer. Important local works by Binder & Curtis included several large theaters in the late teens and twenties, the ten-story Commercial Building of the 1920s, the Benson Building (1933), the San Jose Water Works Building (1934;1940), the San Jose Civic Auditorium (1934-36), the Administration and Law buildings at Santa Clara University, and the main buildings of the Santa Clara County hospital.

Many of Curtis' designs of the period ca. 1930-1950 employ the imagery of the Spanish Colonial Revival, with white planar surfaces and red-tiled roofs. The outstanding example is the Civic Auditorium. The San Jose Water Works Building combines this recurring stylistic impetus with a feeling of classical order, and is further distinguished by well-executed ornament derived from Moderne and programmatic sources.

Regional examples of the Spanish Colonial Revival and the Moderne applied to public and quasi-public buildings are legion. Vestigial classicism with Moderne detailing is exemplified in two federal buildings in San Francisco by Gilbert Stanley Underwood: the new U.S. Mint (1935-37) and the Rincon Annex Post Office (1939-40). The former building, in particular, is severely abstract in its massing and detailing. More typical are the works of a Bay Area architect like Henry H. Meyers; his series of Veterans Memorial Buildings for Alameda County municipalities, built between 1927 and 1934, are closely analagous to Curtis' San Jose Water Works Building, in which the severity of classical order is softened by Moderne ornament and Spanish Colonial Revival detailing like red-tiled roofs. Finally, Curtis' use of programmatic ornament is inspired and lively, comparing well with other examples in a regional context; his variations on water themes are realized with delightful effect.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

San Jose Chamber of Commerce. A Century of Service--San Jose's 100 Year Old Business Firms, Organizations and Institutions. San Jose, Smith-McKay Printing, 1977.

San Jose Mercury. Santa Clara County and Its Resources--A Souvenir of the San Jose Mercury. San Jose, San Jose Mercury, 1896.

San Jose Mercury Herald. Newspaper.

"Fred A. Curtis, S. J. Builder, Dies," clipping, n.d. (1929).

"San Jose Water Works Receipts For '33," April 26, 1934.

"S. J. Water Works Building Offices On First Site," April 29, 1934.

"New Water Works Home Indicates Business Growth," November 9, 1934.

"Public Invited to Inspect New Water Works Building," December 9, 1934.

"Water Works In New Home; Many At Open House," December 11, 1934.

"William Binder Marks 57th Anniversary as S. J. Architect,"
March 18, 1947.

San Jose Mercury News. Newspaper.

"William Binder Dies; Prominent Architect," April 3, 1953.

"Lasting Monuments" (editorial), April 4, 1953.

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Section number _____ Photographs _____ Page 1

Note: Items #1 through #5 are the same for all photographs.

PHOTOGRAPH 1 OF 19

1. Building: San Jose Water Works Building
2. Location: 374 West Santa Clara Street
San Jose, California
3. Photographer: Woodruff C. Minor
4. Date: August 1989
5. Negative at: Department of the Army
Sacramento District
Corps of Engineers
650 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814-4794
6. View: Exterior, looking southwest:
West Santa Clara Street (north) elevation
7. Photograph #: 1 (negative #25)

PHOTOGRAPH 2 OF 19

6. View: Exterior, looking east:
west and north elevations
7. Photograph #: 2 (negative #28A)

PHOTOGRAPH 3 OF 19

6. View: Exterior, looking north:
west and south elevations
7. Photograph #: 3 (negative #20A)

PHOTOGRAPH 4 OF 19

6. View: Exterior, looking west:
east and south elevations
7. Photograph #: 4 (negative #4A)

PHOTOGRAPH 5 OF 19

6. View: Exterior detail, north elevation:
entry and flanking window bays
7. Photograph #: 5 (negative #36A)

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Section number Photographs Page 2

PHOTOGRAPH 6 OF 19

6. View: Exterior detail, north elevation:
sculptural ornament over entry
7. Photograph #: 6 (negative #23A)

PHOTOGRAPH 7 OF 19

6. View: Exterior detail, west elevation:
north window, first story
7. Photograph #: 7 (negative #35A)

PHOTOGRAPH 8 OF 19

6. View: Exterior detail, west elevation:
ornamental panel, north window, first story
7. Photograph #: 8 (negative #24A)

PHOTOGRAPH 9 OF 19

6. View: Exterior detail, west elevation
ornament and windows, central bay
7. Photograph #: 9 (negative #21A)

PHOTOGRAPH 10 OF 19

6. View: Exterior detail, west elevation:
frieze ornament and windows
7. Photograph #: 10 (negative #34A)

PHOTOGRAPH 11 OF 19

6. View: Exterior detail, south elevation:
second-story windows
7. Photograph #: 11 (negative #14A)

PHOTOGRAPH 12 OF 19

6. View: Exterior, looking north:
building group (with rear wings)
7. Photograph #: 12 (negative #17A)

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PHOTOGRAPH 13 OF 19

6. View:

Exterior, looking north:
pump-house/transformer-house wing;
suction basin in foreground
13 (negative #11A)

7. Photograph #:

PHOTOGRAPH 14 OF 19

6. View:

Exterior, looking northwest:
south and east elevations, transformer house;
south elevation, pump house
14 (negative #7A)

7. Photograph #:

PHOTOGRAPH 15 OF 19

6. View:

Exterior, looking north:
south and west elevations, transformer house
15 (negative #13A)

7. Photograph #:

PHOTOGRAPH 16 OF 19

6. View:

Exterior, looking east:
north and west elevations, south wing
(Data Processing Building)
16 (negative #15A)

7. Photograph #:

PHOTOGRAPH 17 OF 19

6. View:

Looking south from West Santa Clara Street:
setting, relation of building to bridge
17 (negative #33A)

7. Photograph #:

PHOTOGRAPH 18 OF 19

6. View:

Looking east from West Santa Clara Street:
setting, relation of building to landscaping
18 (negative #29A)

7. Photograph #:

PHOTOGRAPH 19 OF 19

6. View:

Looking east from West Santa Clara Street:
setting, relation of building to downtown
19 (negative #31A)

7. Photograph #:

(18) (19)
(off map)

(2) W. SANTA CLARA ST. (1) (5) (6)

(17)

KEY

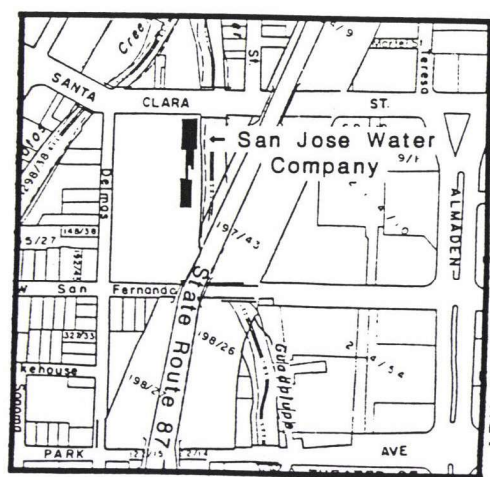
- A - Main Building
- B - Pump House Wing
- C - Transformer House
- D - Data Processing Building (South Wing)
- E - Side Entry
- F - Breezeway
- G - Suction Basin
- - Photo Number and Direction

landscaping

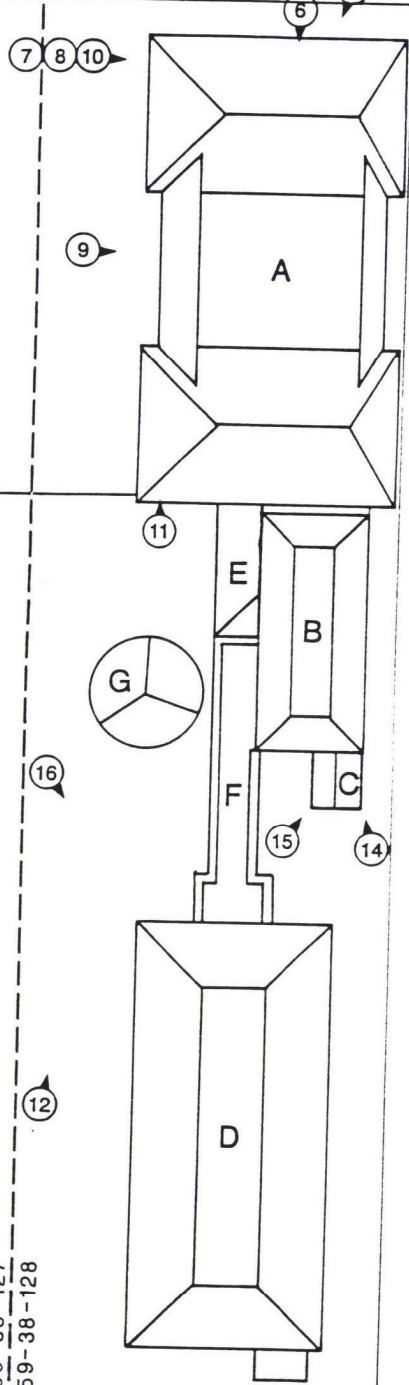
parking



0 100ft



APN 259-38-127
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GUADALUPE RIVER

INDEX TO NEGATIVES AND PROOF SHEETS

Building: San Jose Water Works Building
Location: 374 West Santa Clara Street
San Jose, California
Photographer: Woodruff C. Minor
Date: August 1989

Frame	View
0A	Exterior, looking south from W. Santa Clara St. Bridge: east elevation, main building
1A	Exterior, looking southwest from Guadalupe River: east elevation, main building
2A	Exterior, looking west from Guadalupe River: east and south elevations, main building
3A	Exterior, looking west from Guadalupe River: east and south elevations, pump house/transformer wing
4A	Exterior, looking west from Guadalupe River: east and south elevations, main building
5A	Setting, looking south from W Santa Clara Street, at Route 87 Freeway overpass: showing ornamental streetlights
6A	Exterior, looking north from southeast corner of site: east elevation of south wing (Data Processing Building)
7A	Exterior, looking northwest: south and east elevations of transformer house, south elevation of pump house
8A	Exterior, looking northeast from parking lot: showing relation of main building to pump house/entry
9A	Exterior, looking north from parking lot: west and south elevations of building group
10A	Exterior, looking north from parking lot: west and south elevations, main building; suction basin
11A	Exterior, looking north from parking lot: west and south elevations, pump house/transformer wing;breezeway; suction basin in foreground
12A	Exterior, looking north from parking lot: west and south elevations, main building; suction basin

Frame View

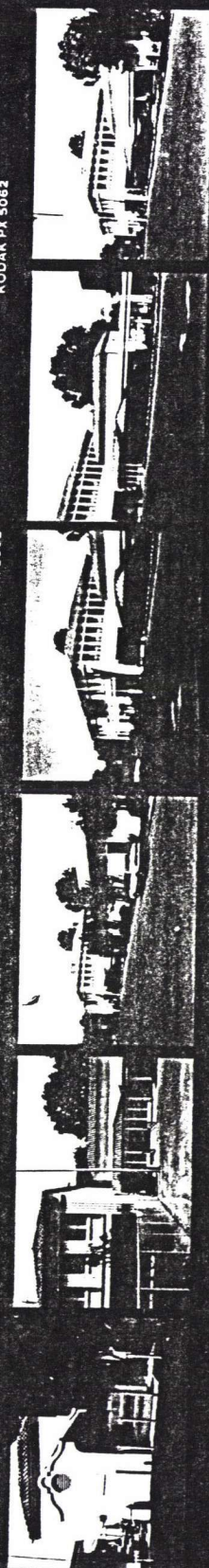
- 13A Exterior, looking north:
south and west elevations, transformer house
- 14A Exterior detail, south elevation, main building:
second-story windows
- 15A Exterior, looking east from parking lot:
north and west elevations, south wing (Data Processing
Building); breezeway in foreground
- 16A Looking northwest from parking lot:
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- 17A Looking north from parking lot:
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- 18A Looking northeast from Delmas Street:
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- 19A Exterior, looking north from parking lot:
west and south elevations, main building
- 20A Exterior, looking north from parking lot:
west and south elevations, main building
- 21A Exterior detail, west elevation, main building:
ornament and windows, central bay
- 22A Exterior detail, front (north) facade, main building:
entry
- 23A Exterior detail, front (north) facade, main building:
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- 24A Exterior detail, west elevation, main building:
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- 25A Exterior, looking southwest from W Santa Clara Street:
front (north) facade, main building
- 26A Exterior, looking southwest from W Santa Clara Street:
front (north) facade, main building
- 27A Exterior, looking east from W Santa Clara Street:
west and north elevations, main building
- 28A Exterior, looking east from W Santa Clara Street:
west and north elevations, main building
- 29A Setting, looking east from W Santa Clara Street:
showing landscaping

Frame View

- 30A Setting, looking east from W Santa Clara Street:
 showing axial vista to building
- 31A Setting, looking east from W Santa Clara Street:
 showing relation of building to downtown
- 32A Exterior detail, front (north) facade, main building:
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- 34A Exterior detail, west elevation, main building:
 frieze ornament and windows
- 35A Exterior detail, west elevation, main building:
 north window, first story
- 36A Exterior detail, front (north) facade, main building:
 entry and flanking window bays



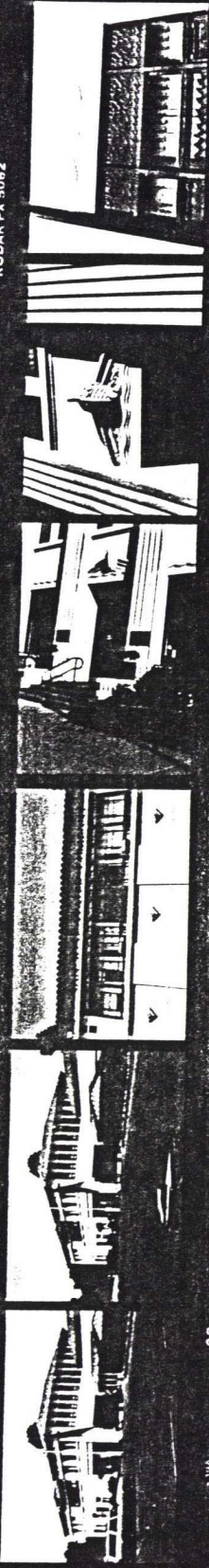
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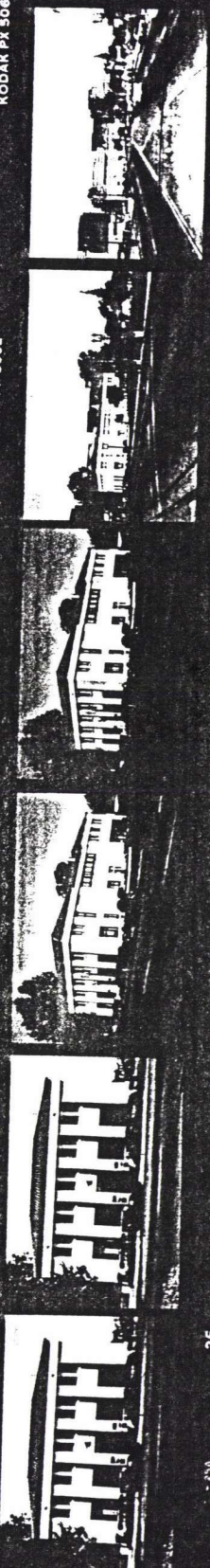
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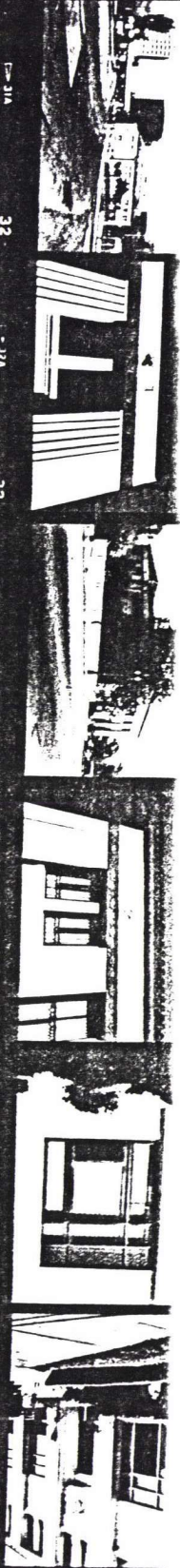
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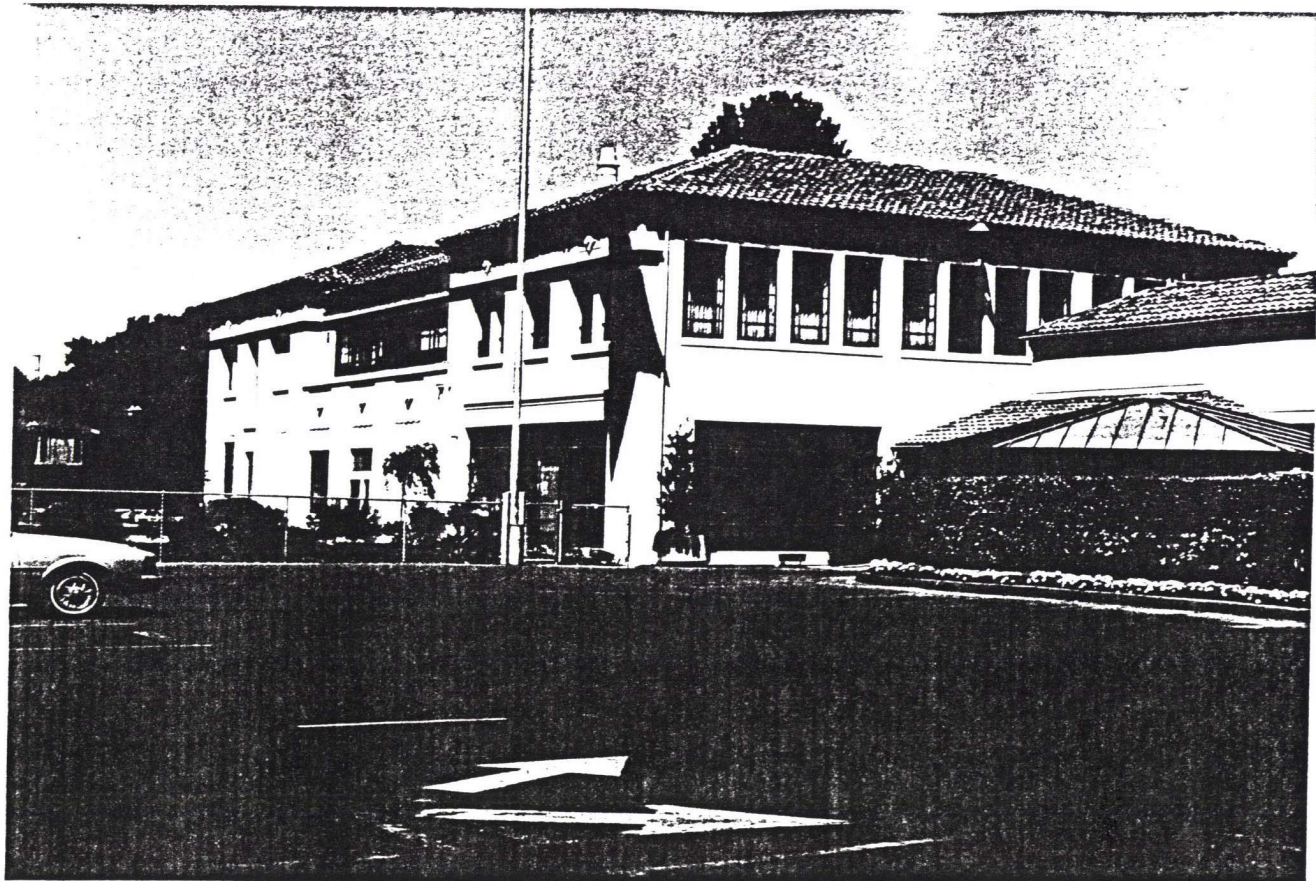


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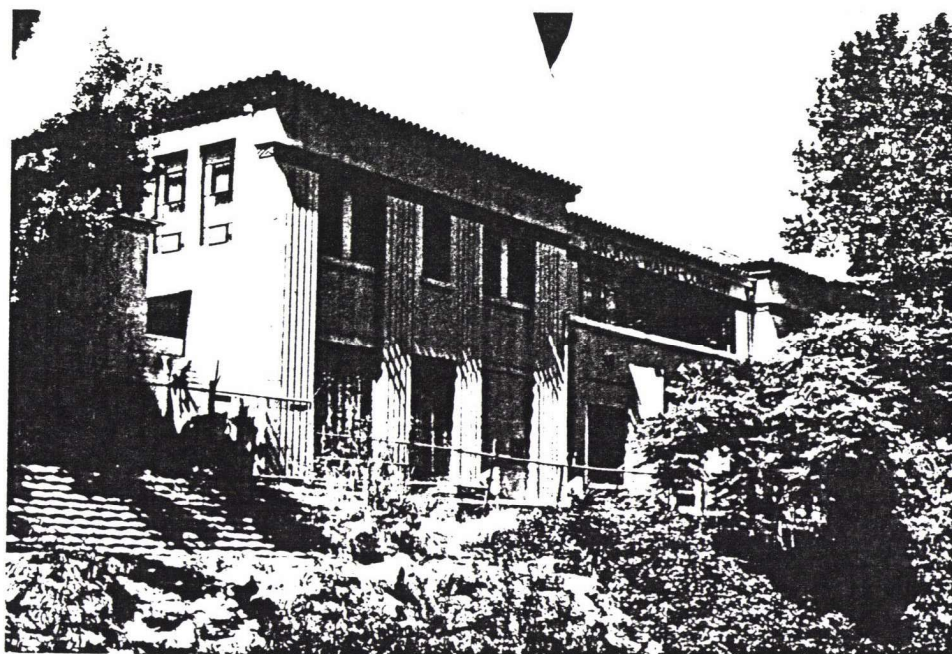


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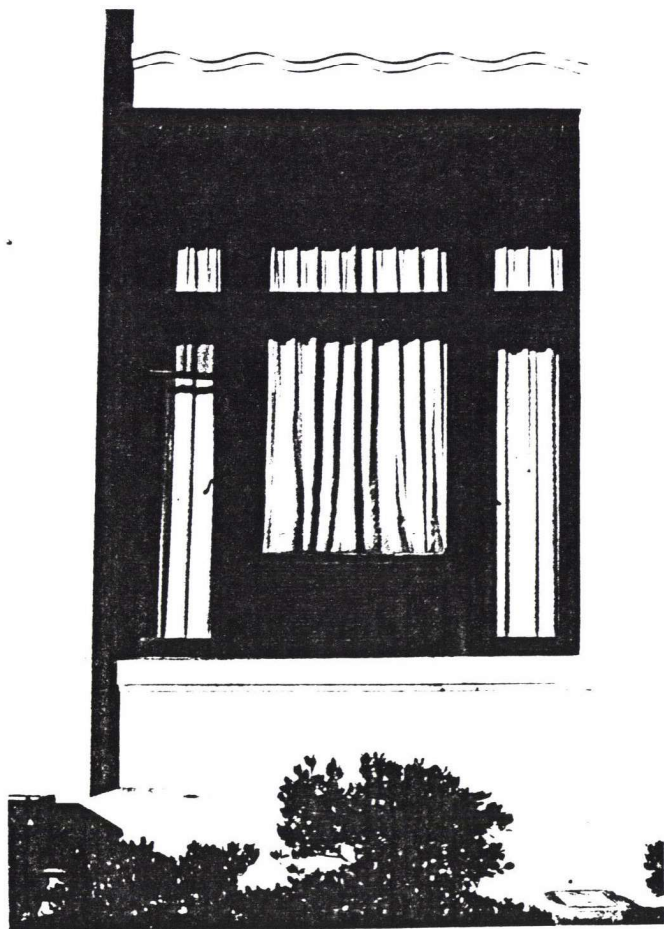
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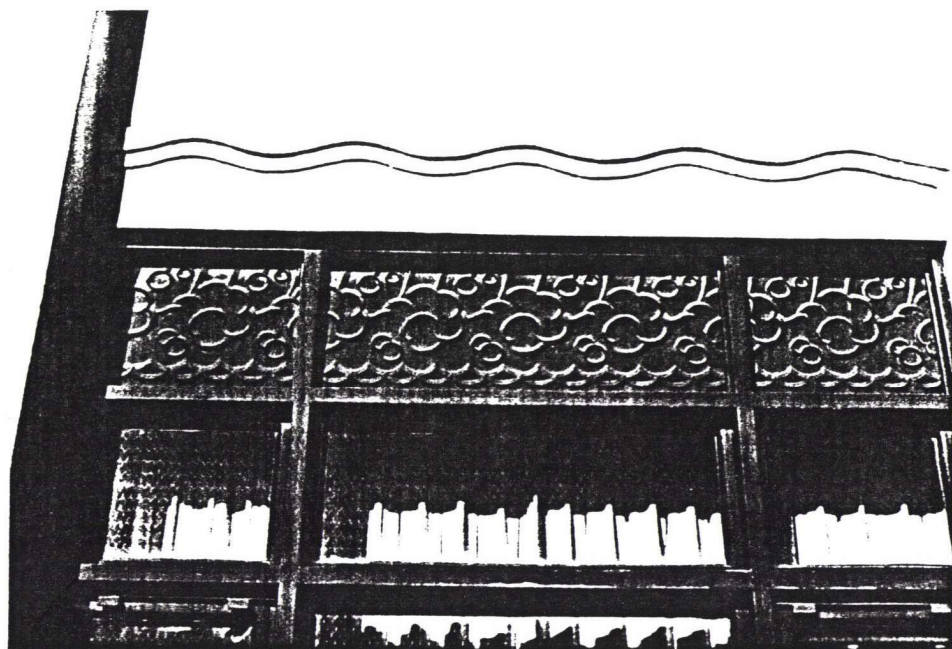
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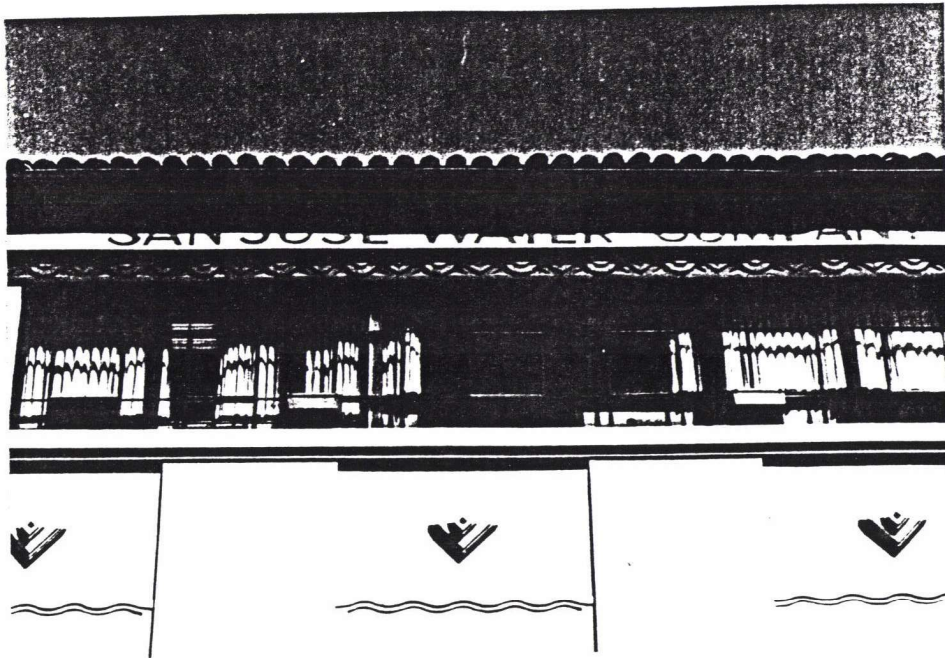
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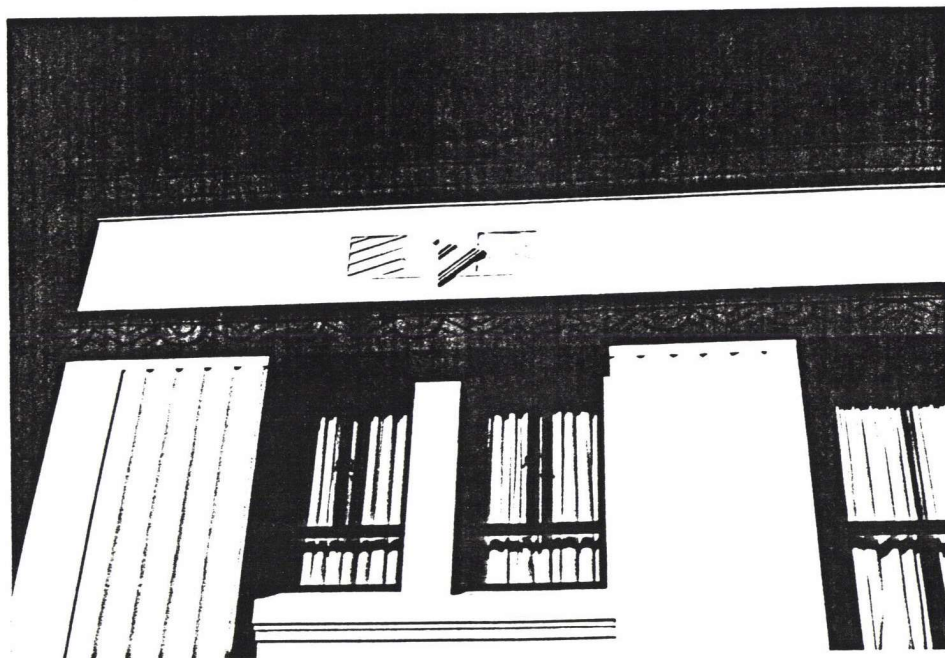
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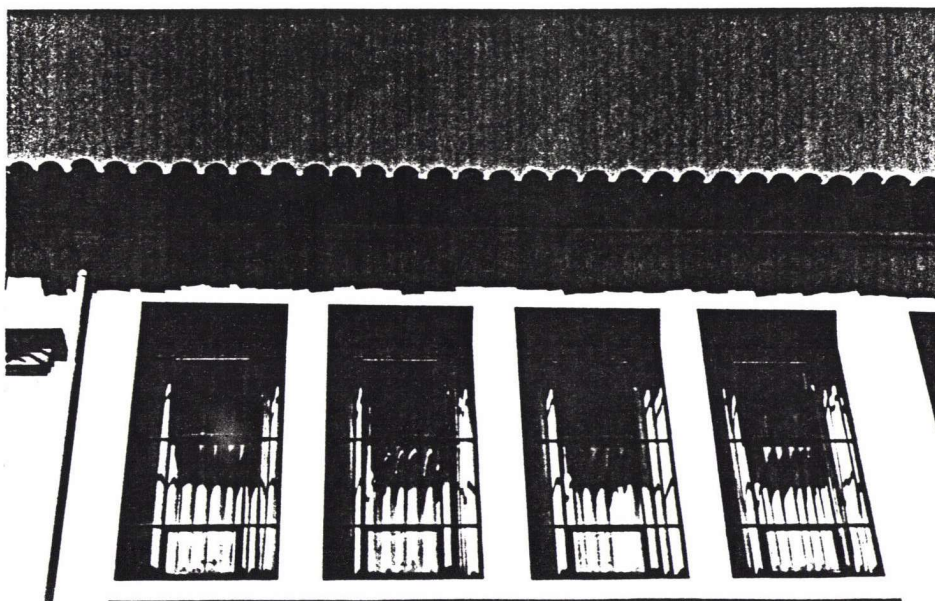
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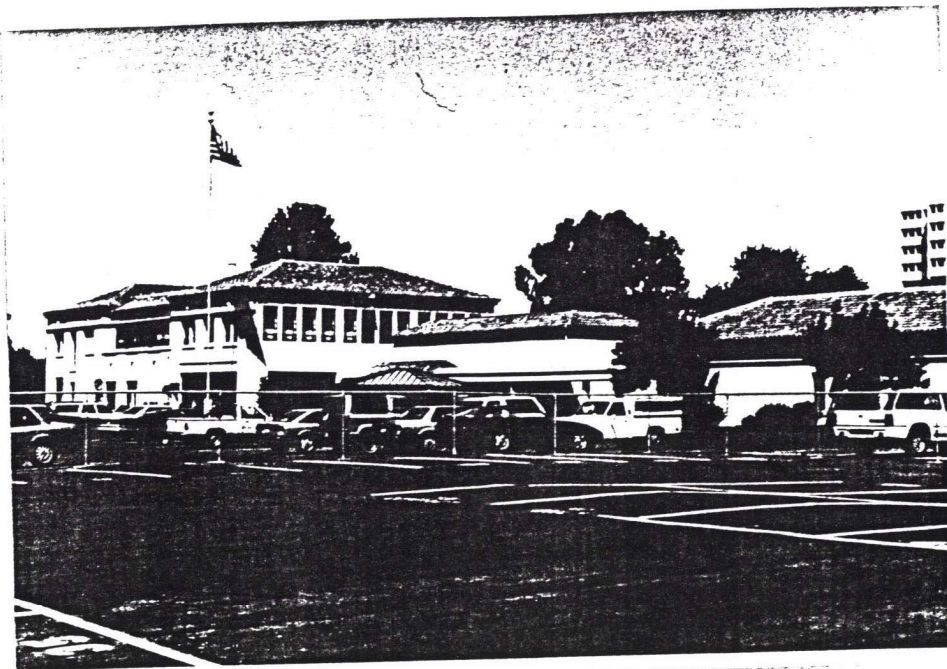
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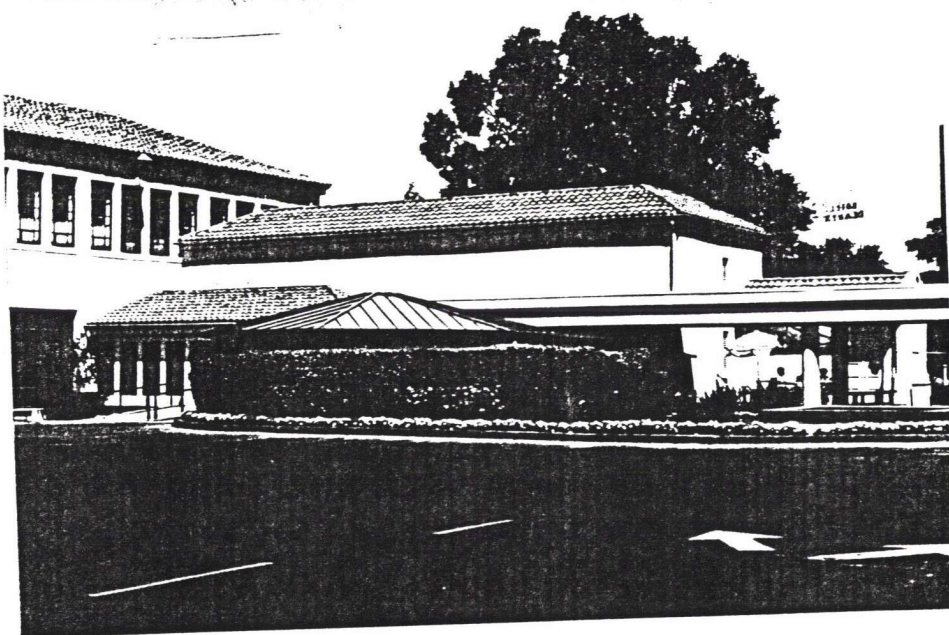
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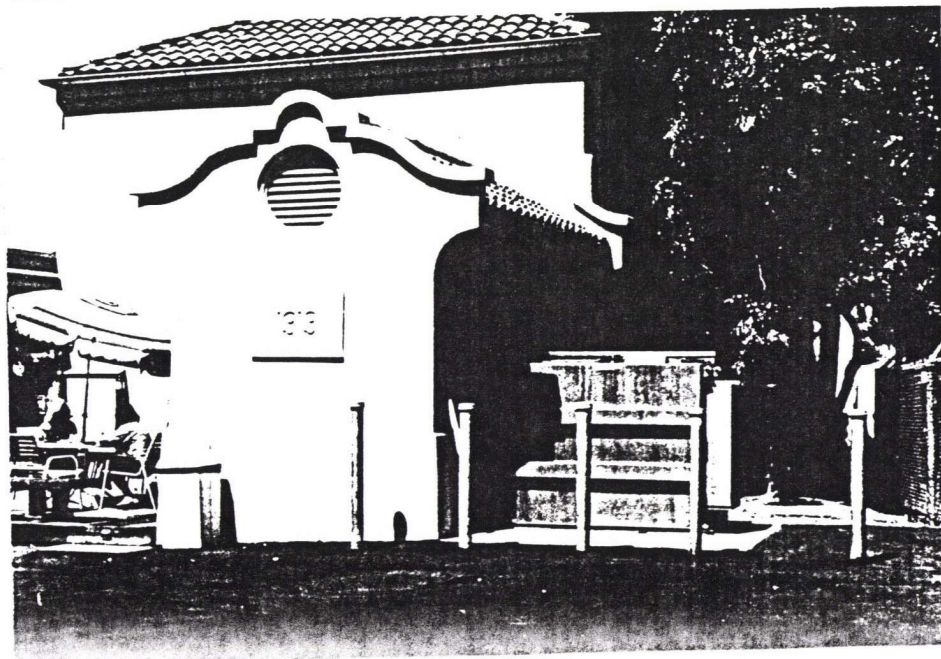
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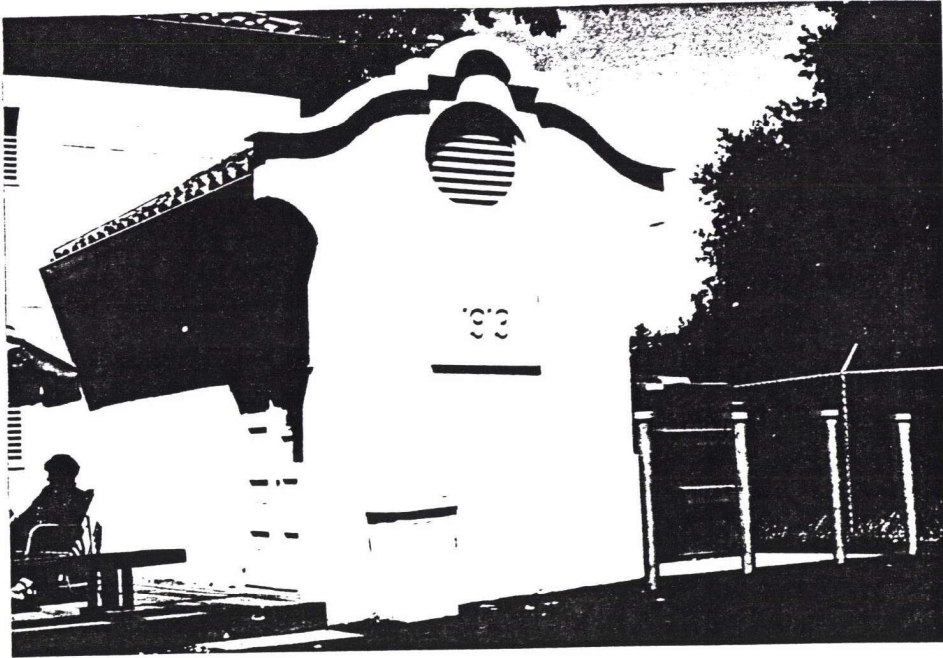
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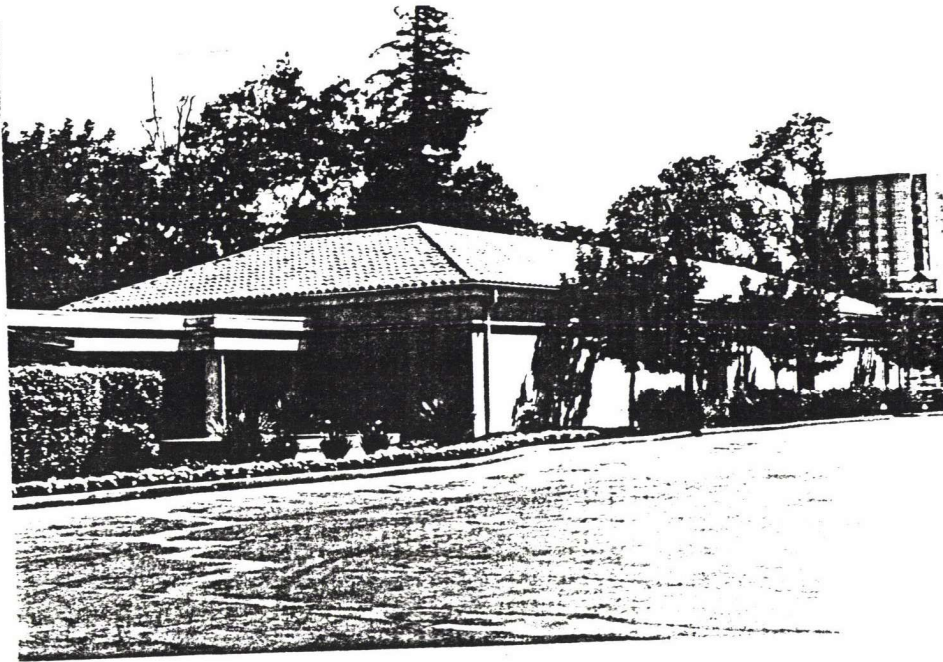
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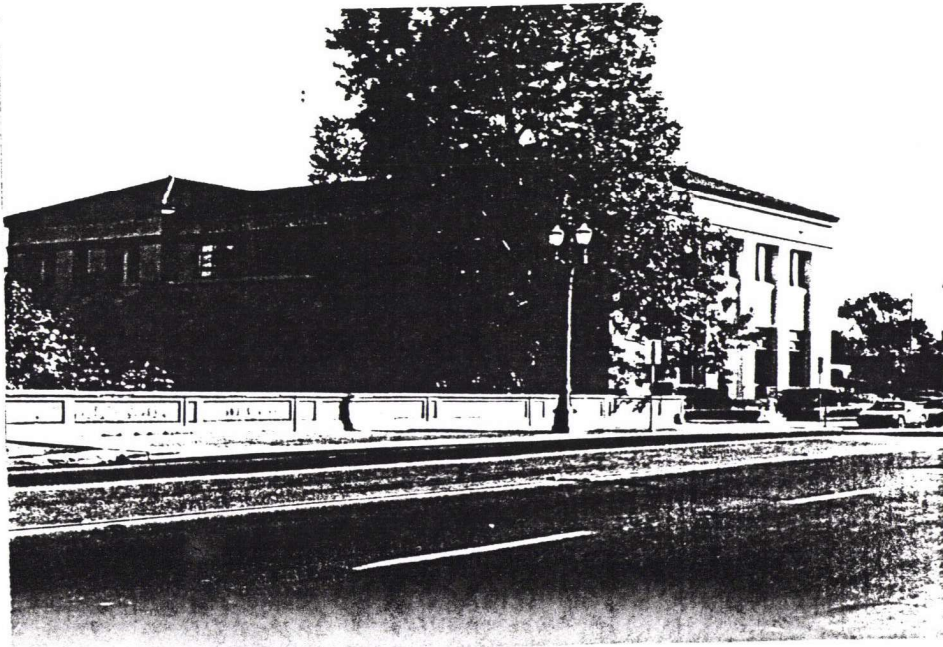
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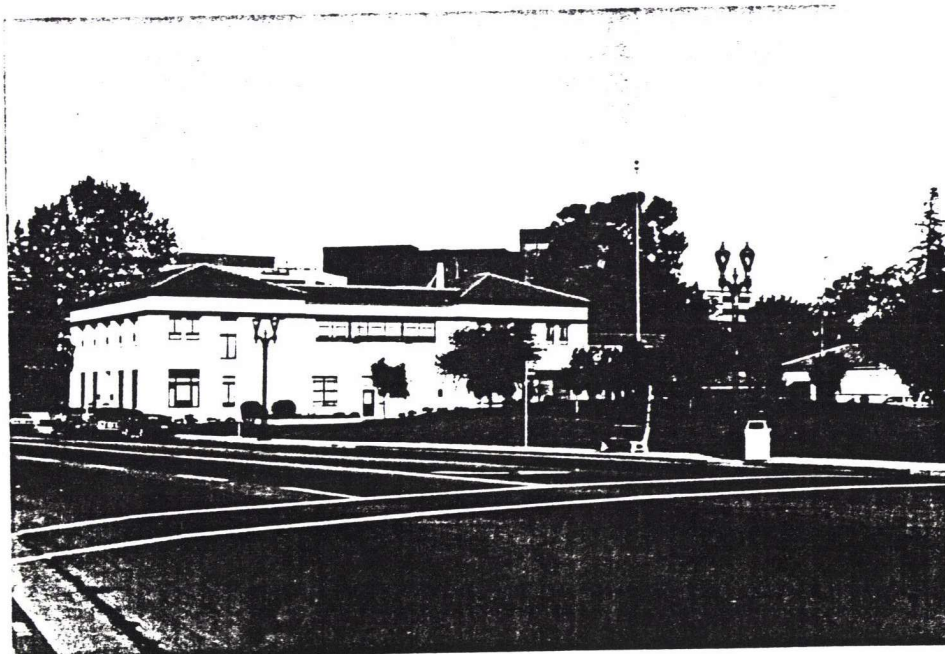
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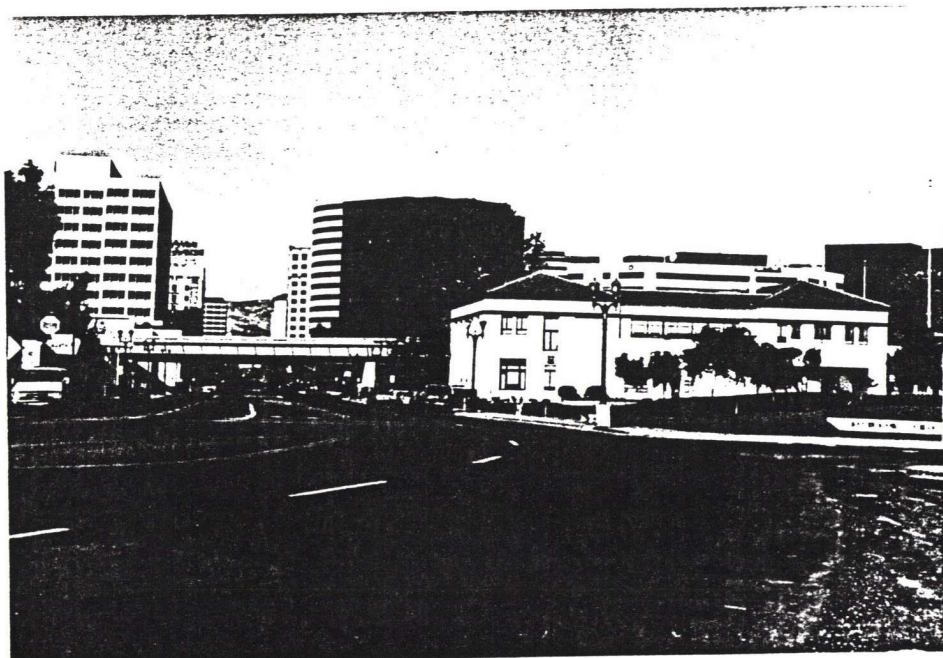
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