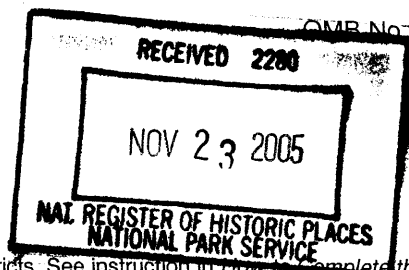


United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1497

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation Building

other names/site number San Joaquin Light & Power Company Building; Pacific Gas and Electric Company Building; International Trade Center; Local Register of Historic Resources #120

2. Location

street & number 1401 Fulton Street N/A not for publication

city or town Fresno N/A vicinity

state California code CA county Fresno code 019 zip code 93721

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

18 NOV 2005
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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
 - See continuation sheet.
- other, explain
 - See continuation sheet.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

[Signature]
Edson H. Beall

1.3.06

San Joaquin Light & Power Company Building
Name of Property

Fresno County, California
County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/business

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/business

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Italian Renaissance Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls BRICK and TERRA COTTA
PLASTER
roof CERAMIC TILE and ASPHALT
other METAL: bronze, cast iron

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation Building
Name of Property

Fresno County, California
County/State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Periods of Significance

1924

Significant Dates

1924

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).
N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Felchlin, Richard F.
Shaw, Raymond
Franklin, Charles H.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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
- # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:
California State University, Fresno, Henry Madden Library, Sanoian Special Collections Library, City of Fresno Planning and Development Department, The Fresno Bee, Editorial Library, Fresno City and County Historical Society, The County of Fresno, Public Library, California History & Genealogy Room

San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation Building
Name of Property

Fresno County, California
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 0.3 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1.	11	250460	4069140	
	Zone	Easting	Northing	
2.				
	Zone	Easting	Northing	
3.				
	Zone	Easting	Northing	
4.				
	Zone	Easting	Northing	=

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christeen Taniguchi (Galvin & Associates) and Barry A. Price (Applied EarthWorks, Inc.)

organization Applied EarthWorks, Inc. date August 1, 2005

street & number 5090 N. Fruit Ave., Suite 101 telephone 310-375-6775

city or town Fresno state CA zip code 93711

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Uptown Investments, LP (Attn: Mr. Cliff Tutelian)

street & number 2300 Tulare Street, Suite 300 telephone 559-266-8000

city or town Fresno state CA zip code 93721

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127, and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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San Joaquin Light and Power Corporation Building
Fresno County, California

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DESCRIPTION

Overall Description

General

The San Joaquin Light and Power Corporation (SJL&P) Building was constructed between 1923 and 1924 in the Italian Renaissance Revival style. This ten-story office building is located at 1401 Fulton Street, in the downtown area of Fresno, California.¹ It sits on a northeast-southwest axis at the west corner of the intersection of Fulton and Tuolumne streets. The principal elevations face northeast onto Fulton Street and southeast onto Tuolumne Street. The elevation facing Tuolumne is 150 feet wide and the side facing Fulton is 75 feet wide; these two elevations are nearly identical. There are two less ornate side elevations, one facing southwest onto an alley, and the other facing northwest towards an adjacent one-story brick commercial building. The nominated building is constructed up to the property lines, and there are no landscape features.

The building has a full basement. The lobby is accessed from Fulton Street. There is also a first floor display room located at the Tuolumne Street side of the building. The second to ninth stories are office spaces, while the tenth floor features a ballroom, library, and cafeteria/kitchen.

The Fulton Mall is located directly southeast of the nominated building. Originally part of Fulton Street, this outdoor pedestrian mall opened to national acclaim in 1964 as one of the first efforts to revitalize an urban downtown and reverse inner city decline. The Mall features tree-lined pedestrian walkways, fountains, and public art along six blocks featuring numerous landmark buildings. The nominated building anchors the north end of the Mall. There are two 1920s-era Spanish Colonial Revival/Churriguesque style movie theaters nearby: Warner's Theatre across the street to the northeast and the Wilson Theater to the northwest.

Exterior

The Italian Renaissance Revival style SJL&P Building has two symmetrical principal elevations with a rectangular plan. The building is 235 feet tall from the sidewalk level to the top of the towers and has a reinforced steel framing system clad with reinforced concrete. The two principal elevations are vertically divided into three sections based on the classical form. The first and second floors make up the "base," the third to seventh floors are the "shaft" and the eighth to tenth floors (including the roof) are the "capital." The base and capital sections are clad with terra cotta made to mimic the appearance of granite. The shaft is clad mainly with brick, with terra cotta trim.

The first and second floor (base) exterior walls are clad with terra cotta made to simulate the appearance of ashlar granite blocks, establishing a rusticated appearance with its deliberately conspicuous joints.

There are entrances at either end of the Tuolumne Street elevation and both ends of the Fulton Street elevation. Three of these entrances lead into the display room, while the entrance at the northwest end of the Fulton Street elevation leads into the lobby. There is one set of original double doors at the southwest entrance facing Tuolumne Street; this entrance also retains its original cast iron security gates. The other three entrances have non-original metal and glass double doors apparently installed in the 1980s. A pointed arch surrounds each entrance. Within each arch is a cartouche, with cascading thick ribbons. A row of dentils are located above. The lunette within each arch has a circular bronze medallion cast with the letters "San Joaquin Power" and the image of a transmission line. In turn, there is a rectangular panel inset above the entrance arches. Each panel is symmetrical with typical classical details such as a rosette, fruit and ribbon swag, acanthus, and ribbons. Original

¹ Fulton Street was called J Street at the time the nominated building was constructed. 1403 Fulton Street is an additional address noted in historic documents, likely referring to the lobby entrance at the northeast-facing primary elevation. 1999 Tuolumne Street is an additional address for the building.

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octagonal tapered bronze light fixtures flank the entrances. The fixtures have acanthus details, and are each topped with a pinecone in the center.

A continuous row of fixed plate glass display windows with metal sashes is located between the entrances at each of the principal elevations; these windows face into what was originally the display room. Suspended bronze canopies shelter both sets of windows. The top outer sections of the canopies are topped with highly ornamental heart and pin drop patterned ironwork cresting. There are regularly spaced rosettes on the side panels of the canopies. Pinecones hang underneath the front of each canopy. Regularly spaced non-original rectangular light fixtures are located underneath the canopies. They appear to have been installed in the 1980s. Above each canopy is a row of ribbon windows, and in turn there are entablatures. The frieze has a vertical wavy pattern, and the band above it has regularly spaced paterae.

The second floor at the principal elevations consists of simple 1/1 light, regularly spaced, wood double hung sash windows with lamb's tongues. Most of the primary elevation windows of the floors above are of the same type and material. The two outer windows at each primary elevation are spaced a little further apart from the rest of the windows and have faux bronze balconies with symmetrical acanthus and rosette details. Interspersed between each window are vertical panels with symmetrical cartouche, medallion, acanthus, and ribbon details. There is an entablature above the second floor windows. The frieze consists of regularly spaced rosettes interspersed with acanthus, with a cable molding border below. The cornice includes a bead-and-reel pattern.

The third to seventh floor (shaft) exterior walls are clad with beige brick. There are nineteen bays at the Tuolumne Street elevation and nine at the Fulton Street elevation. These are called out by a continuous vertical feature between each single window. The outer windows at each elevation, however, are set a little farther apart from the others and are not divided by this vertical feature; casings surround the third floor outer windows, each with an entablature. Balusters are located just below the wood double hung sash windows at the third floor level. Between each floor are rectangular terra cotta panels, with a band below with paterae designs. The entablature above the seventh floor windows consists of a frieze with regularly spaced rosettes, and a cornice that includes an egg and dart pattern.

The exterior walls at the eight to tenth floor (capital) levels are clad entirely with terra cotta features. The eighth and ninth floors are distinguished by a Corinthian order engaged colonnade. The Tuolumne Street elevation has sixteen columns, while the Fulton Street elevation has six columns. Each column has fluted shafts, and is interspersed with wood double hung sash windows and decorative panels bordered below by a band with rosettes. Each colonnade is in turn flanked by pilasters. Both the columns and pilasters have Corinthian order details within the capitals. The outermost windows at each elevation are set a little apart from the others. The eighth floor of these outer windows has a pediment supported by ancones, with dentils in between. The frieze within the entablature has a repeated pattern of double swags interspersed with what appear to be medallions. The cornice above includes dentils as well as an egg and dart pattern.

Balusters and a shallow balcony extend the entire width of the tenth floor at the Tuolumne Street elevation. There is also a row of wood double hung sash windows at the Tuolumne Street elevation. There are no windows at this level of the Fulton Street elevation. Instead, it consists of one large terra cotta panel bordered by a pattern with interspersed swag and rectangular shapes. The windows at this level face into the auditorium. The upper section of the auditorium is located within the building's hipped roof.

The hipped roof is made of concrete slabs clad with Spanish clay tiles. There are also flat areas of the roof that are clad with composite material. There is a crocket, likely made of terra cotta or cast iron, at each of the four corners. At the center of the roof is a rectangular metal sign, 120 feet long and 15 feet high, topped with a horizontal band with circular openings which in turn is topped with regularly spaced finials with swag details. The sign is currently mounted on either side with the letters reading "Trade Center." This originally read "San Joaquin Power" (original plans and conceptual drawings indicated "San Joaquin Light & Power"), and the letters "P. G. and E." were later mounted. The original "San Joaquin Power" sign was described as a huge electric sign with five-

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foot-tall flashing letters. Scars from these earlier letters are evident on the sign. The metal sign is flanked by cartouches on either side. They consist of a cabochon with a scroll and a scallop shell above. Each cartouche is in turn flanked by two squat rectangular fluted shafts topped with fruit and flower clusters interspersed with ribbons. Original radio towers rise from the top of the cartouches, with cross bracing throughout the structures. Today there are also satellite dishes as well as cellular antennae mounted onto the towers. In addition to the electric sign, the entire building was originally lighted with multi-colored floodlights with 46 different variations.

The two side elevations face northwest and southwest. Unlike the two principal elevations, these exterior walls are simply clad with plaster, punctuated by regularly spaced window openings and one door at the southwest elevation. There are a few sporadic windows at the tenth floor level at these elevations. The double hung window sashes at these elevations are metal, and the lights are embedded with chicken wire. The first floor windows at the southwest elevation have metal bars. A few of these windows have been boarded over. There is also a fire escape located at this elevation.

Interior

The building has a below grade full basement where there are electrical and heating systems, as well as storage areas. The original plans indicate that the boiler room, telephone room, a fireproof vault, and a fixture shop were some of the uses.

The first floor lobby is accessed from a set of double doors located at the northwest end of the Fulton Street elevation. The walls and floors are clad entirely with marble. The off-white marble on the walls are clad to resemble ashlar stone; the baseboard is distinguished by a darker green marble. The entablature, located just below the ceiling, consists of a plain frieze and a cornice with dentil details. There are three non-original beveled glass chandeliers in this space.² There was originally a consumer department with offices located to the southwest off of the lobby area, which in turn led to a counter space located in the display room. These offices were originally lighted with a light court located at the second floor level; these have since been enclosed, and equipment has since been installed. A bronze building directory is mounted on the wall facing the entrance into the lobby; it consists of classical details such as fluted pilasters, and acanthus and scallop shells. Three banks of elevators are located in the space behind the directory. The elevator cars are original, but the interiors were replaced in the 1980s or 1990s. There is a non-original circa 1980s wood security desk located at the east corner of the lobby.

The first floor display room is a large open rectangular space with a mezzanine at the southwest section accessed by a set of wrought iron stairs with quatrefoil, rosette, and acanthus details. The mezzanine has a railing grille of the same pattern as those of the stairs, and looks over the display room. The floors and baseboards of this room are clad with marble, and the walls are of cast stone blocks. There are four free standing octagonal columns within the larger space at the northeast section, and two identical columns at the mezzanine that extend up to the mezzanine level. These columns are partially fluted and have shield details. There are also about an equal number of engaged columns at the northwest end of the room. The bronze doors and window surrounds leading to the street at the east corner are original, as is the interior entrance at the northwest end leading into the lobby. These entrances have classical details such as rosettes and cartouches. The plaster ceiling has rectangular panels extending between each column; these panels have urn designs bordered with Vitruvian wave patterns. The walls have cornice details consisting of dentils, bead-and-reel, and acanthus. There are fourteen non-original chandeliers in this room, identical to those currently in the lobby. A consumers department with marble counters and linotile floor originally was located at the northwest side of the room. These features have since been removed, and a small stage was recently added in its place. A cigar stand and stock room was originally located at the north corner of the room, facing onto the lobby. This has been removed.

² Three original metal and glass hanging light fixtures that may have come from the lobby are stored in the basement.

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Offices occupy the second to ninth floors. These floors are generally distinguished by large open spaces surrounded by individual offices located adjacent to the windows. The floors are carpeted. The walls are plaster, although some of the surfaces have been re clad with acoustic tiles. The baseboards are wood. At most of the office floors, the office spaces are separated from the elevator banks via wood partition walls with glass lights. On each of the levels, the original ceilings are covered with acoustic tiles and the original light fixtures have been removed in favor of fluorescent lighting and ceiling fans ranging in date from about the 1940s to the 1980s. The third and fourth floor office spaces were not occupied at the time of this nomination. Of the restrooms located on each of the levels, those at the third and fourth floors were the most intact, with original plan, floor and wall tiles, and plumbing and light fixtures. Some of the restroom fixtures at the tenth floor have been removed, and the other floors that are actively being used have replacement bathroom fixtures. However, the general plan, floor and wall tiles, and mirrors are examples of features that remain intact.

The auditorium, today called the ballroom, is located at the tenth floor. A stage with an elliptical arch marks the southwest end of the auditorium. At the opposite end are motion picture booth openings on the wall near the ceiling. The room has hard wood floors and an elliptical barrel vaulted ceiling that runs the length of the space. The interior walls are of cast stone blocks. This room is distinguished by its decorative plasterwork above the spring level of the barrel vault. There is an entablature at the spring level. It consists of a frieze with a repeated swag pattern, interspersed with a medallion, and surrounded by ribbons. As a continuation of the frieze, nearer the stage are shields with the initials "SJP" (San Joaquin Power) flanking each side. Medallions illustrating an electrical transmission pole also flank the stage. Within the arch of the stage are three additional medallions; the center one also shows a transmission pole; these are interspersed with bands with rosette and acanthus details. Except for original rectangular panels, the ceiling today is clad with acoustic tiles, likely from the 1950s. A library is also located at the northeast end of the tenth floor; it does not have the decorative plasterwork and barrel vaulted ceiling of the auditorium. The cafeteria/kitchen, located at the northwest section, has its original plan, tile floor, tile counter tops, sink, and light fixtures. The elevator banks lead directly into the auditorium lobby, which has walls and floors clad with off white marble panels. Most of the surfaces are of beige colored marble, with the baseboard in a darker green hue.

The Building and the Character Defining Features of the Italian Renaissance Revival Style

The San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation Building was designed in the Italian Renaissance Revival style and completed in 1924. This style was popular in the United States from about the 1890s to the 1930s. Its roots go back to Renaissance Italy during the fifteenth century, when there was a revival of interest in the classical architecture of the Greek and Roman civilizations. From there, the style became popular in other European countries such as France and England. In the United States, Italian architecture inspired the Italianate style, popular during the nineteenth century in the decades before the introduction of the Italian Renaissance Revival style. Unlike Italianate, Italian Renaissance Revival architecture was more authentic and more closely resembled the original architectural form and details. This style became popular in the United States and California not only for commercial buildings but also for other building types such as schools, apartment buildings, public buildings, and hospitals.

The most distinctive character defining features of this architectural style found with the nominated building are the tripartite division of the two principal elevations and the numerous classical architectural details such as pediments, dentils, egg-and-dart molding, and swags. More general features include the symmetrical facades, hipped roof, rusticated ground floor, single-light sashes for the windows, and the colonnade. In addition, the balustrades at the roof and the windows are typical of the Italian Renaissance Revival style. The cartouches above the entrances and the roof sign are found with this architectural style as well.

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Integrity Statement

The SJL&P Building was evaluated against the seven aspects of integrity outlined in National Register of Historic Places Bulletin 15. The seven aspects of integrity include location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The nominated building maintains good to excellent integrity in all areas. It retains its original location and has not been moved. The design, materials, and workmanship have remained highly intact since its original construction. The exterior features such as the brick, terra cotta and plaster wall claddings, windows, bronze light fixtures, bronze canopies, and roof signage and towers are examples of the many significant architectural elements that have remained intact. The physical fabric of the interior has also retained a high level of integrity. Each of the significant floors, the first level with the display room and lobby and the tenth level with the auditorium, has retained its original plan and architectural features. These intact elements include the display room's mezzanine level wrought iron railings, plaster molding, and marble floors and baseboards. The lobby retains its original marble walls and floors, as well as the bronze building directory. The auditorium has retained its original stage, wood floors, and extensive original plasterwork, including medallions and shields that reflect the building's San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation heritage. Although there have been some modifications to the floor plans and physical fabric of the office floors (second to ninth levels), these have remained generally intact. The third and fourth levels have retained their original plan, wood and glass wall partition between the office area and elevator banks, restroom fixtures, and doors. Of the changes, the front of the building was originally designed to be lit at night with multiple colors from floodlights in 46 different variations, and the roof top sign was electric; although there appear to be a few remnants of the floodlight fixtures, they are no longer actively used. In addition, the roof sign is no longer electrified. Other changes include the replacement of three of four original exterior bronze and glass doors, letters on the roof signage, interior light fixtures, and remodeling of the elevator cars. In the display room and lobby, the light fixtures have been replaced, although three of the original fixtures are stored in the basement.

The building was completed in 1924 as the headquarters for the San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation. It was erected on J Street, today known as Fulton Street, which became Fresno's main commercial corridor with the establishment of the SJL&P building, Wilson Theater (1926), Warner's Theatre (1929), and other smaller commercial buildings in the immediate area. The nominated building serves as the northwest anchor of this main street. The nearest tall and visually significant building is the Mattei Building (1922), located about 800 feet away. Erected contemporaneously to the SJL&P Building, these and other contemporary commercial buildings enhance the setting, feeling, and association of the nominated building. Although the setting and feeling changed somewhat when Fulton Street was converted to an outdoor pedestrian mall in 1964, the association with other significant buildings and the commercial use and feeling of the area remain intact. At around that same time, a circa 1960s Long's Drug Store and its associated parking lot were built directly across the street to the southeast.

In summary, the San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation Building maintains good to excellent integrity.

Condition Statement

The building is currently occupied and maintained. The exterior terra cotta and brick surfaces, as well as bronze elements such as the canopies and light fixtures, show patina but are in stable condition. There is water damage, however, to the currently unoccupied third, fourth, and tenth (auditorium) floors. This is evidenced by stained and warped ceiling plaster and acoustic tiles. The overall condition of the San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation Building is good.

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SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation had its beginnings in 1895 and then expanded to serve the rapidly growing light and power needs of the San Joaquin Valley. The construction of the nominated building in 1923-1924 is symbolic of the prestige and significance the company had attained. Also at this time, the City of Fresno had grown from a small town to a major city. A building boom during the 1910s and 1920s resulted in construction of a sizeable number of significant buildings such as the SJL&P building. This building was and still remains a significant visual landmark in the city, and is an excellent example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style. In addition, it was constructed by R. F. Felchlin Co., an important local architectural-engineering-construction firm shown to have produced the works of a master.

Therefore, this building is being nominated for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C at the local level of significance. The nominated building is eligible under Criterion C because it is an excellent example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style and is the work of a master, the R. F. Felchlin Co., a significant Fresno-based architectural, engineering, and building firm.

Historic Context

The San Joaquin Light and Power Company provided electricity to seven San Joaquin Valley counties³ and also supplied the electrical current distributed by the Midland Counties Public Service Corporation in Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara Counties.⁴ SJL&P had its beginnings on April 1, 1895, as the San Joaquin Electric Company when the company built Powerhouse No. 1 on the San Joaquin River 37 miles away from Fresno. The San Joaquin Electric Company was able to successfully transfer power via transmission lines.⁵ However, they declared bankruptcy in 1899. William C. Kerckhoff and A. C. Balch purchased the company in 1902. They also owned other smaller utility companies. The San Joaquin Electric Company was renamed and incorporated as the San Joaquin Power Company on May 13, 1905. Albert G. Wishon was named manager.⁶ The company became the San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation in 1910. It was to play an important role in supplying electricity to Fresno and the rest of the San Joaquin Valley, where large areas were being farmed and towns were being established and growing in response to the booming agricultural industry. The same transmission lines brought electricity to the towns and also provided energy for agricultural irrigation pumps. SJL&P played a crucial role in the growth of the San Joaquin Valley as the leading agricultural force in California. By 1920, SJL&P was an established and significant public utility, with 11 powerhouses and a vast array of transmission lines throughout the Valley.⁷

As the SJL&P service area spread throughout the San Joaquin Valley, its office spaces could no longer meet the company's needs. Offices at that time were scattered throughout Fresno at seven different locations. *The Fresno Republican* newspaper reported in 1922 that, "At present the San Joaquin organization is crowded into the basement, main floor and upper floor of a former lodging house. Part of its engineering offices are located in the new garage at First and Fresno, while additional engineers are housed in the old Sperry barn building on O Street,

³ SJL&P serviced Fresno, Kings, Kern, Madera, Merced, and Tulare counties in California's Great Central Valley. Fresno and Bakersfield are two of the large cities in the San Joaquin Valley service area.

⁴ "With the Vision of a Day to Come: San Joaquin Power Planning its Development to Provide Ample Power to Meet the Ever Increasing Demands of a Growing Population, New Farms and Industries," *San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation: Annual Report to Stockholders. Year Book - 1923*, 1923, 5.

⁵ Catherine M. Rehart, *The Heartland's Heritage: An Illustrated History of Fresno County*, Carlsbad, California: Heritage Media Corp., c2000, 106.

⁶ Catherine Morison Rehart, *The Valley's Legends & Legacies*, "Mr. Wishon's Building," Fresno, California: Word Dancer Press, 1996, 261.

⁷ Charles M. Coleman, P. G. and E.: *The Centennial Story of Pacific Gas and Electric Company, 1852-1952*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., c1952, 199.

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between Fresno and Mariposa. The stock and publicity departments are in offices in the Hughes block."⁸ With the completion of the new SJL&P Building in 1924, about 300 employees in the executive, finance, research, operating, power development, legal, supplies, service and sales, personnel, and medical departments of the SJL&P were brought together under one roof.⁹

In addition to the corporate offices of SJL&P, a portion of the newly constructed building also housed the Midland Counties Public Service Corporation and the Valley Electrical Supply Company.¹⁰ The latter occupied part of the first floor, using the display room to showcase their electrical appliances. As SJL&P grew, however, the building eventually became fully occupied by them. The auditorium and library were located at the tenth floor; today, this is known as the ballroom. One of the significant spaces of the building, it was used for lectures and employee functions.

The SJL&P Building was erected during the building boom of the 1910s and 1920s, when Fresno was prosperous and growing rapidly. The agricultural industry was booming, thanks in large part to the SJL&P, for they provided the required power via their transmission lines. Raisins were an important industry, particularly for Fresno County. Fresno grew from a small town to a city with a significant number of new high-rise buildings. The Hotel Fresno (1913), Helm Building (1914), Bank of Italy Building (1917), and Mason Building (1918) were built in the 1910s, while the Mattei Building (1922), T. W. Patterson Building (1922), Pacific Southwest Building (1923), SJL&P Building (1924), and Radin-Kamp Department Store (1924) are examples of buildings constructed in the 1920s. Except for the Radin-Kamp Department Store, these buildings are eight stories or taller. The Pacific Southwest Building is the tallest at fifteen stories with a tower. These buildings define the Fresno skyline, which did not change at all until the 1960s. It still remains very similar today to its appearance following the 1910s and 1920s boom.

When ground was broken for the SJL&P Building with an elaborate ceremony on September 27, 1922, *The Fresno Bee* called it "Fresno's Champion Skyscraper."¹¹ A monumental anchor to the northeast end of Fulton Street, the building is symbolic of the culmination of SJL&P's success in distributing hydroelectric power to the San Joaquin Valley. Al C. Joy, the publicity manager for SJL&P, states "This new building has been a dream of the directors for years. It will be a beautiful monument to their achievements."¹² The progress of planning and building the structure was significant to the city, as evidenced by regular front-page articles in *The Fresno Bee* and *The Fresno Republican*. The building was distinctive in that, during its early years, it was brilliantly illuminated with colored floodlights, making it highly visible throughout the city. 46 different varieties of colors were arranged to create striking effects.¹³ They were supposedly the brightest illumination in the Pacific southwest.¹⁴ In addition, the rooftop sign with the company name was lit. This was a monumental and significant building for the city.

The R. F. Felchlin Co. was the architect, engineer, and builder of the SJL&P Building. Established in 1912, the firm was headed by engineer Richard Ferdinand Felchlin. He was born in Stockton, California, and studied civil engineering at the University of California. He originally came to Fresno to help with the construction of the old Civic Auditorium. Raymond Shaw, an architect, joined the firm in 1917 to become chief architect. Shaw had studied architecture at Stanford University and worked in George Kelham's San Francisco Architectural Club atelier. Kelham had been educated at Harvard University and the acclaimed l'Ecole des Beaux Arts. Architect Charles H. Franklin began working for Felchlin when the firm began, but did not become a licensed architect until 1917.¹⁵ Franklin had previously apprenticed with the Reid Brothers in San Francisco, the firm responsible for the

⁸ E. W. Douglas, "Millions for New Buildings: J Street Properties in Many Deals," *The Fresno Republican*, 22 April, 1922, 13.

⁹ "New Ten Story Building Will be Ready Soon: Power Company Tower Interior Work Started," *The Fresno Morning Republican*, 26 August 1923, 1.

¹⁰ "New Ten Story Building Will be Ready Soon: Power Company Tower Interior Work Started," op. cit., 1.

¹¹ "Work Starts on City's New Skyscraper," *The Fresno Republican*, 28 September 1922, 1.

¹² "New Building to Loom High Above Skyline. San Joaquin Light and Power Corporation Plans Edifice. Structure Will Tower 183 Feet into Air in 10 Stories," *The Fresno Republican*, 15 September 1922, 9.

¹³ "To Be Fresno's Champion Skyscraper," *The Fresno Republican*, 15 September 1922, 9.

¹⁴ "Work Starts on City's New Skyscraper," op. cit., 1.

¹⁵ "Richard F. Felchlin," <http://historicfresno.org/bio/felchlin.htm>, 1.

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well-known Hotel Del Coronado in Coronado, California.¹⁶

The R. F. Felchlin Co. had their offices in the Bank of Italy Building, one of the buildings they designed. In 1925, the name changed to Felchlin, Shaw and Franklin, and the partnership broke up in 1930. R. F. Felchlin Co. designed many of Fresno's most significant buildings, including the Bank of Italy Building (1917), Patterson Building (1922), Pacific Southwest Building (1923), and Radin-Kamp Department Store (1924). It is also likely that they were the engineer and/or builder for these buildings. In addition, the R. F. Felchlin Co. built the Hotel Californian (1923). Thus, this firm and their resulting works were critical for creating the Fresno skyline. All five other Felchlin buildings, along with the SJL&P Building, are included on Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources. The Hotel Californian and the Bank of Italy Building also are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

By 1930, SJL&P had merged with the Great Western Power Company, and both became part of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). The SJL&P name and identity finally merged completely into the parent PG&E Company in 1939. The name on the roof sign, however, did not change to PG&E until well after World War II. PG&E vacated the nominated building and moved into another building in Fresno in 1987. Not only had the utility company outgrown the building, but it also concluded that it was not cost effective to remodel the building to meet new earthquake and building codes.¹⁷

The SJL&P Building is a highly significant building in Fresno, both as a visual architectural landmark for the City and as an excellent example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style. The nominated building was judged eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in a local historic resources inventory conducted in 1978. The California SHPO and Federal Communications Commission also joined in a consensus determination of eligibility of the building in 2001.

Criterion C Eligibility

The SJL&P Building is eligible under Criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction and represents the work of a master. It was designed in the Italian Renaissance Revival style and completed in 1924. The City of Fresno grew rapidly during the 1910s and 1920s, with Fulton Street (today Fulton Mall) as the downtown core. This was a time when the Italian Renaissance Revival, Beaux Arts, and other classically based architectural styles were popular in the United States for office, commercial, institutional, and governmental buildings. Fresno is distinguished by having a high number of significant buildings in these architectural styles. Buildings such as the Bank of Italy, T. W. Patterson, and Pacific Southwest helped to establish the City's urban landscape, which remains essentially unchanged today. The monumental SJL&P Building is especially distinctive as it anchors the northeast end of Fulton Street.

The nominated building is a well-designed and executed example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style. The most distinctive character defining features of this style found with the building are the tripartite division of the two principal elevations and the numerous classical architectural details such as pediments, dentils, egg-and-dart molding, and swags. Other features of the style include the symmetrical facades, hipped roof, rusticated ground floor, single-light sashes for the windows, and the colonnade. In addition, the use of balustrades at the roof and the windows are representative of the Italian Renaissance Revival style. Cartouches, located above the entrances and the roof sign, are also typical. The SJL&P building retains a high level of architectural integrity and is an excellent example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style applied to a tall office building (by elongating the shaft).

In addition, the Fresno-based architectural, engineering, and building firm of R. F. Felchlin Co. served as the architect, engineer, and builder for the nominated building. This company produced the works of masters, as reflected by the nominated building and their other important buildings in the City of Fresno. The SJL&P Building

¹⁶ "Charles H. Franklin," <http://historicfresno.org/bio/franklin.htm>, 1.

¹⁷ Krause, Audrie, "PG&E Will Vacate Building on Fulton," *The Fresno Bee*, February 1987, A1.

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was one of several designed by this firm that helped to define the Fresno skyline in the 1910s and 1920s, which remained essentially unchanged until the 1960s.¹⁸ R. F. Felchlin was responsible for at least six of the significant and monumental buildings erected in downtown Fresno at this time. In addition to the SJL&P Building, they designed and built the Bank of Italy Building, T. W. Patterson Building, Pacific Southwest Building, and Radin-Kamp Department Store. They also built the Hotel Californian, which was designed by the noted architect H. Rafael Lake. Each of these buildings has been listed on the Local Register of Historic Resources, and the Bank of Italy Building and Hotel Californian are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Not only did the R. F. Felchlin Co. help to define the city's skyline and identity, but they created well-designed and executed office and commercial buildings that gave Fresno architectural distinction. In particular, Shaw, who had joined the R. F. Felchlin Co. in 1917, had worked under George Kelham. Kelham was a master who had trained at the noted l'Ecole des Beaux Arts and designed San Francisco landmarks such as the Old Main Library (1916) and the old Federal Reserve (1924), as well as Powell Library (1929) on the University of California, Los Angeles campus. Shaw was the chief architect at R. F. Felchlin Co. It was the work of a master such as R. F. Felchlin Co., in particular Shaw, which created the well-proportioned and finely designed SJL&P Building.

¹⁸ Charles W. Clough, *Fresno County in the 20th Century From 1900 to the 1980s*, ed. Bobbye Sisk Temple, vol. 2. Fresno, California: Panorama West books, 1986, 50.

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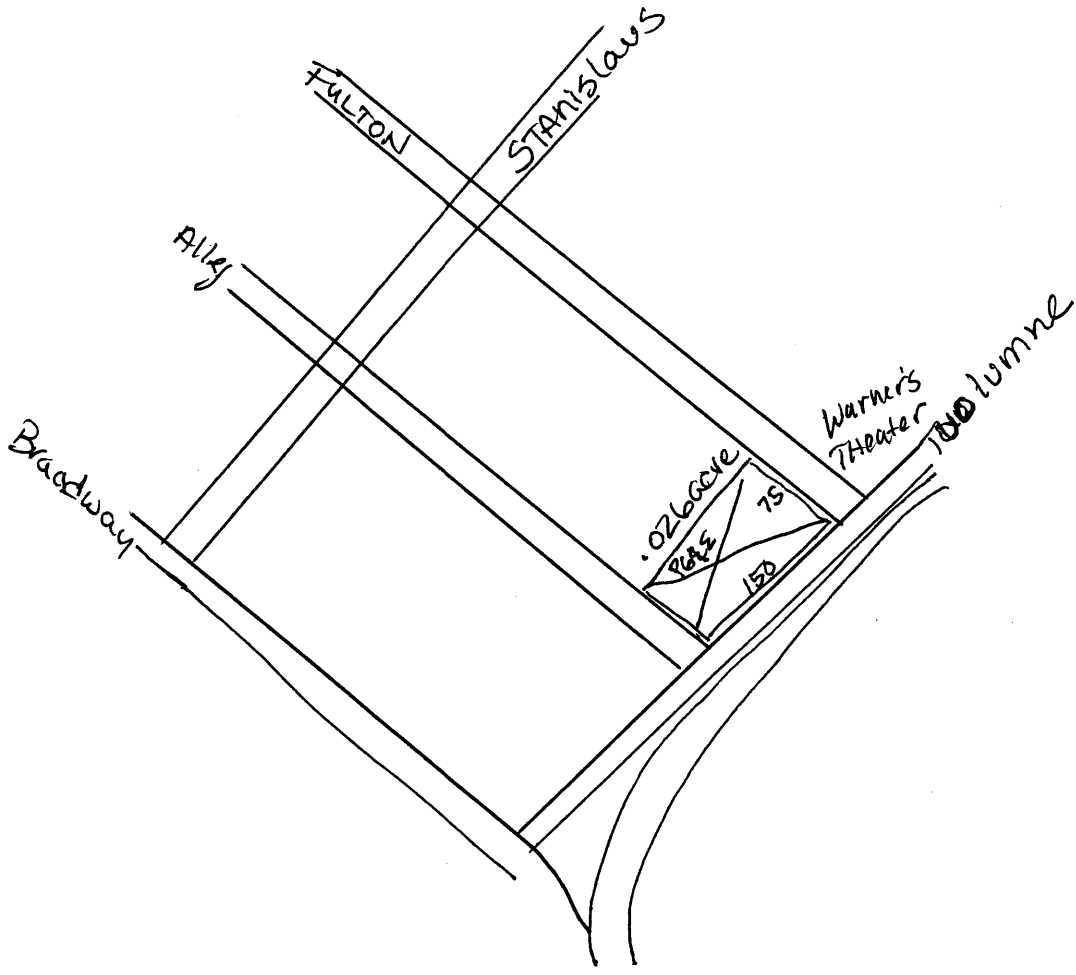
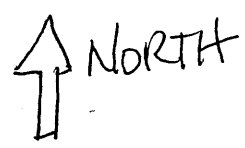
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

This building stands at 1401 Fulton Street on a 11,250 square foot parcel located at the west corner of Fulton (originally J Street) and Tuolumne Street in Fresno, California. It sits on an estimated 0.3 acres of land with the APN 466-202-05. The building is 75 feet at the northeast facing Fulton Street elevation and 150 feet at the southeast facing Tuolumne Street elevation. There is an alley and a parking lot located to the southwest, and an adjacent one-story brick commercial building to the northwest.

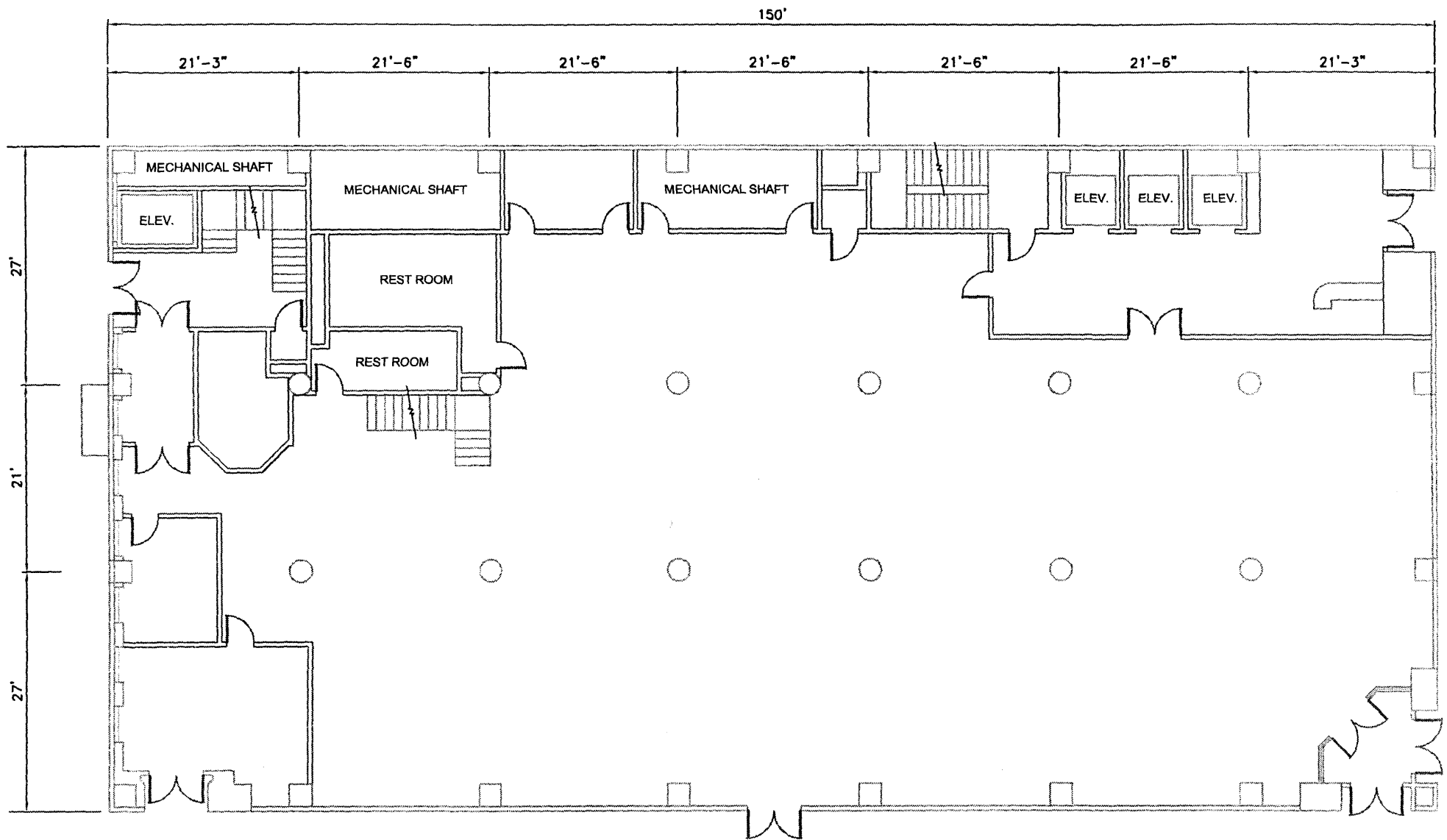
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The property's historic and current boundaries are the same.

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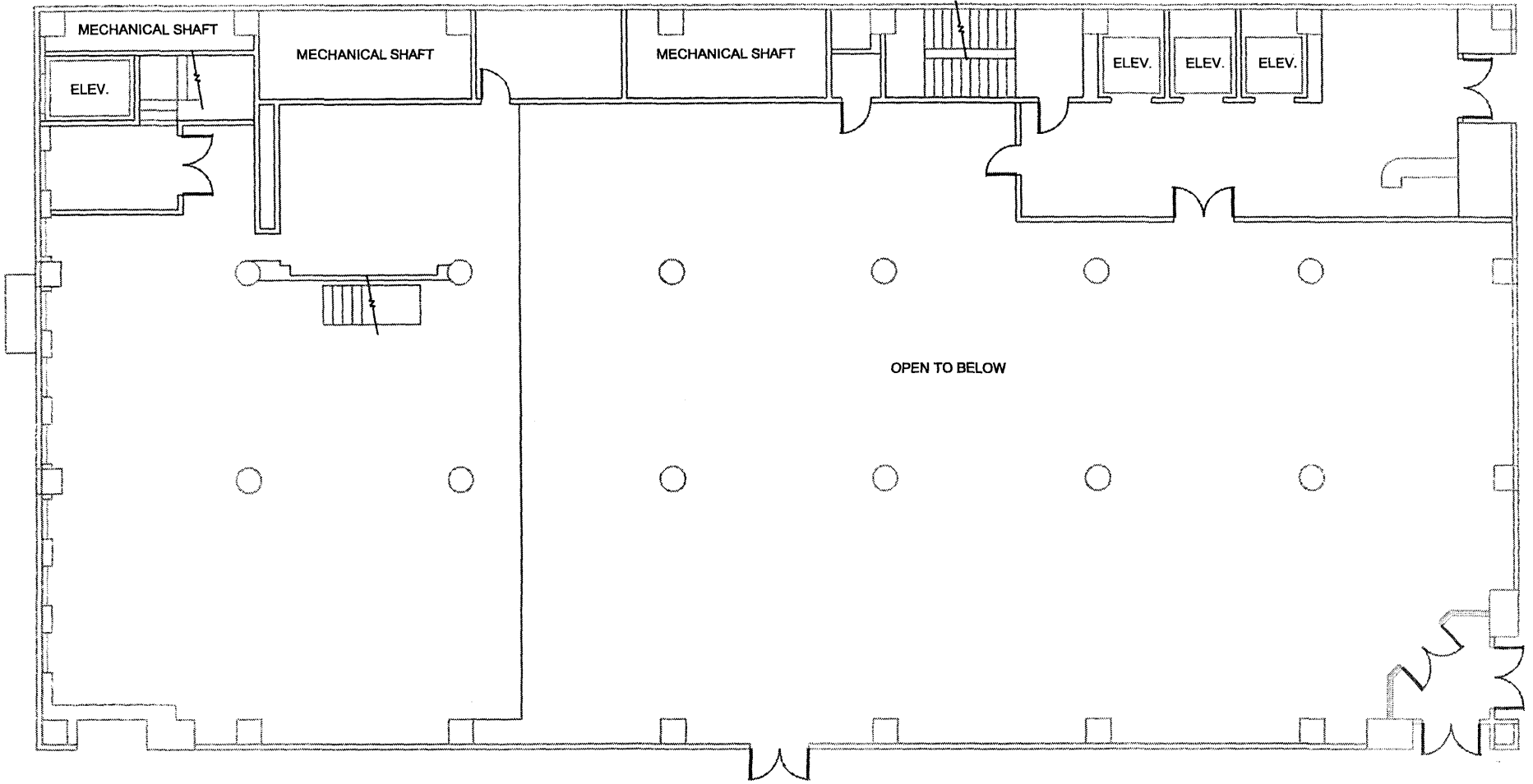
Local SKetch Map. 1999 TULUMNE
San Joaquin Light & Power Co. (1401 FULTON)



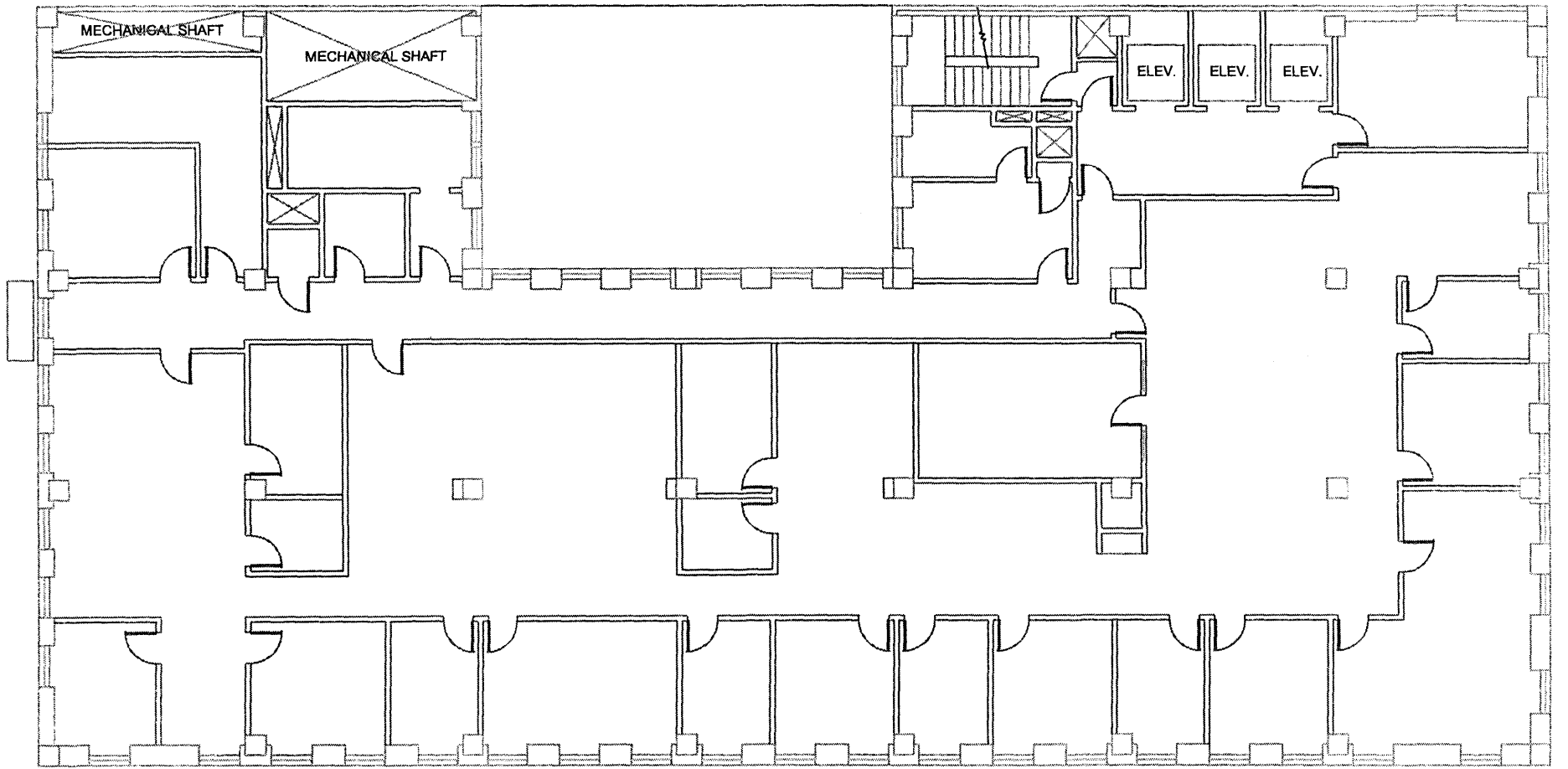
1st FLOOR

TRADE CENTER BUILDING

van Jaarguin Light & Power Corporation Building
 Fresno County, California



1st FLOOR - Mezzanine Level
TRADE CENTER BUILDING



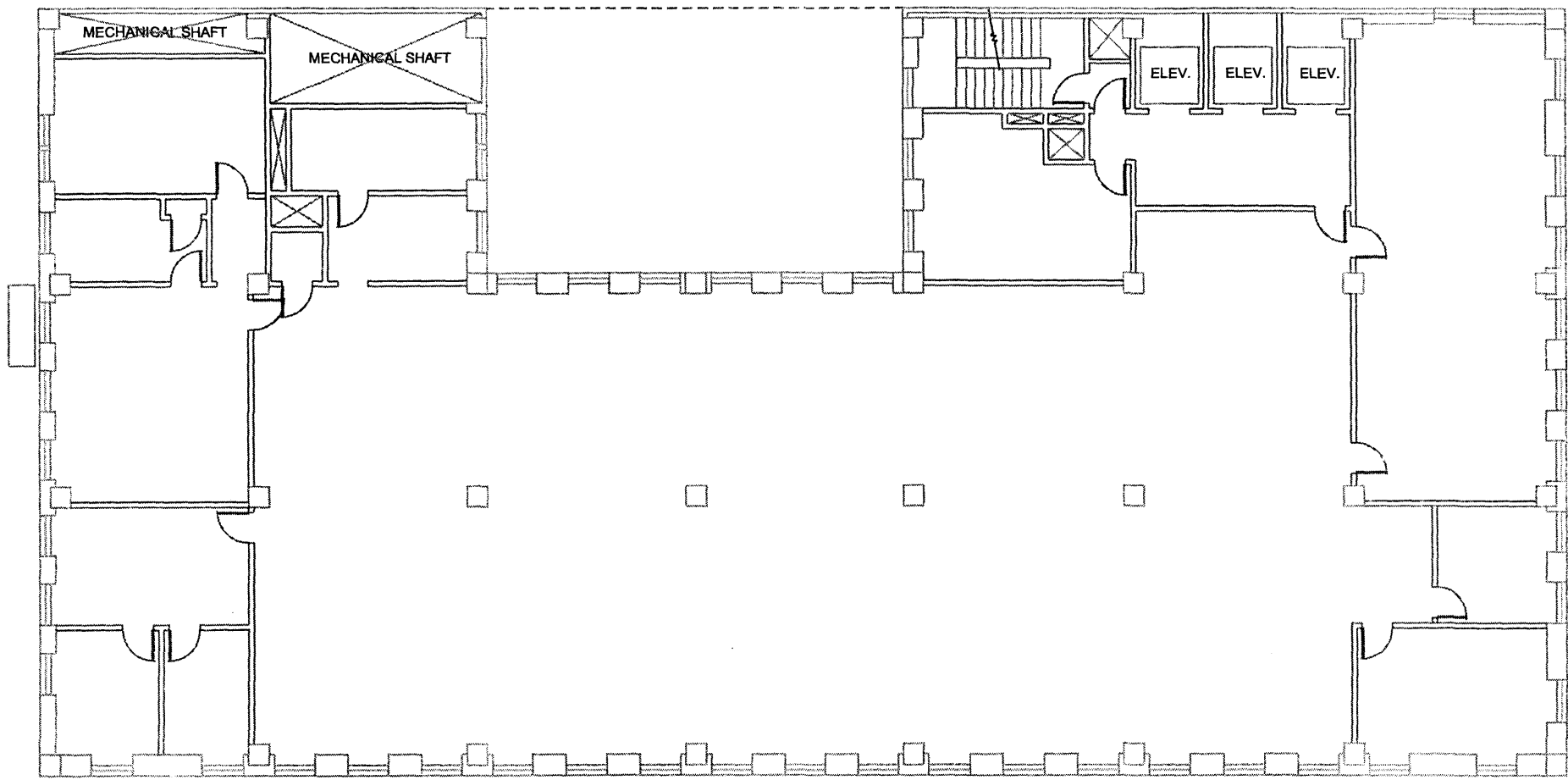
2nd FLOOR
TRADE CENTER BUILDING

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Fresno County, California

San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation Building

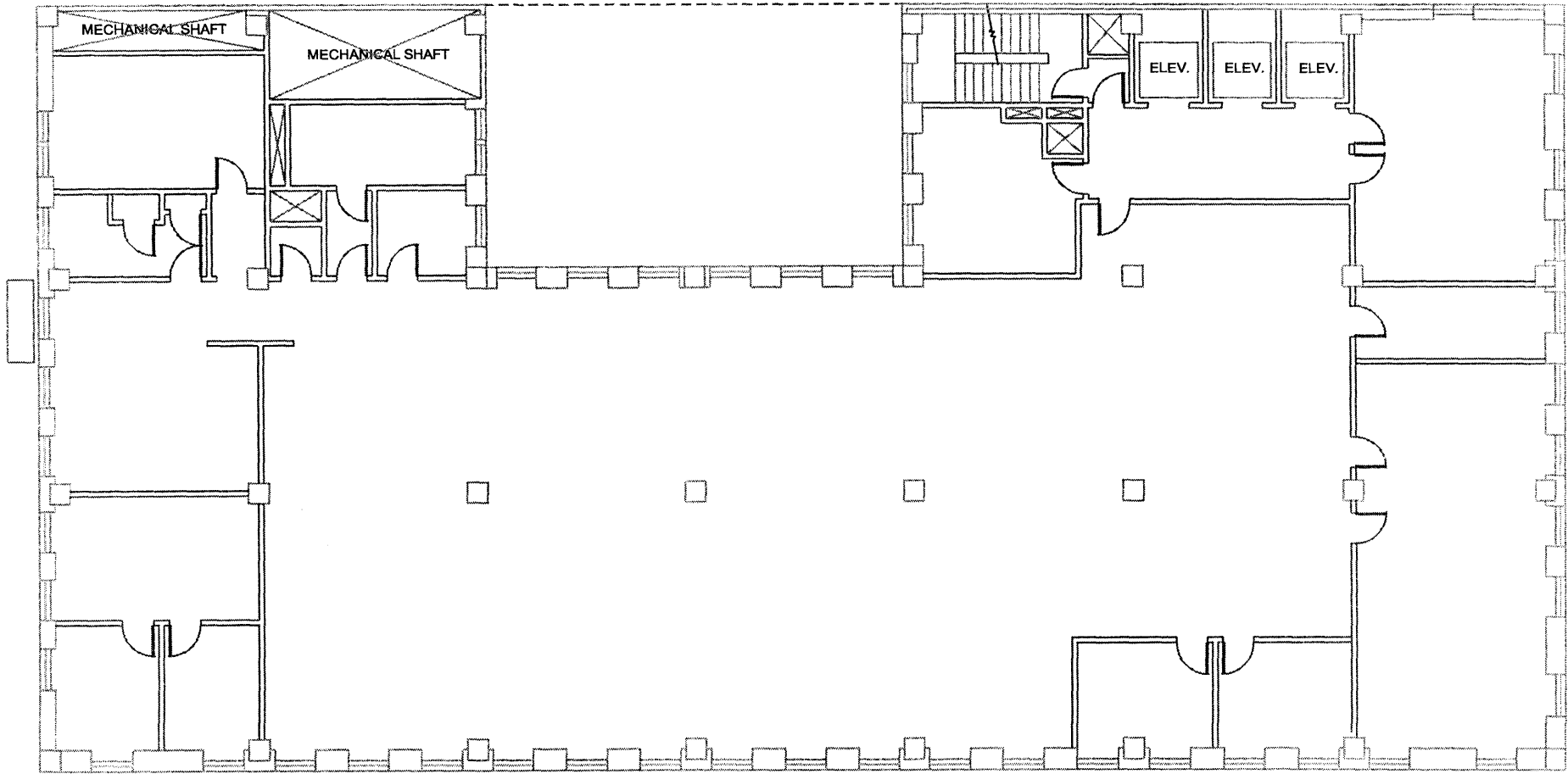
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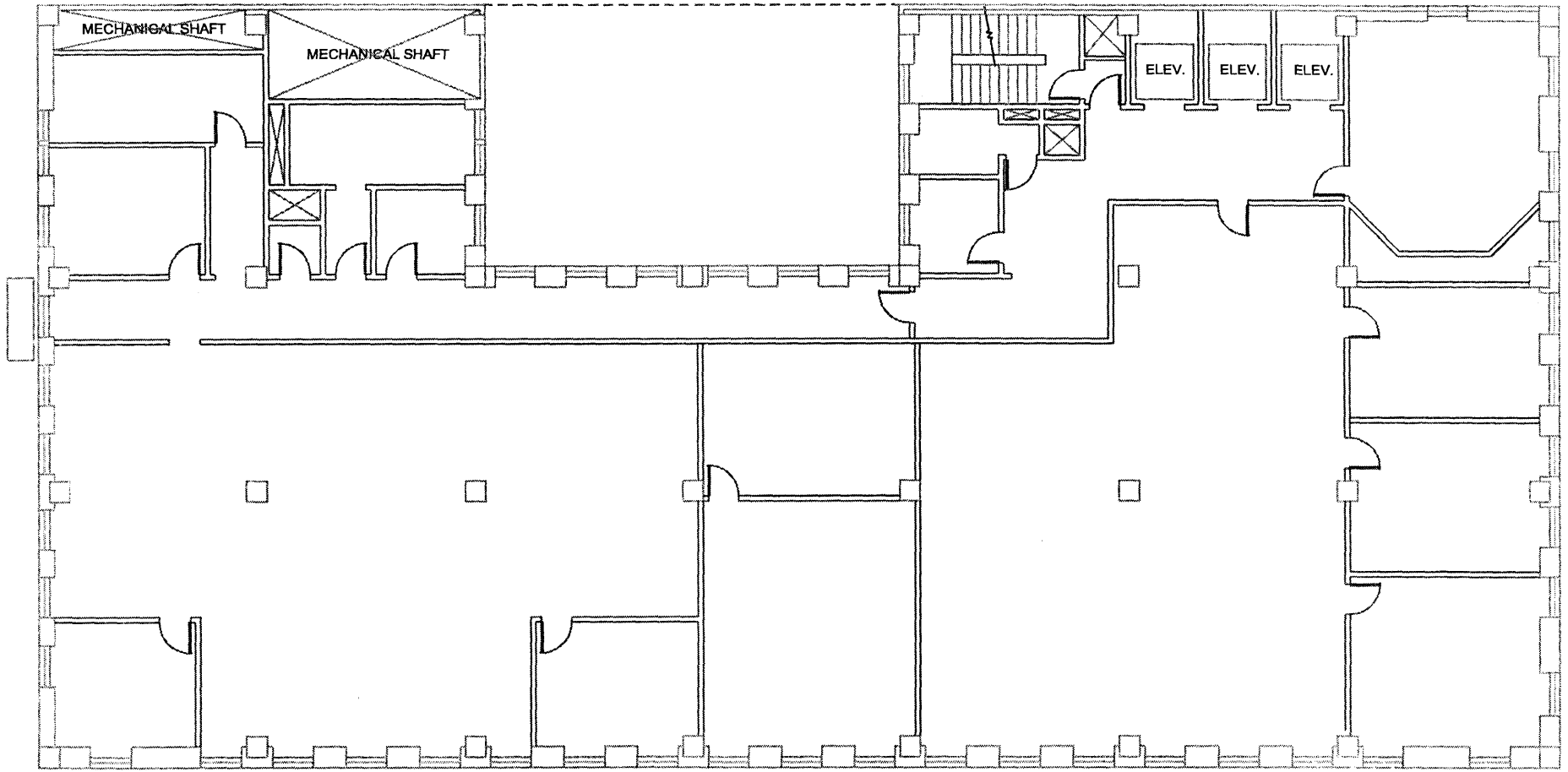
3rd FLOOR
TRADE CENTER BUILDING

San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation Building

Tresno County, California



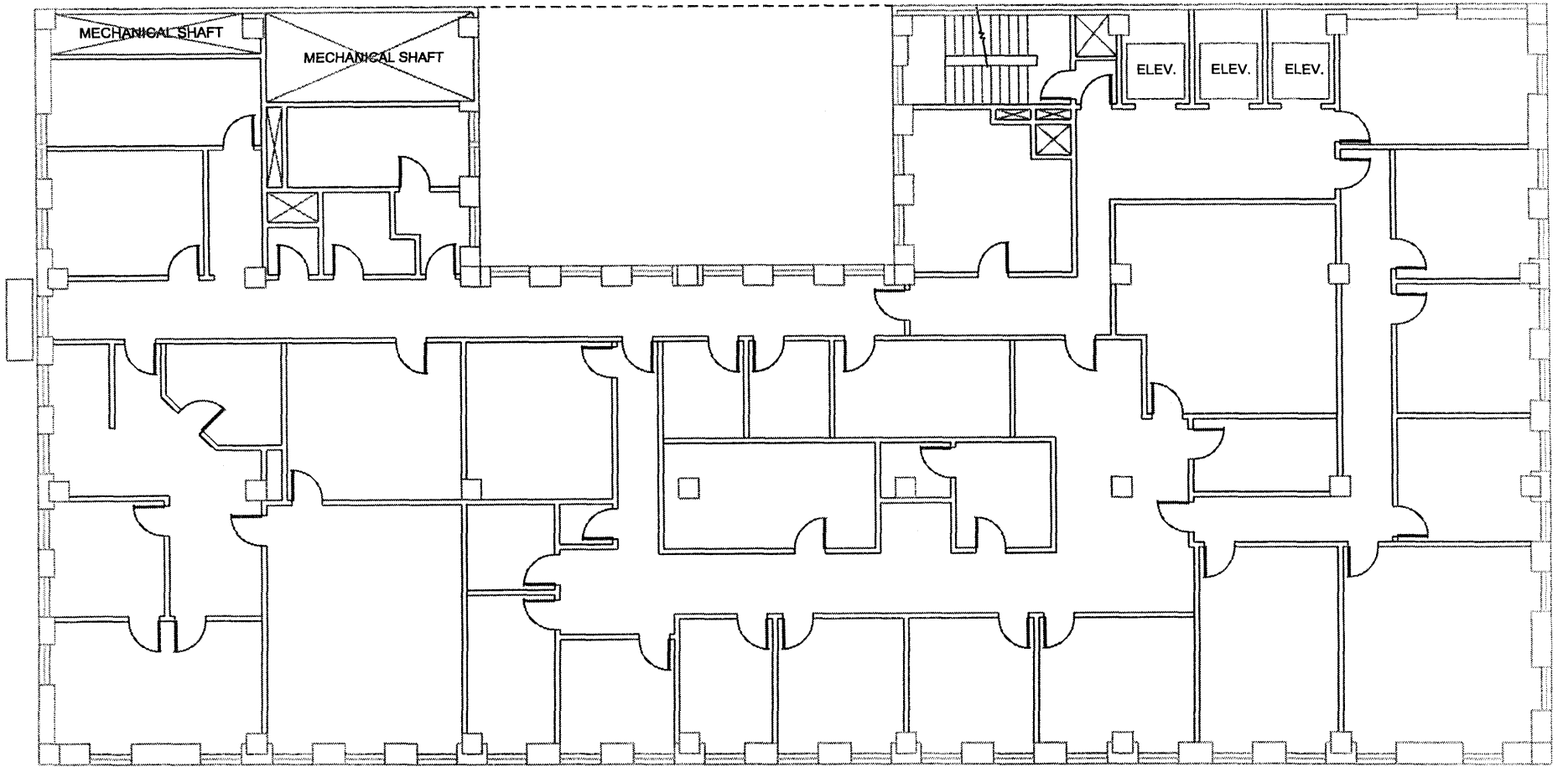
4th FLOOR
TRADE CENTER BUILDING



5th FLOOR
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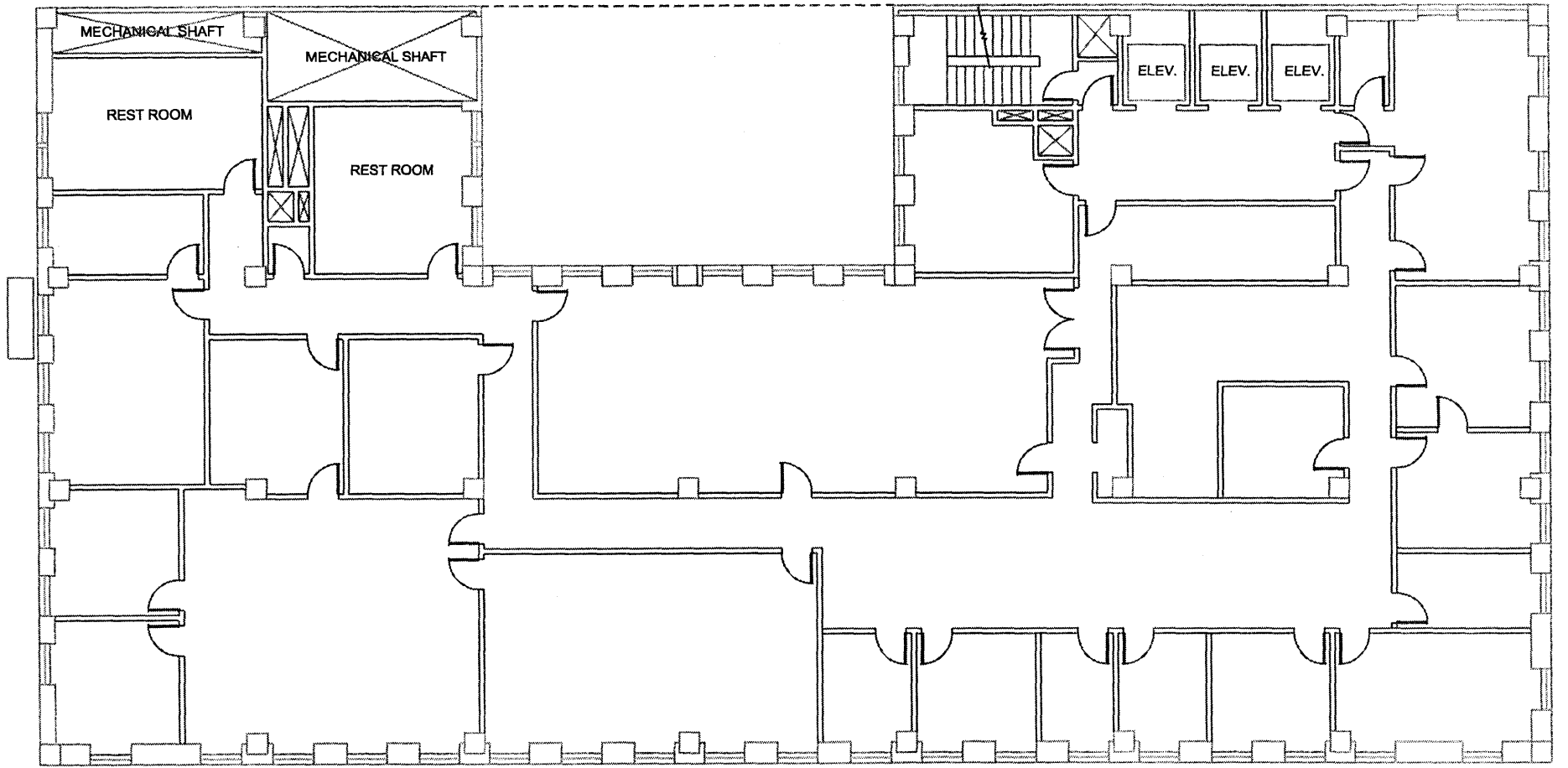
San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation Building

Tresno Country, California



6th FLOOR
TRADE CENTER BUILDING

San Joaquin Light & Power Corporation Building
Tresno County, California



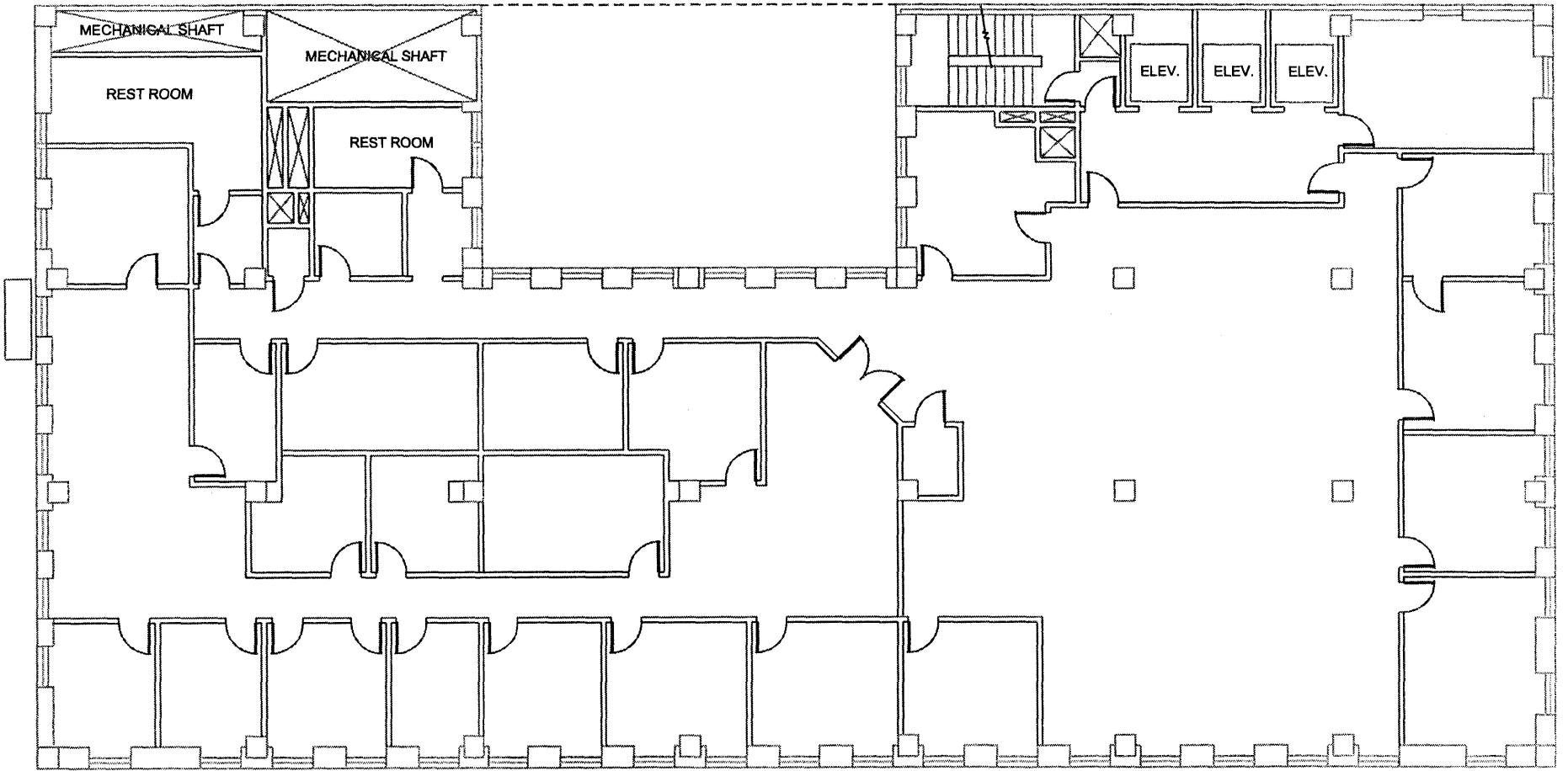
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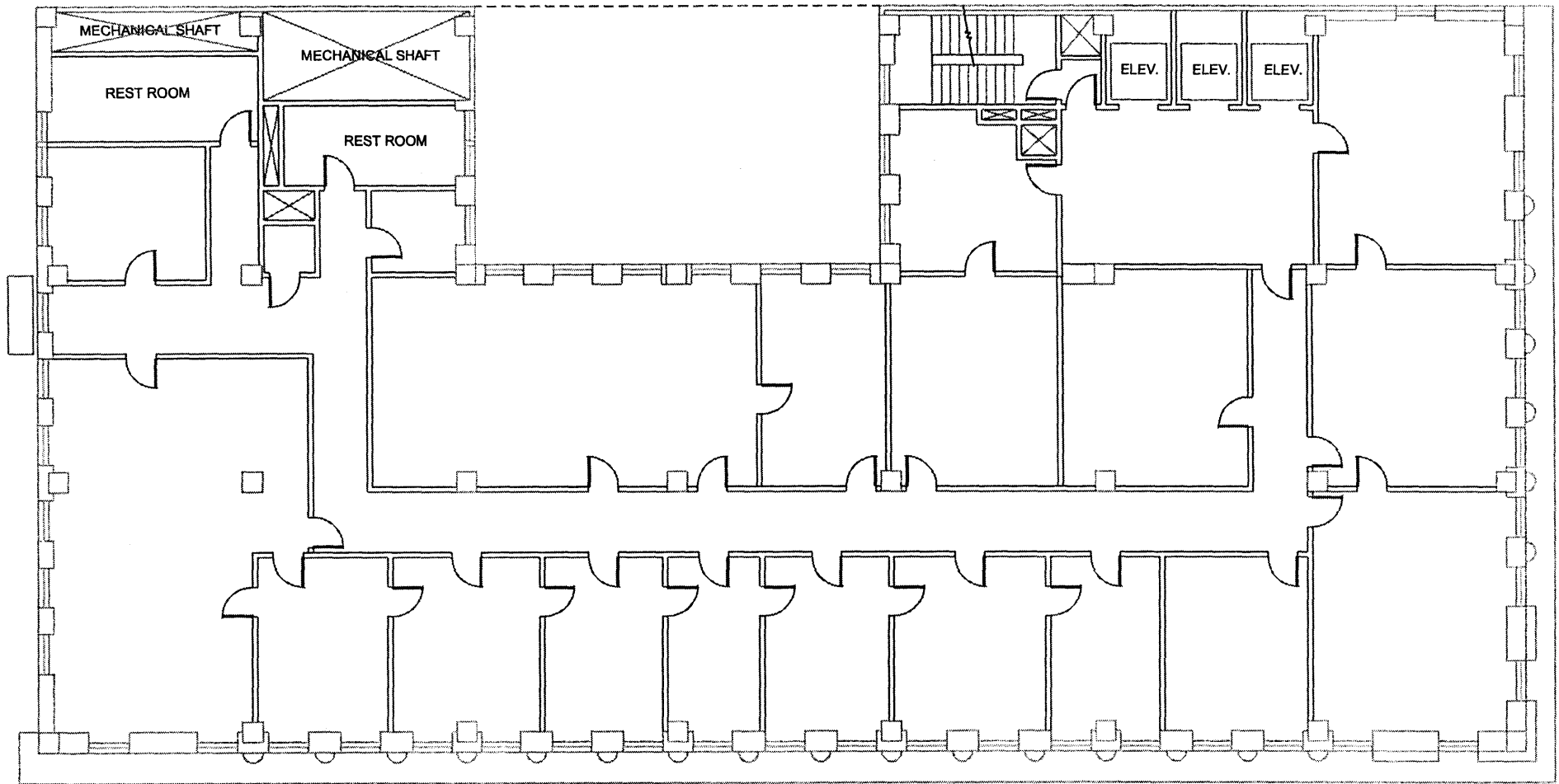
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Tresno County, California



8th FLOOR
TRADE CENTER BUILDING



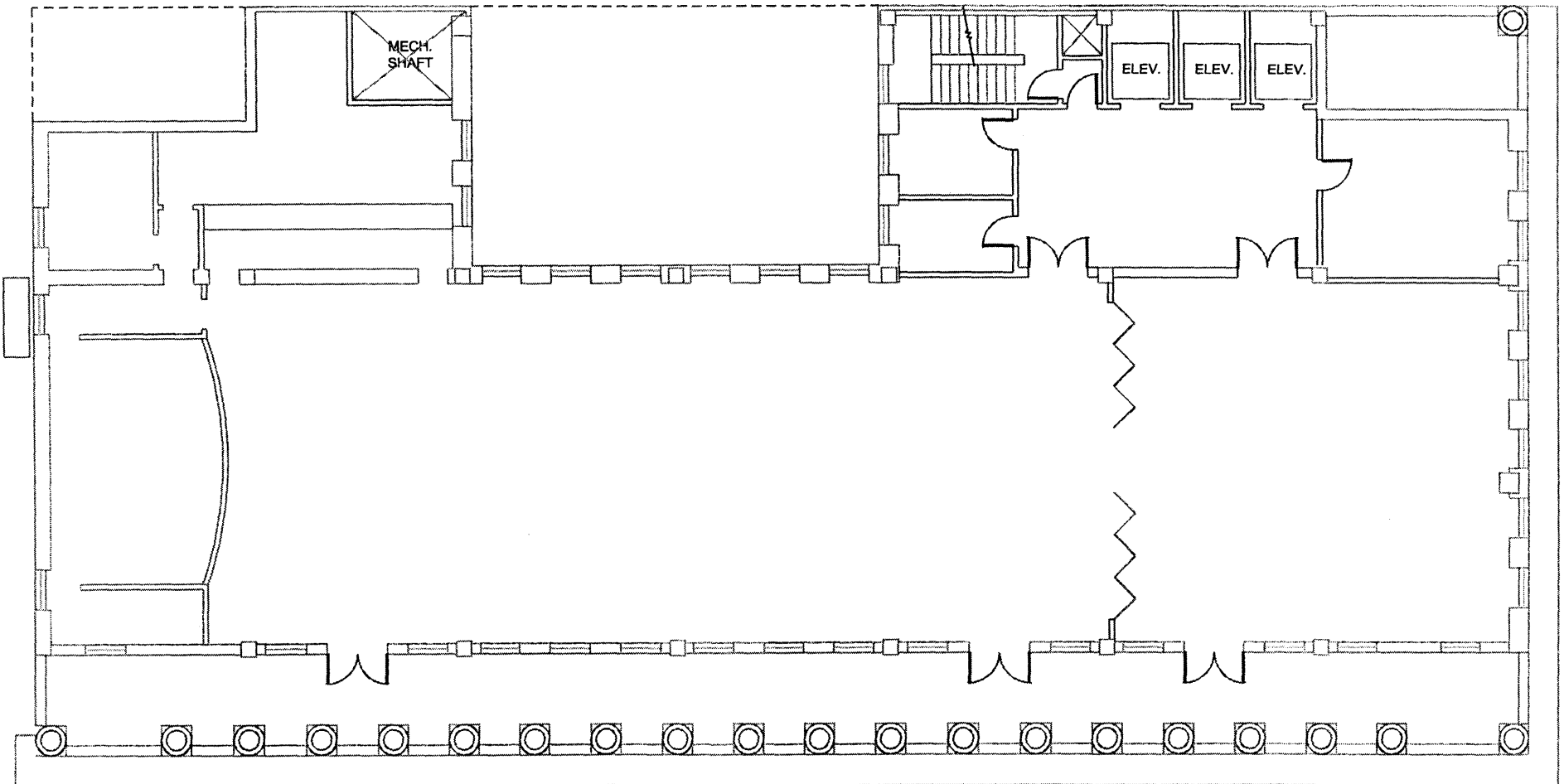
9th FLOOR
TRADE CENTER BUILDING

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10th FLOOR
TRADE CENTER BUILDING