



CITY OF SALINAS HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD

DATE: **APRIL 7, 2025**

TO: **HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD**

FROM: **LISA BRINTON, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

BY: **GRANT LEONARD, PLANNING MANAGER**

TITLE: **34-38 SOLEDAD STREET UPDATE**

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to receive a project update on 34-38 Soledad Street and discuss architectural elements for preservation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the February 3, 2025 meeting, the Historic Resources Board reviewed and provided comments on the draft Historic Structures Report for 38 Soledad Street. The City received a final Historic Structures Report in March 2025. Also in March, the property was broken into and experienced additional damage to the exterior of the building. Staff will present an overview of the status of the building and discuss future actions needed for the either the preservation or demolition of the structure.

BACKGROUND:

The City purchased 34-38 Soledad Street in December 2022 as part of the on-going efforts to implement the Chinatown Revitalization Plan. In the Summer of 2023, the City applied for and received two Regional Early Action Planning grants to support the predevelopment costs for development of mixed-use affordable housing located at 34-38 Soledad Street. As part of the predevelopment work the City hired TEF Design to prepare site plans and architectural renderings for the development of mixed-use affordable housing at 34-38 Soledad Street. Initial site plans and renderings were shared with the Historic Resources Board at the July 1, 2024 meeting.

One component of the design work is to determine if or how to integrate the existing structure into the future development plans. Due to the age and poor condition of the existing structure, the City requested TEF Design complete a Historic Structures Report to determine the historic significance of the existing building and its structural integrity. The Historic Structures Report was limited to

38 Soledad Street and did not assess 34 or 36 Soledad Street. Although the three addresses are linked, only 38 Soledad Street was determined to be potentially historically significant. The Draft Historic Structures Report was presented to the Historic Resources Board at the February 3, 2025, meeting, and a final report was received by the City in March of 2025. Key findings of the report include:

- The building likely qualifies for historic status based State and Federal standards.
- Many historic elements of the building remain but are deteriorating.
- The building has multiple structural deficiencies caused by decades of deferred maintenance, vandalism, and multiple fires.
- Additional analysis is required by a structural engineer to determine appropriate treatments to stabilize the structural deficiencies and prevent further deterioration.
- Until the time that a larger rehabilitation project is undertaken, the building should be made watertight, cleaned of detritus and infestation, and secured.

On March 18, 2025, the City became aware that 34-38 had been broken into and additional damage sustained to the south facing exterior wall in an area previously damaged by fire and where the exterior stucco siding is separating from the structure. The break-in further exacerbated the deterioration of the section of wall.

Upon review of the Historic Structures Report, the Chief Building Official conducted a field visit on April 2, 2025, to inspect the most recent damage, and determined that 34-38 Soledad Street needed to be condemned. Signage was posted and the building was cleared by the Police Department of all people and the area of the break-in secured with new temporary framing and plywood.

At this time, the City is exploring its options related to securing the building's failing structural components or pursuing demolition if it is determined to be needed to ensure public health and safety. The City is also seeking input from the Historic Resources Board about the architectural elements to be preserved and incorporated into the designs for the new mixed-use affordable housing proposed for the site.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 includes the general rule that CEQA applies only to activities which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Because the proposed action and this matter have no potential to cause any effect on the environment, or because it falls within a category of activities excluded as projects pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378, this matter is not a project. Because the matter does not cause a direct or foreseeable indirect physical change on or in the environment, this matter is not a project. Any subsequent

discretionary projects resulting from this action will be assessed for CEQA applicability.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Final 38 Soledad Street Historic Structures Report
2. Site Photos from April 3, 2025