

\*Recorded by: Sonali Gupta, ESA

\*Date: June 2023

Continuation

Update

**P1. Other Identifier:** Orangecourt, APN 070-244-009

**P8. Recorded by:**  
Sonali Gupta, ESA

\***B10. Significance:** Theme Pioneer and Railroad Era (1848 – 1904)      Area Downtown Davis  
Period of Significance ca. 1880      Property Type Commercial      Applicable Criteria n/a

#### Historic Context

In 2015, the Davis, California: Citywide Survey and Historic Context Update was prepared to provide a framework for the evaluation of 20th century resources within the City of Davis. It provided an updated historic context statement focusing on the World War II and post-war periods, evaluation criteria, and significance themes. The significance themes include Native American, Spanish, and Mexican Era (prehistory – 1847); Pioneer and Railroad Era (1848 – 1904); University Farm and University of California Era (1905 – present); Early Twentieth Century and Depression Era (1905 – 1939); World War II and Post-War (1940 – 1958); Explosive Growth (1959 – 1971); and Progressive Visions, Managed Growth (1972 – 2015). The oldest portion of the subject property was originally constructed in 1880 with subsequent additions; therefore, it falls into the Pioneer and Railroad Era (1848 – 1904) significance theme established in the 2015 historic context.

The following early history of the City of Davis is taken from the *Davis, California: Citywide Survey and Historic Context Update*.<sup>1</sup>

#### Pioneer and Railroad Era (1848 – 1904)

##### *Davis Ranch*

American settler Joseph Chiles bought a portion of the Rancho Laguna de Santos Calle, which he resold to his son-in-law Jerome Davis in 1854. Davis established a dairy and other ventures, and eventually his land holdings grew to 12,000 acres. After California became a state in 1850, other farmers, many of them German immigrants, began to settle in the area. Yolo County quickly became a prosperous farming region focused on grain, livestock and orchard crops.

##### *Railroad and Davisville*

In the 1860s, a group of five investors sometimes called the “Big Five” began planning a railroad routed through Davis’ ranch, and by 1868 the California Pacific Railroad had built its line to the area, laying out the three-way junction in its present location and alignment, where the Woodland branch line turned north from the main line. The railroad also constructed a depot, and laid out a town around it as a speculative investment.

The arrival of the railroad was a turning point, creating an economic impetus to found a town out of what had previously been a collection of scattered farms. The railroad’s investors laid out the town site adjacent to the depot, and by 1868 Davisville had about 400 residents. The railroad and new population spurred a brief building boom, but by the 1870s local growth had slowed. Davisville during the late nineteenth century was a farm village devoted to processing, storing, and shipping agricultural products. There was also industrial activity along the railroad tracks, some of which, like the lumber-yard, served the town in general. Most of the industry, however, was related to agriculture in one way or another, such as the Schmeiser manufacturing plant, on the east side of the railroad tracks with buildings on both sides of what is now Third street, which built almond hullers.

##### *Commercial and Residential Development*

After the railroad provided an economic impetus for a town, commercial establishments quickly sprang up to serve local residents. In addition to the farming-related businesses that were the community’s *raison d’etre*, blacksmiths, carpenters, livery stables, and wagon-makers established businesses. A post office and express office provided access to the world beyond Davis, and hotels, restaurants, saloons, and boarding houses catered to travelers. Retail businesses such as grocery stores, butchers, liquor stores, and clothing stores opened, as did a doctor’s office and shoe repair shop. With warehouses and industrial services concentrated along the railroad tracks, downtown was clustered between First and Third Streets on G Street, a block west of the depot and tracks. A short-lived weekly newspaper was founded in 1869, and the Davis Enterprise began publishing in 1897. In addition to all the commercial activity, local residents established an Odd Fellows Lodge and Presbyterian and Roman Catholic churches.

<sup>1</sup> Brunzell Historical. *Davis, California: Citywide Survey and Historic Context Update*. November 2015.

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With the tiny downtown located on G Street, residential development began around F Street just one more block to the west. Individual property owners built houses one at a time, and the availability of land meant that during the nineteenth century many blocks had only one or two houses set on large parcels. The gradual population growth of this area (ten residents a year) meant that residential construction proceeded at a measured pace. At the turn of the twentieth century, Davis did not have a single residential block that was completely built-out in the modern sense. The original town plat easily accommodated the gradual growth of the little town, and the only major subdivision was Rice's Addition in 1888, which was four small blocks along Rice Lane between the University campus and B Streets [just south of the subject property].

Subject Property

The earliest portions of the building at 129 E Street were constructed ca. 1880.<sup>2</sup> It sits on a 12,040 sq. ft lot. This irregular complex of one and two-story, flat roofed and gabled structures incorporates a 19<sup>th</sup>-century building, considerably altered, and a number of more recent constructions that replicate the older structure. The earlier building is clad with horizontal shiplap siding and most of the more recent structures are covered with vertically scored plywood. The complex is used for commercial purposes and is called Orangecourt. The adaptive reuse scheme for the complex was done by local Davis architect Richard Berteaux. The complex consists of two structures constructed more than 45 years ago and three new two-story buildings designed to complement the design of the older structures. The five buildings are linked with decks and railings. The courtyard is accented with a half-story tall, abstracted form of a water tower typical to this part of California.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> DPR, 1980, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> DPR 1996

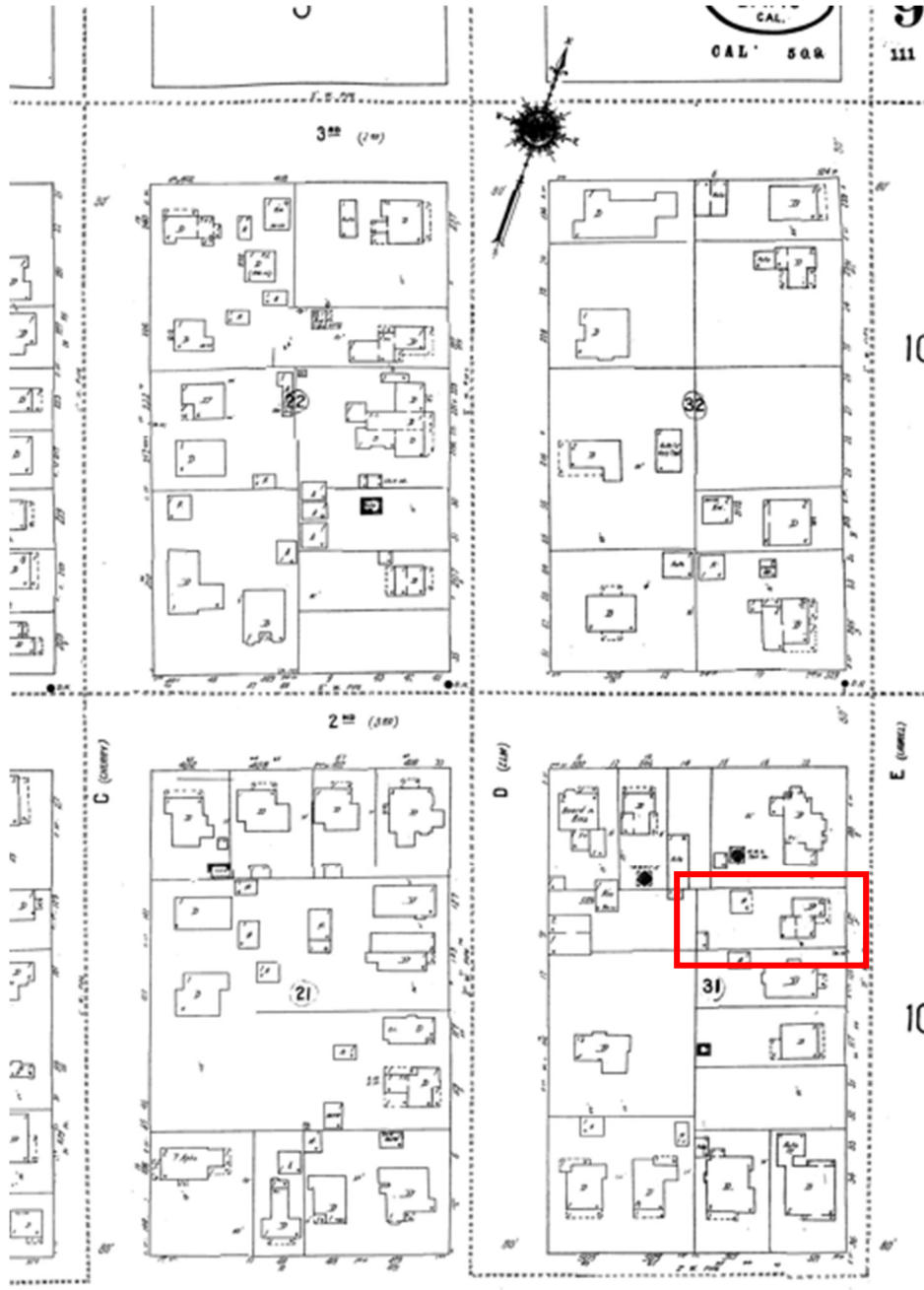


Figure 1 – Updated 1941 Sanborn Map, Subject Property in Red

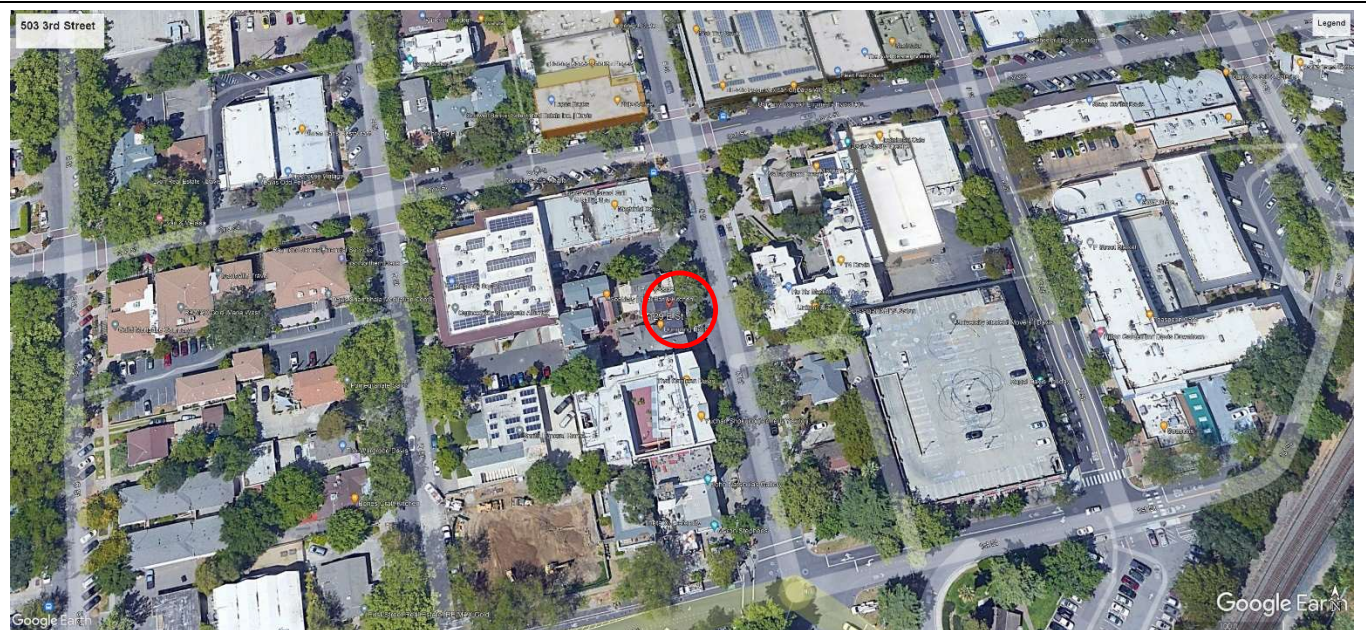


Figure 2 – 129 E Street Current aerial (Google Earth 05/30/2023)



Figure 3 – 129 E Street Front view (Google Earth 05/030/2023)

Regulatory Framework

*National Register of Historic Places*

A property is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) if it meets the National Register listing criteria at 36 CFR 60.4, as stated below:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and that:

- A) Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, or
- B) Are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, or
- C) Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, or
- D) Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

*California Register of Historical Resources*

To be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) a historical resource must be significant under one or more of the following criteria:

- 1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;
- 2. Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
- 3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
- 4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history.

*City of Davis Landmark Resource*

In addition to the National and California registers, the City of Davis provides for the additional designations of Landmark Resource and Merit Resource in their Historical Resources Management Zoning Code (40.23.060). To be eligible as a Landmark a resource must meet at least one of the four criteria at the local, state, or national level of significance and retain a high level of historic integrity.

- (1) Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in the history of Davis, California, or the nation; or
- (2) Associated with the lives of significant persons in the history of Davis, California, or the nation; or
- (3) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, architectural style or method of construction; or that represents the work of a master designer; or that possesses high artistic values; or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- (4) Has yielded or may likely yield archaeological or anthropological information important in the study of history, prehistory, or human culture.

The following factors must also be considered:

- (1) A resource moved from its original location may be designated a landmark if it is significant primarily for its architectural value or it is one of the most important surviving structures associated with an important person or historic event.
- (2) A birthplace or grave may be designated a landmark if it is that of a historical figure of outstanding importance within the history of Davis, the state or the nation and there are no other appropriate sites or resources directly associated with his or her life or achievements.
- (3) A reconstructed building may be designated a landmark if the reconstruction is historically accurate and is based on sound historical documentation, is executed in a suitable environment, and if no other original structure survives that has the same historical association.
- (4) A resource achieving significance within the past fifty years may be designated a landmark if the resource is of exceptional importance within the history of Davis, the state or the nation.

*City of Davis Merit Resource*

In addition to the National and California registers, the City of Davis provides for the additional designations of Landmark Resource and Merit Resource in their Historical Resources Management Zoning Code (40.23.060). To be eligible as a Merit Resource must meet at least one of the four criteria and retain a high level of historic integrity. The four criteria to qualify as a Merit Resource as nearly identical to those for a Landmark except that Merit Resources only consider local significance.

The following factors must also be considered:

- (1) A resource moved from its original location may be designated a merit resource if it is significant for its architectural value or if an understanding of the associated important person or historic event has not been impaired by the relocation.
- (2) A birthplace or grave may be designated a merit resource if it is that of a historical figure of outstanding importance within the history of Davis and there are no other appropriate sites or resources directly associated with his or her life or achievements.
- (3) A reconstructed building may be designated a merit resource if the reconstruction is historically accurate and is based on sound historical documentation, is executed in a suitable environment, and if no other original structure survives that has the same historical association.
- (4) A resource achieving significance within the past fifty years may be designated a merit resource if it is of exceptional importance within the history of Davis.

Even if a resource is not listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the California Register, the lead agency may consider the resource to be a "historical resource" for the purposes of CEQA provided that the lead agency determination is supported by substantial evidence (CEQA Guidelines 14 CCR 15064.5).

Evaluation

The subject property at 129 E Street was surveyed in 1980, 1996, and 2015. It was determined to no longer retain enough integrity to be considered historic however, the previous efforts did not include complete evaluations for the National Register, California Register, or locally as a Davis Landmark or Davis Merit Resource. The following is an evaluation for potential historic significance under National Register Criteria A through D, California Register Criteria 1 through 4, Davis Landmark Criteria 1 through 4, and Davis Merit Resource Criteria 1 through 4. While the wording is slightly different for each of the four criteria for the National Register, California Register, Davis Landmark, and Davis Merit Resource eligibility, they each align to cover the same potential significance criterion. A/1/1/1 covers associations with significant historical events, B/2/2/2 covers significant people, C/3/3/3 covers significant architecture, and D/4/4/4 covers the information potential of a site.

A/1/1/1 - Events

Archival review indicates that the oldest portions of 129 E Street were constructed circa 1880 and it has been added to several times in 140 years since. It does not appear that there are any significant associations between 129 E Street and important events or patterns in history. It does not appear to rise above the typical associations with single-family residential or commercial development within the history of Davis. Therefore, it is recommended ineligible under Criteria A/1/1/1.

B/2/2/2 – Persons/Businesses

Archival review also does not indicate that there are any significant associations between 129 E Street and significant persons or businesses. As research does not indicate that 129 E Street is significantly associated with the productive life of any significant person or business, it is recommended ineligible under Criteria B/2/2/2.

C/3/3/3 – Design/Engineering

As noted in previous inventories, the subject property at 129 E Street was constructed in vernacular 19th-century style. The oldest structure and the most prominent building of this complex was built prior to 1888 as it appears in the Sanborn Insurance Maps of that year. On the 1891 Sanborn Insurance Map a hay barn and outbuilding appears to adjoin the house. The complex makes use of the older building, and the newer additions and decks are of the same character as the original building. The complex is an early example of a successful adaptive reuse scheme in the late 1970s. The adaptive reuse scheme was undertaken by Richard Berteaux, an architect from Davis in the 1970's. No specific architect, engineer, or designer is associated with the original building at 129 E Street, nor does it appear to be the work of a master architect. For these reasons, 129 E Street is recommended ineligible under Criteria C/3/3/3.

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D/4/4/4 – Information Potential

Criterion D/4/4/4 applies to properties that have the potential to inform important research questions about human history. According to National Register Bulletin 15, to qualify for listing, the property must “have or have had information to contribute to our understanding of human history or prehistory and the information must be considered important.” 129 E Street does not meet this criterion and therefore is recommended ineligible under Criteria D/4/4/4.

Integrity

For a property to be eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, or as Landmark or Merit resources per the City of Davis regulations it must meet one of the eligibility criteria discussed above as well as retain sufficient integrity. However, the subject property does not meet any of the eligibility criteria for significance; therefore, a discussion of integrity is not necessary.

Recommendation

ESA recommends 129 E Street ineligible for listing in the National Register, California Register or locally as a Davis Landmark or Merit Resource but is an important contributor to the area neighborhood.

**\*B12. References:**

1921 Sanborn Map. Proquest Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970. Accessed via the Los Angeles Public Library.  
[https://digitalsanbornmaps-proquest-com.ezproxy.lapl.org/browse\\_maps/5/499/2201/2143/21471?accountid=6749](https://digitalsanbornmaps-proquest-com.ezproxy.lapl.org/browse_maps/5/499/2201/2143/21471?accountid=6749).

Brunzell Historical. Davis, California: Citywide Survey and Historic Context Update. 2015.

Yolo County Assessor’s Parcel Data. ParcelQuest.com. Accessed May 2023.