

TEF

Salinas Historic Resources Board

37-39 Soledad Street Project Update

March 02, 2026



Agenda

- 01 Historic Structure Report Findings
- 02 37-39 Soledad Emergency Stabilization
- 03 37-39 Soledad Rehabilitation Design
- 04 Current Project Schedule



01

Historic Structure Report Findings



Project Location

- Subject building located in Chinatown Cultural District on Soledad Street near Market Way
- Nearby buildings 38 Soledad Street (Arre's Pool Hall) and 45 Soledad Street (Republic Hotel) are no longer extant

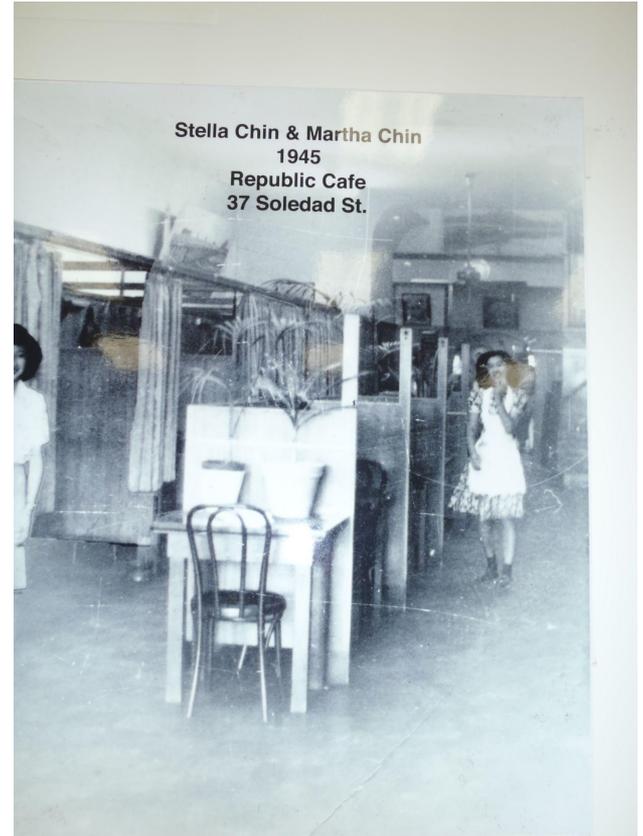


Project Context & Purpose

- **1989:** 37-39 Soledad Street listed as historic resource for City of Salinas on the **1989 Historical and Architectural Resources and Survey Plan**
- **2011:** 37 Soledad Street (Republic Cafe) listed in the **National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)**:
 - Under Criterion A in the area of *Asian Ethnic Heritage*
 - At the local level of significance
 - For the period 1942-1957
 - 39 Soledad not included in evaluation
- **2025:** TEF Design and Groundwork Preservation, LLC hired to evaluate both buildings for the NRHP and California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR).

The resulting Historic Structure Report:

- evaluates properties under additional significance criteria
- includes the significance of 39 Soledad Street (Lotus Inn)



Evaluation Criteria

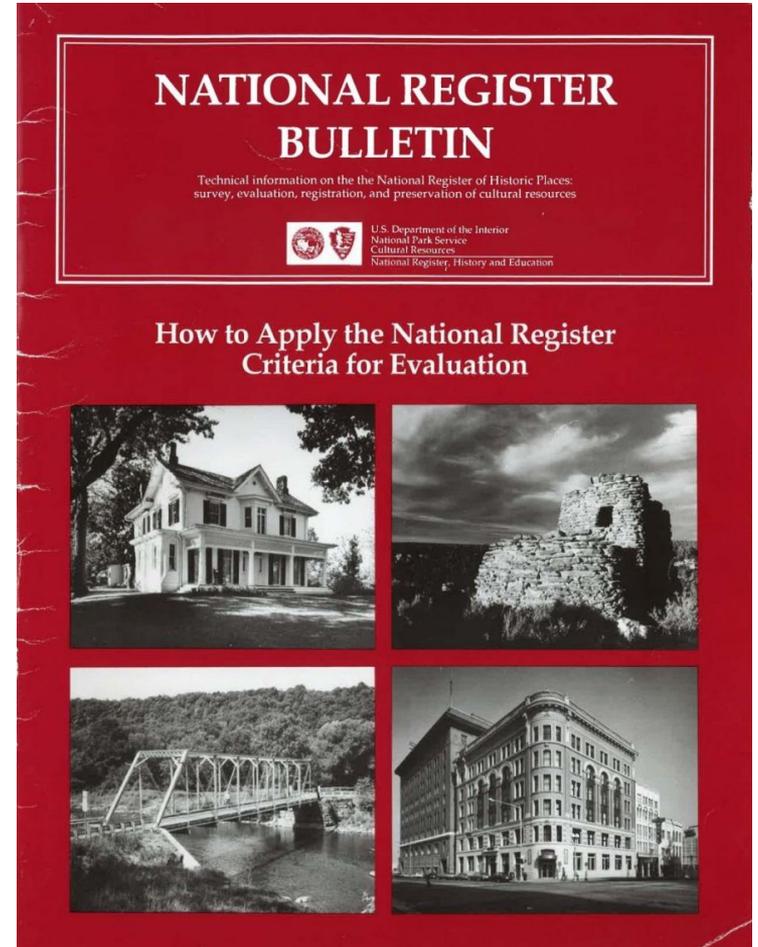
National/California Register Criteria:

A/1 Events: Resources that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.

B/2 Persons: Resources that are associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.

C/3 Design/Construction: Resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values.

D/4 Information Potential: Resources that have yielded, or have the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.



Republic Cafe Significance

37 Soledad Street

Designed by Charles E Butner in 1942 for Wallace Ahtye and Bow Chin

Designated in NRHP and CRHR under the following:

- *Criterion A/1:* Associated with cultural heritage as prominent ethnic minority business
- *Criterion B/2:* Association with Wallace Ahtye Sr. & Lily Ahtye
- *Criterion C/3:* Architecturally distinctive example of Chinese-inspired architecture

Lotus Inn Significance

39 Soledad Street

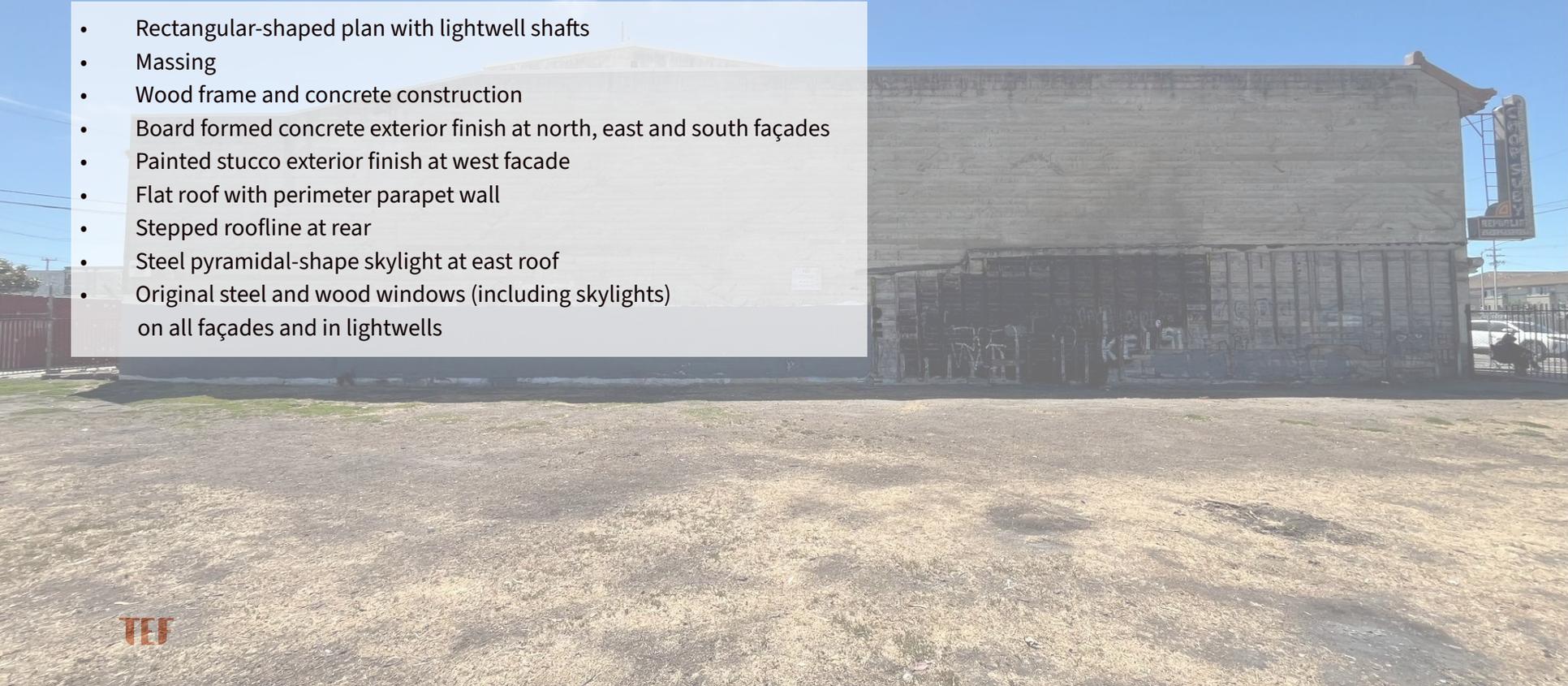
Designed by Charles E Butner in 1941 for Wallace Ahtye and Bow Chin

Eligible for NRHP and CRHR under the following:

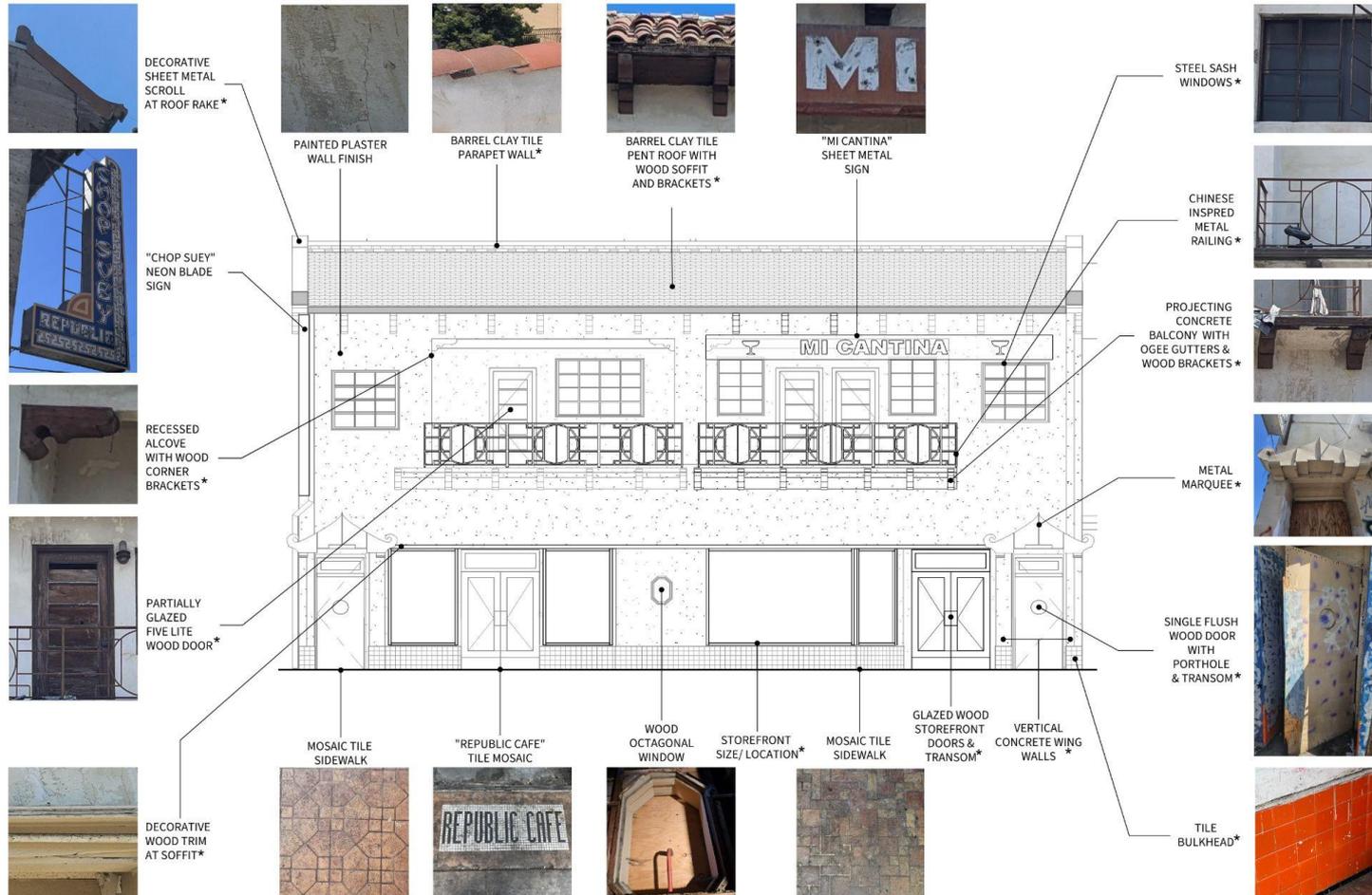
- *Criterion A/1:* Associated with cultural heritage as prominent ethnic minority business
- *Criterion C/3:* Architecturally distinctive example of Chinese-inspired architecture

Character Defining Features: Exterior

- Rectangular-shaped plan with lightwell shafts
- Massing
- Wood frame and concrete construction
- Board formed concrete exterior finish at north, east and south façades
- Painted stucco exterior finish at west facade
- Flat roof with perimeter parapet wall
- Stepped roofline at rear
- Steel pyramidal-shape skylight at east roof
- Original steel and wood windows (including skylights) on all façades and in lightwells



Character Defining Features: West Facade



* feature is present on both 37 & 39 Soledad Street

Character Defining Features: Interior

37 Soledad Street - Republic Cafe

- Historic restaurant space configuration and covered ceilings
- Woks and extant kitchen equipment
- Partial booth/ space divider
- Configuration of mezzanine stairs and banquet room sign
- Mezzanine staircase
- Mezzanine location and configuration, and presence of railing
- Mezzanine arched closet opening and covered ceilings
- Dumbwaiter shaft and cab
- Arched openings in apartment
- Roof access from third floor
- Straight staircase providing entry to the second floor from the primary facade
- Interior staircases providing entry to the second and third floor



Character Defining Features: Interior

39 Soledad Street - Lotus Inn

- Original bar configuration and coved ceilings
- Service bar with built in round bar stools
- Backbar with mirror backsplash
- Triangular, metal light sconces
- Second floor as double loaded corridor
- Location and dimensions of lightwells
- Location, dimension, and operation of original steel and wood windows



Treatment Approaches

RESTORATION - to reinstate character-defining features of the primary west facade that have been compromised through neglect.

REHABILITATION - maintenance actions to preserve and repair extant character-defining features.

REHABILITATION - to promote continued use of the building through sensitive interventions in future work.



THE SECRETARY
OF THE INTERIOR'S
**STANDARDS FOR
THE TREATMENT
OF HISTORIC
PROPERTIES**

WITH

**GUIDELINES FOR
PRESERVING,
REHABILITATING,
RESTORING &
RECONSTRUCTING
HISTORIC
BUILDINGS**



U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Technical Preservation Services



MI CANTINA



NO TRESPASSING
PUNISHABLE BY LAW

39

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NO ENCLOSURE
OR OBSTRUCTION
FRONT OR OTHER SIDEWALK
PARKED IN THIS AREA
OR ON ANY OTHER
CITY STREET, SIDEWALK
OR ALLEY

NO
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TRIBLX

Handwritten graffiti in blue and red, including the word "POSSY" and a smiley face.

Building Conditions

West Facade

The image shows the interior of a building during renovation. The ceiling is composed of numerous dark wooden beams, many of which are curved into arches. The walls are also made of wood, with some sections appearing to be in the process of being removed or replaced. In the foreground, there are several black folding chairs and a long wooden table. In the background, there are more tables and chairs, and a large wooden partition wall. A red banner with the letters 'CHI' and the year '2002' is visible on the right wall. The overall atmosphere is one of a workspace in progress.

Building Conditions

37 Soledad Street - First Floor Interior



Building Conditions

37 Soledad Street - Second Floor Interior



Building Conditions

37 Soledad Street - Roof



Building Conditions

39 Soledad Street - First Floor Interior

The image shows a narrow, dimly lit hallway with significant signs of neglect. The walls are covered in peeling, greyish-white paint, revealing the underlying surface. On the left wall, a window is completely covered by a large, vertical board of weathered, dark wood. In the center of the hallway, a dark brown wooden door is slightly ajar, revealing a dark interior space. To the right of this door, there is an open doorway leading to another room. The floor is made of dark, speckled tiles and is littered with some debris. A single electrical outlet is visible on the wall to the right of the boarded-up window. A small, dark circular object, possibly a light fixture or vent, is mounted on the ceiling. The overall atmosphere is one of decay and abandonment.

Building Conditions

39 Soledad Street - Second Floor Interior



Building Conditions

39 Soledad Street - Roof

Recommended Additional Investigations

Investigation of Fire Damage at West Façade (Critical)

Engage a licensed structural engineer or testing agency to investigate the following:

- Extent of damage and critically failed structural components at the west façade, including:
 - Wall and storefront framing
 - Balconies and alcoves
 - Parapet Pent Roof
- Structural Engineer (with input from qualified historical architect) to design a permanent structural repair of the front façade (see section 8.5 for recommendations to address critical conditions).
- **Associated Recommended Scope:** Engage a qualified historical architect to investigate conditions of components that are currently covered and make recommendations for their restoration or replacement in kind.

Investigation of Fire Damage at Floor/ Roof Framing (Critical)

Engage a licensed structural engineer or testing agency to investigate the following:

- Extent of damage and critically failed structural components at the floor and roof framing of both buildings
- Structural Engineer (with input from qualified historical architect) to design a permanent structural repair of the roof and floor framing (see section 8.5 for recommendations to address critical conditions).

Fire Sprinkler Installation (Highly Recommended)

Engage a licensed plumbing contractor to design and build a temporary NFPA-13 compliant fire sprinkler system. Note that installation of a new fire water lateral will likely be required.

Window Investigation (Recommended)

Hire a qualified architect or licensed general contractor to further assess the conditions of steel sash and wood windows, with attention to component condition, concrete window opening condition, window sash and hardware operability. If replacement in kind is required, additional focus should be paid to original installation of the window to determine a recommended method for removal of windows.

Lightwell Drainage Investigation (Recommended)

Hire a licensed roofing contractor and architect to further investigate the location, routing and condition of drainage components for the existing lightwells.

Pipe Investigation (Recommended)

Hire a licensed plumbing contractor to inspect the existing internal downspouts (from roof and balcony) and below grade piping (if extant) to determine blockage, existing sizes, and pipe integrity.

Historic Paint Analysis (Optional)

Hire a qualified materials conservator or historical architect to perform a historic paint analysis. Samples should be taken of all painted character-defining features at the west façade to determine their original paint colors.



02

37-39 Soledad Street Emergency Stabilization

City Ongoing Work

Building Clean out

- Removal of animals, fleas, detritus
- Hazardous Material Abatement
- Temporary stabilization of fire damaged components
- Temporary roofing repair
- Boarding up of all exterior openings



37-39 Soledad Street

Emergency Stabilization Scope of Work

- Stabilize front facade
- Repair fire damaged components
- Install fire sprinkler system
- Stabilize building structure
- Make watertight (roof replacement) and vandal resistant

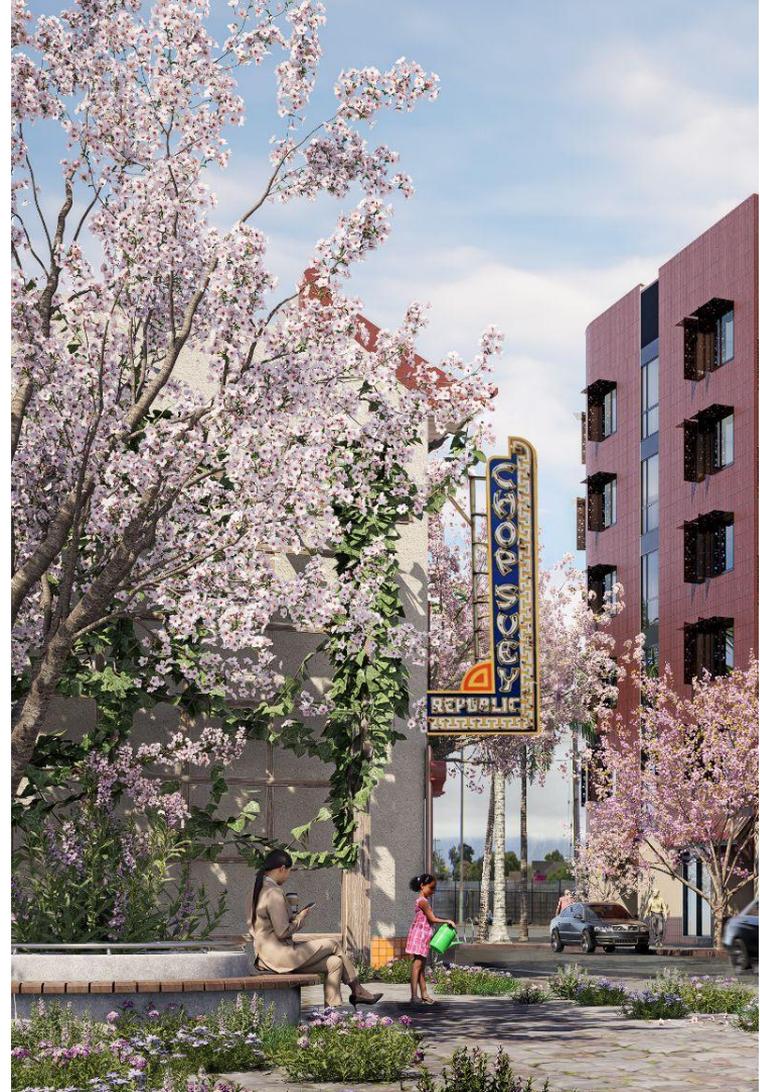


Areas of Temporary Reconstruction



03

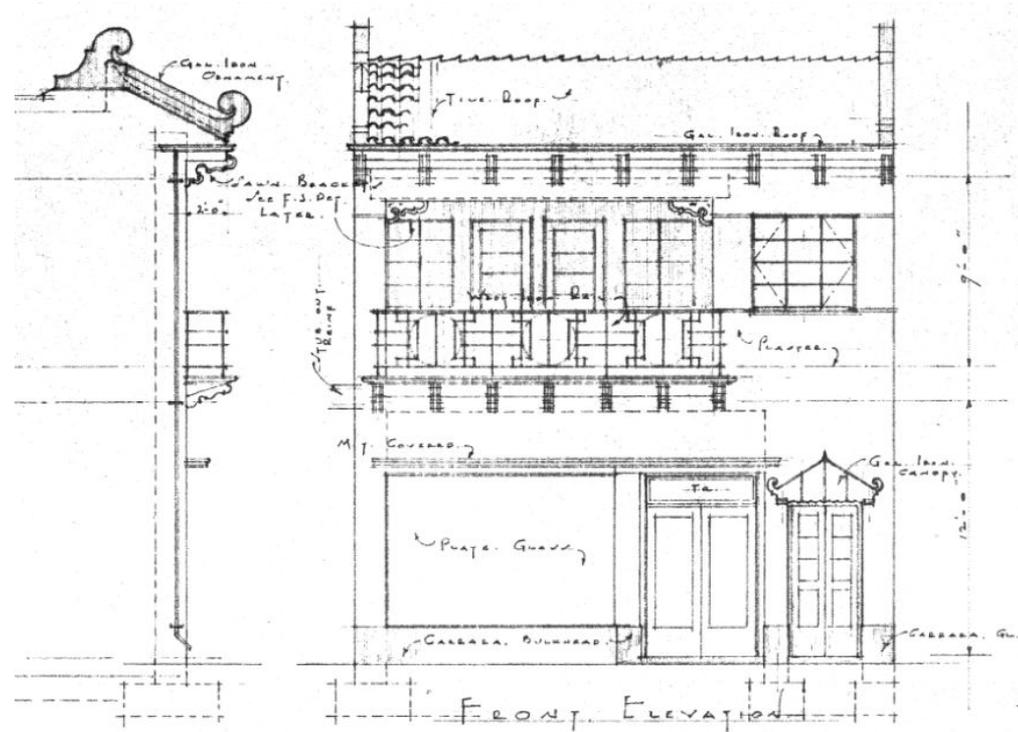
37-39 Soledad Street Rehabilitation Design



37-39 Soledad Street

Rehabilitation Scope of Work

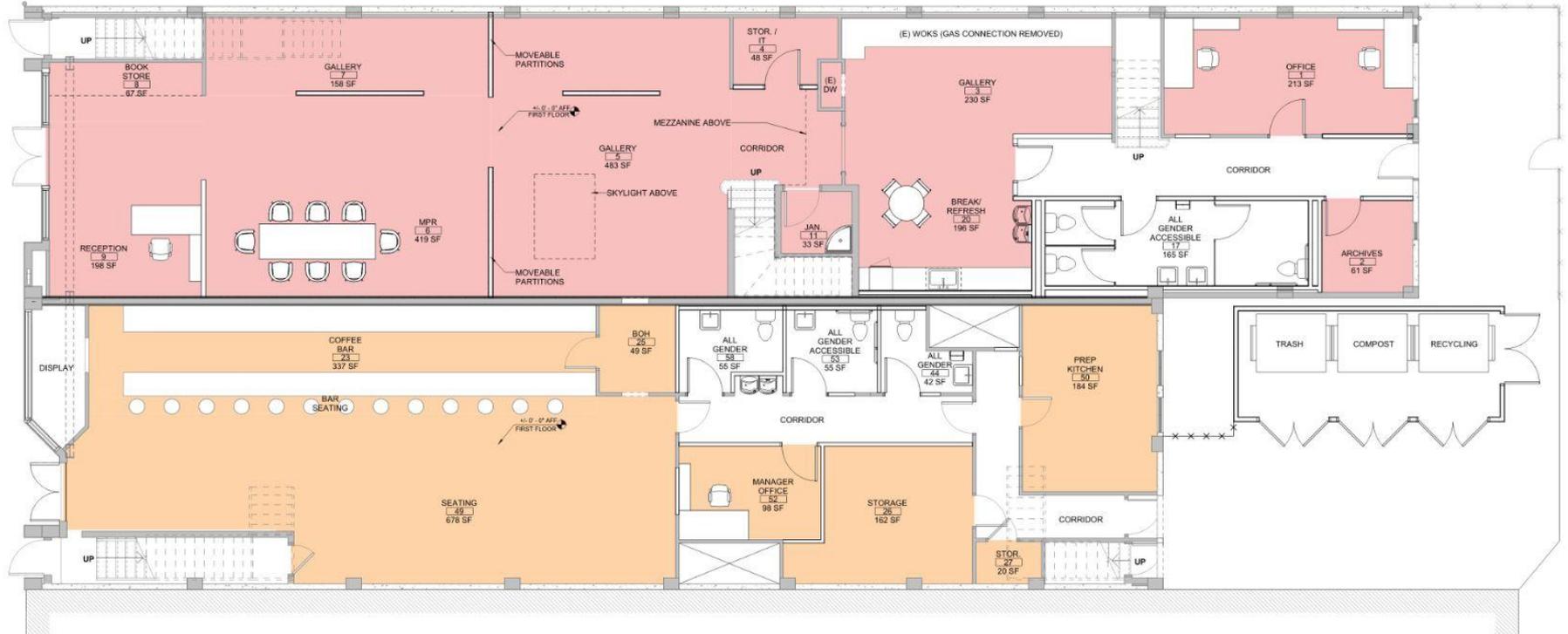
- Front Facade Restoration
- New utility laterals
- Core and shell work (make ready for future tenants)



37-39 Soledad Street

Museum Area

Commercial Area

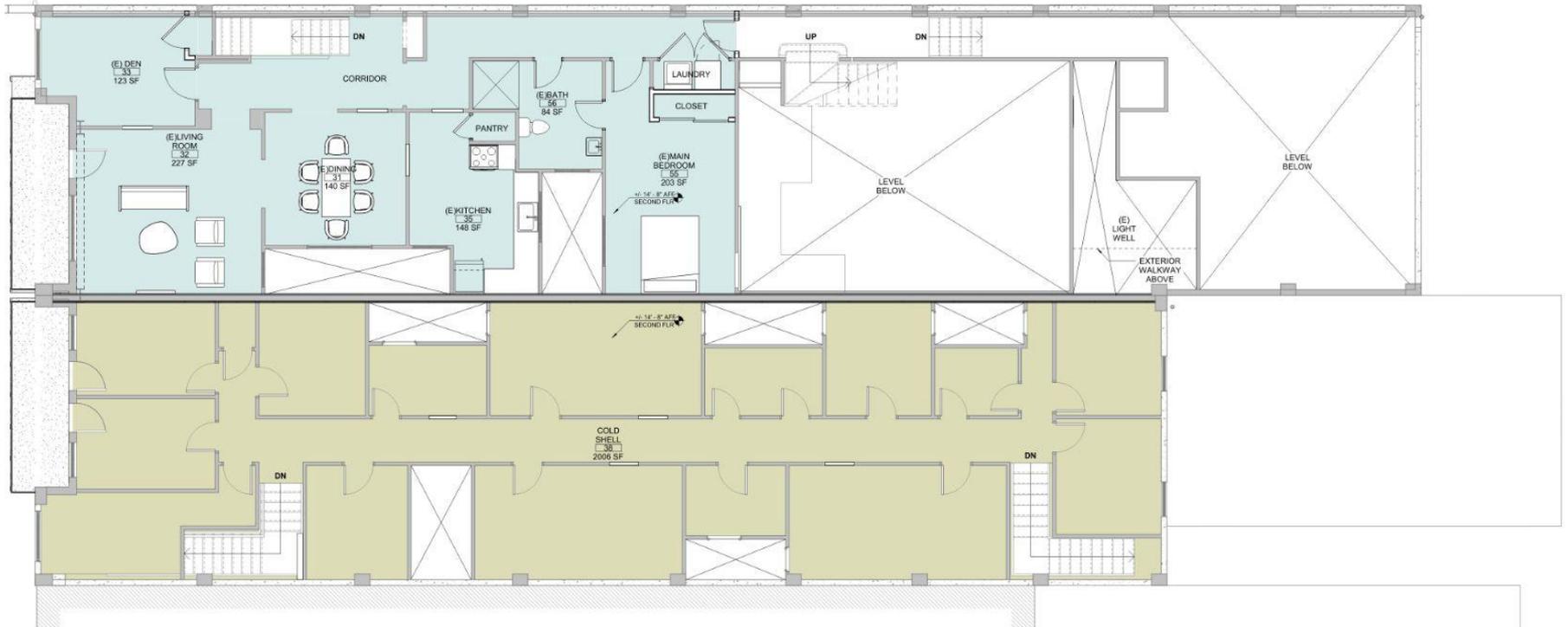


Level 1 Concept Plan



37-39 Soledad Street

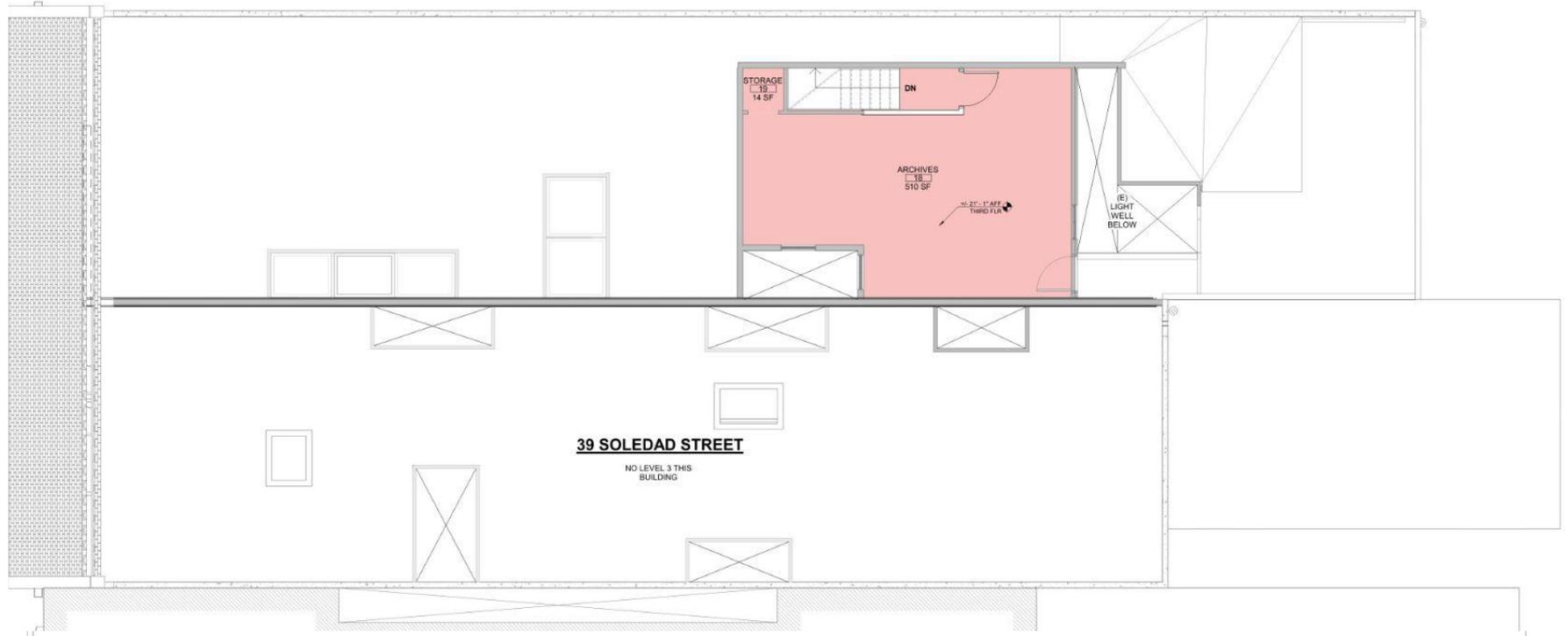
- Residential Area
- Cold Shell Area



Level 2 Concept Plan

37-39 Soledad Street

 Museum Area



Level 3 Concept Plan

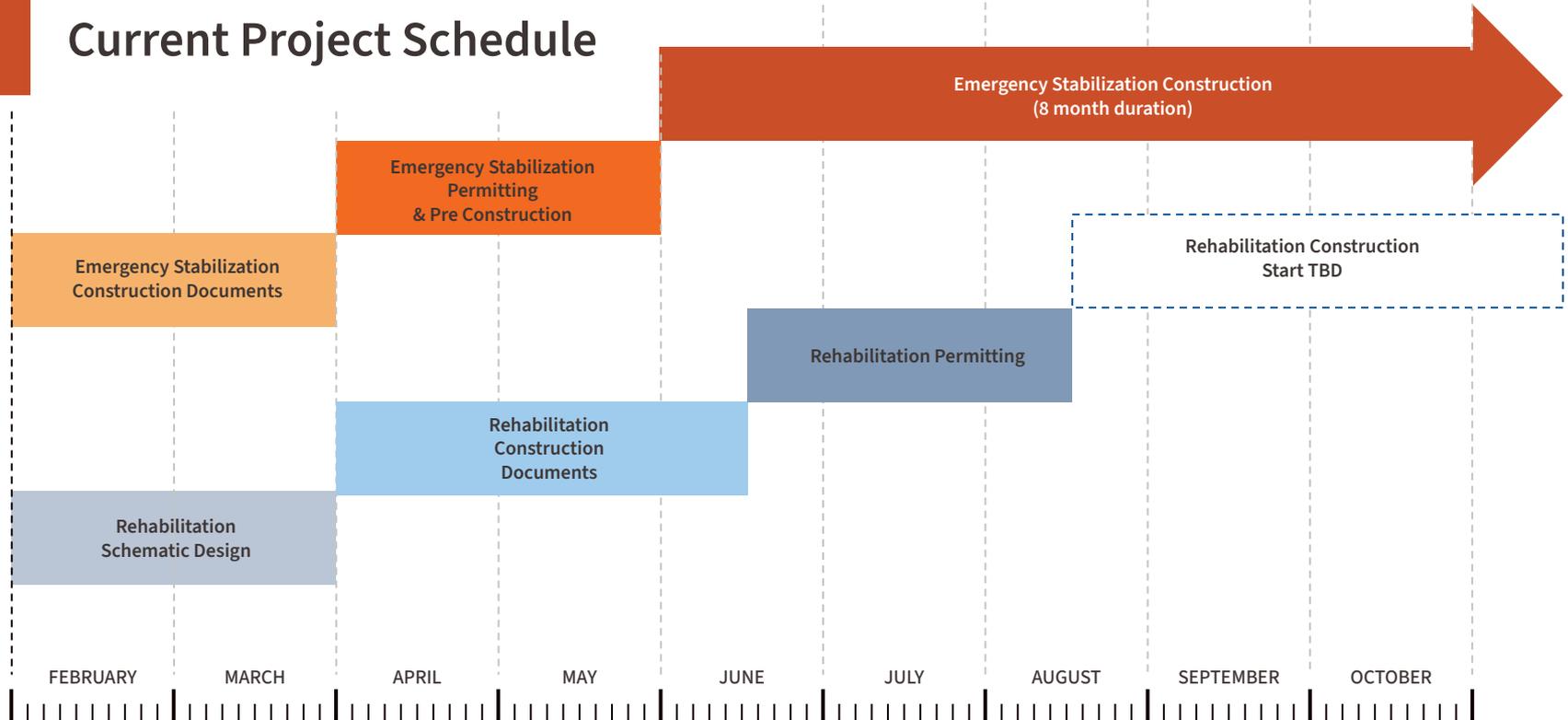


37-39 Soledad Street

Exterior Rendering

04

Current Project Schedule



2026

TEF

We craft places people love