

May 3, 2024

City of Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg
Sacramento County Third District Supervisor Rich Desmond
City of Sacramento District 2 Councilmember Shoun Thao
Roger Dickinson, Former Assemblyman/Candidate for Sacramento City Council, District 2

Submitted via e-mail

Re: Adaptive Reuse of 1950 Arden Way, an Eligible Historic Landmark

Dear Honorable Mayor Steinberg, Supervisor Desmond, Councilmember Thao, and Candidate Dickinson,

Given the pause in City Council's vote on the proposed ordinance to list 1950 Arden Way on the City of Sacramento's Register of Historic and Cultural Resources, this an excellent opportunity to reimagine the site and reflect on what provides greater community benefits for the neighborhood and City. The advantages of adaptive reuse versus demolition with fast food drive-throughs are consistent with several elements, goals, and policies delineated in the Sacramento 2040 General Plan. In the spirit of optimism, good faith, and encouragement of problem solving / positive change-oriented thinking, we are sharing some ideas below.

We have reviewed all publicly available documents relating to the historic eligibility of 1950 Arden Way. The site is a former Home Savings and Loan bank designed by renowned artist/designer Millard Sheets, engineered by architect Frank Homolka & Associates, and includes mosaics and a mural designed by Sheets that were fabricated by his talented assistants and valued artisans, Susan Hertel and Denis O'Connor. We conducted intensive and independent research. Our findings and conclusions wholeheartedly concur with the City of Sacramento Preservation Director and staff; City of Sacramento Preservation Commissioners, who unanimously voted in favor of landmarking; internationally recognized Millard Sheets expert historian and professor Adam Arenson; historian and professor Robin Dattel; our colleagues at Preservation Sacramento and Vintage Arden Arcade; and dozens of people who have written letters of support thus far in favor of landmarking. We are happy to meet with you in person to underscore the relevant elements, policies, and goals of the 2040 General Plan and identify each of the shortcomings of the owners' / owners' representatives' analyses.

Below is a short list of spontaneously crowdsourced ideas. This list is not intended to be final. Some of the suggestions are relatively common among adaptive reuse; others are ambitious. We are sharing these ideas to promote further discussion and brainstorming:

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to promoting, preserving and protecting modern art, architecture and design in the Sacramento region.

Gretchen Steinberg

SacMod.org

Civic:

Library (books, audio-visual, things)
Community Center with meeting spaces
Archive
Cultural Center

Arts & Recreation:

Museum
Art Gallery / Studios / Exhibit Space
Small Performing Arts Venue (music; theater; etc.)
Small Event Rental Center
Art / Craft / Maker Workshop Space with equipment and facilities
Dance Studios
Plant Nursery

Education & Tech:

Local University / Extension Satellite Site
Trade school
Charter/private school
Job Center
Innovation Hub
Demonstration Lab

Health:

Clinic (Medical / Dental / Psychology / Other)
Rehabilitation Center
Care Facility
Hospice Center
Physical Therapy Center
Fitness Center
Spa
Veterinarian / Animal Hospital

Food:

Co-op
Grocery Store(s) / Market(s)
Permanent Indoor Public Market with additional outdoor Farmer's Markets
Restaurant(s) (minus drive-throughs)
Fresh Food Distribution Center
Commercial Kitchen
Culinary Arts Center
Food Truck Hub

Housing & Hospitality:

Boutique Hotel
Live / Work Collective for Creatives
Specialty Temporary Shelter
Apartments / Condominiums
Warming and Cooling Center
Retreat Space

Infrastructure:

Communications (radio; television; etc)
Data Center

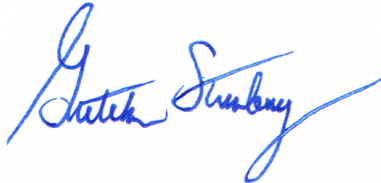
Call Center
Safety Center
Solar Array with EV Charging Stations (parking lot)

Traditional / Other:

Retail
Law Offices
Mediation Center
Financial Center
Business Center
Real Estate Services (Realtors; Lenders; Title Company)
Headquarters (Public / Private / Joint Venture)
Co-working Space

Of note, it is our understanding that a charter school contacted Community Development staff to conduct an inquiry regarding the building/site once this issue was reported by local media. We hope every effort will be made to encourage and accommodate any adaptive reuse requests. The artwork, craftsmanship, and quality building materials at 1950 Arden Way are exemplary, and the amount of embodied energy it represents is huge. Demolishing and replacing it with disposable stucco drive-through restaurants is wasteful—and demonstrates a lack of vision for the intersection, neighborhood, and the community. This is an opportunity for decision-makers to deliver on their promise and commitment to encourage adaptive reuse for a healthier and more sustainable city and county.

Respectfully submitted,



Gretchen Steinberg, President, SacMod