

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
NRHP Status Code _____

Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

Page 1 of 6 *Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 1401 Alhambra Boulevard

P1. Other Identifier: Incredible Edible Place restaurant

*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

*a. County Sacramento and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Sacramento East, CA. Date 2021 T 8N; R 5E; ☐ of Mt. Diablo ☐ of Sec 00; B.M.

c. Address 1401 Alhambra Boulevard City Sacramento Zip 95816

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone __, __ mE/ __ mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, decimal degrees, etc., as appropriate)

*P3a. **Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1401 Alhambra Boulevard (APN 007-0215-001 and 007-215-002) is a one-story, 1,610-square-foot commercial building located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Alhambra Boulevard and N Street in the East Sacramento neighborhood of Sacramento. The building was constructed in 1975 and has a roughly square footprint with a hipped parapet roof with broadly overhanging boxed wood eaves and clay tile roofing. The northwest, northeast, and roughly two-thirds of the southwest facades are clad with painted concrete blocks, while the west third of the southwest façade and all of the southeast facades are clad with vertical wood siding. The northwest facade, facing Alhambra Boulevard, and northeast façade, facing N Street, are the primary facades of the building and contain public entrances to the building (**Figure 1** and **Figure 2**). These entries are located in arched openings with glazed metal storefront doors. (Continued on Page 3)

*P3b. **Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6. 1-3 story commercial building

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photograph required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



*P4. **Resources Present:**

☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object
☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐
Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5b. Description of Photo: (view, date, accession #) View southeast of 1401 Alhambra Blvd., taken August 13, 2024.

*P6. **Date Constructed/Age and Source:** ☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1975, Source: Sacramento County Assessor.

*P7. **Owner and Address:**
Alhambra 1401 LLC, 6040 Bayville Ct.
Granite Bay, CA 95746

*P8. **Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address) Page & Turnbull, Inc., 1007 7th Street, #404, Sacramento, CA 95814

*P9. **Date Recorded:** October 8, 2024

P10. **Survey Type:** (Describe) Intensive

*P11. **Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")
Sacramento LGBTQ+ Experience

History Project Historic Context Statement (LGBTQ+ HCS)

*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☐ Location Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List): _____

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

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*NRHP Status Code 3CS, 5S3

*Resource Name or # 1401 Alhambra Boulevard

B1. Historic name: Incredible Edible Place

B2. Common name: _____

B3. Original Use: Commercial

B4. Present use: Commercial

*B5. Architectural Style: Spanish Eclectic

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Jerry Staveris submitted a permit to construct a restaurant at 1401 Alhambra Boulevard in 1974.¹ According to the Sacramento County Assessor, the building was completed in 1975.² (Refer to continuation sheet, Page 4.)

*B7. Moved? ☒ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____

*B8. Related Features: None

B9a. Architect: Unknown

b. Builder: Unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme Out & Proud: Development of Visible Sacramento LGBTQ+ Community Area Sacramento, California
Period of Significance 1977-1992 Property Type Commercial Applicable Criteria 1/I, 2/ii

Historic Context:

Incredible Edible Place (1977-1992)

Gay businessman Paul Fitzgerald opened the Incredible Edible Place restaurant at 1401 Alhambra Boulevard in 1977. According to a 1979 article in *Mom Guess What...!* highlighting gay businesses in Sacramento, Fitzgerald's goal for the Incredible Edible Place was to give Sacramento's LGBTQ+ community "good and affordable service."³ Though he desired for Sacramento to have a restaurant solely for the LGBTQ+ community, he recognized that when his restaurant opened in the late 1970s, the local LGBTQ+ community was not yet large enough to support an openly gay restaurant in the numbers required to sustain a healthy business. The restaurant's staff were evenly split between gay and straight employees, and patrons also included a mix of both gay and straight people. Fitzgerald was a prominent advocate for Sacramento's LGBTQ+ community. He was particularly committed to the development of a gay business community. In his interview with *Mom Guess What...!*, he stated: "I feel that gay people should support gay businesses and that the gay business community should educate the rest of the community as to the advantages of gay businesses such as: political clout, getting more gay people into other fields such as doctors, mechanics, etc."⁴ With this goal in mind, he extended the hours of the Incredible Edible Place into the evening on weekends to provide a space for LGBTQ+ patrons to gather for a late-night snack or cup of coffee.

As a result of the welcoming and safe environment fostered by Fitzgerald, the Incredible Edible Place became a popular meeting place for local LGBTQ+ clubs and organizations. It was the site of the first meeting of the Advocates for Gay State Employees (AGSE) in 1979. AGSE was formed by a group of State employees earlier that year to provide input to the State Personnel Board about implementation of Governor Jerry Brown's executive order, prohibiting discrimination against State employees on the basis of sexual preference.⁵ (Refer to continuation sheet, Page 4.)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: N/A

*B12. References: Refer to footnotes

B13. Remarks: N/A

*B14. Evaluator: Page & Turnbull, Inc.

*Date of Evaluation: October 8, 2024

(This space reserved for official comments.)

Source: Sacramento County Assessor, Online Parcel Viewer, 2024. Subject Parcel shown outlined in red.



¹ "City Building Permits," *Sacramento Bee*, 23 June 1974: E13.

² Sacramento County Assessor, Assessor Parcel Viewer, accessed September 4, 2024, <https://assessorparcelviewer.saccounty.gov/jsviewer/assessor.html#>.

³ James K. Graham, "Gay Business...Right Here in River City," *Mom Guess What...!*, April 1979.

⁴ Graham, "Gay Business...Right Here in River City."

⁵ "Gay State Employees Have a Voice," *Mom...Guess What...!*, 1 September 1979.

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***P3a. Description (continued):**

Large arched storefront openings flank the entrances. The door and window openings are surrounded by projecting concrete block borders. A large coffee cup sculpture and signage for Starbucks Coffee sits on a flat semicircular platform on the roof at the northwest corner of the building. The southwest façade faces a small surface parking lot and has one arched storefront window (Figure 3). The southeast façade faces a small concrete paved patio that is surrounded by a low concrete block wall with metal pickets (Figure 4). The subject block is bounded by Alhambra Boulevard to the northwest, N Street to the northeast, 32nd Street to the southeast, and Carly Way to the southwest. 1401 Alhambra Boulevard is zoned C-2-SPD (General Commercial/Special Planning District).



Figure 1. Northwest facade, view southeast.



Figure 2. Northeast facade, view southeast.



Figure 3. Southwest facade, view north.



Figure 4. Southeast façade, view west.

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***B6. Construction History (continued):**

Several restaurants operated out of the building in its first few years including a Mexican restaurant called Alimena's Mexican Restaurant in 1975 and a pizza restaurant called Tower Pizza in 1976.⁶ Gay bar owner and entrepreneur Paul Fitzgerald purchased the property and applied for a license to sell alcoholic beverages at the building in 1977.⁷ Fitzgerald's restaurant, the Incredible Edible Place, opened soon after and remained in operation through approximately 1992.⁸ In 1994, the property was sold and reopened as a Starbucks Coffee shop. The property continued in this use until 2024.⁹ The interior of the building has been remodeled numerous times over its history, starting during Fitzgerald's ownership in 1983. Building permit records document limited exterior alterations to the building after the Incredible Edible Place closed in 1992, including the installation of exterior signage in 1996 and the replacement of existing built-up and tile roofing with new TPO and concrete tile roofing in 2010.¹⁰

***B10. Significance:**

Historic Context (continued)

Another political advocacy group, the River City Democratic Club, had its first meeting at the Incredible Edible Place in 1983.¹¹ The club spearheaded several political efforts on behalf of the LGBTQ+ community in the 1980s and 1990s, including passage of Sacramento's Domestic Partnership Ordinance in 1992 and a project to plant 200 memorial trees along Highway 50 as a memorial to victims of AIDS.¹²

Fitzgerald is also credited with coining the name of one of Sacramento's most prominent and longest running gay bars, Faces, which was opened by Terry Sidie at 2000 K Street in 1985. The name was reportedly intended to reflect the bar's goal to be a place that was inclusive and open to all communities and "faces."¹³

City directories record the Incredible Edible Place at 1401 Alhambra Boulevard until 1992. In 1994, the building was remodeled and reopened as a Starbucks Coffee shop.¹⁴ The building remains in use as a Starbucks Coffee location through 2024.

Paul Fitzgerald (1939-2012)

Paul Fitzgerald was born in 1939 in Poteau, Ohio. He served in the 82nd Airborne Division of the U.S. Army from 1960 to 1963. In 1964, Fitzgerald married Bonnie Elyce Raposa in Redding, and the couple had a son and two daughters. Fitzgerald came out as gay by the late 1970s, and he and Bonnie divorced in 1976.¹⁵

Fitzgerald worked for a time as a manager at JCPenney in Redding and for eight years at a large food firm outside the Sacramento area. Worn down by the long hours and extensive travel, Fitzgerald moved to Sacramento and began opening a series of gay-friendly businesses in Sacramento. From 1977 to 1992, Fitzgerald owned and managed the Incredible Edible Place restaurant at the subject property. By 1979, he had also opened a gay bar called Upstairs Downstairs at 1225 K Street in Downtown Sacramento.¹⁶ Sometime after 1982, Fitzgerald lived next door to the Incredible Edible Place in a house at 3114 N Street.¹⁷ He died of ALS in 2012.¹⁸

Statement of Significance:

In order for a property to be considered eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), or the Sacramento Register as a landmark, the property must possess significance and retain integrity to convey that significance. Refer to the *Sacramento LGBTQ+ Experience History Project Historic Context Statement (LGBTQ+ HCS)* and *Survey Methodology & Framework* for evaluative criteria of each theme.

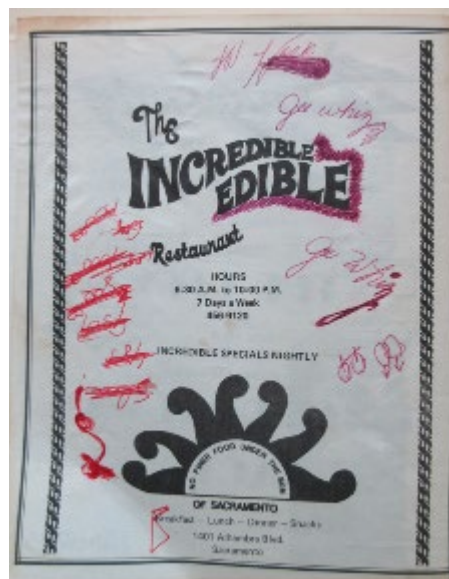


Figure 5. Advertisement for the Incredible Edible Place (1981). Source: *The River City Rambler*, Vol. 1, Issue No. 12, December 1981. Lavender Library.

⁶ Classified ads, *Sacramento Bee*, 11 October 1975: C5; Advertisement, *Sacramento Bee*, 16 September 1976: D6.

⁷ "Public Notice No. 632," *Sacramento Bee*, 2 November 1977: E6.

⁸ Sacramento City Directories, 1978-1992, Sacramento Public Library.

⁹ Certificate of Occupancy, 94-7563-C, City of Sacramento Planning and Development Department, 1994.

¹⁰ Building permit records, City of Sacramento.

¹¹ "New Club," *The Sacramento Bee*, April 1, 1983, C7.

¹² Steve Wiegand, "Tree-Planting with a Twist," *The Sacramento Bee*, March 16, 1992.

¹³ Chris Macias, "Celebrating Inclusion," *Sacramento Bee*, 5 September 2015: B1, B6.

¹⁴ Sacramento city directories, 1978-1994, Sacramento Public Library.

¹⁵ "Marriage Licenses," *Record Searchlight* (Redding, CA), 12 September 1964; California, U.S., Divorce Index, 1966-1984, Ancestry.com.

¹⁶ Graham, "Gay Business...Right Here in River City."

¹⁷ U.S. Public Records Index, 1950-1993, Volume 2, Ancestry.com.

¹⁸ "Fitzgerald, Paul Neeson," *Sacramento Bee*, 22 January 2012: B5.

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California Register of Historical Resources Evaluation

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on those developed by the National Park Service for the National Register of Historic Places.

In order for a property to be eligible for listing in the California Register, it must be found significant under one or more of the following criteria:

1. (Events): 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.
2. (Persons): Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history.
3. (Architecture): Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.
4. (Information Potential): Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources

The Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register) is the City of Sacramento's official inventory of historic and cultural resources. In order to be listed as a local landmark, historic district, or contributing resource to a historic district, a building, structure, site, or feature must meet the following criteria and requirements for listing on the Sacramento Register, as outlined in Chapter 17.604.210 of the City's municipal code:

A. **Listing on the Sacramento Register—Landmarks.** A nominated resource shall be listed on the Sacramento Register as a landmark if the city council finds, after holding the hearing required by this chapter, that all of the requirements set forth below are satisfied:

1. Requirements.
 - a. The nominated resource meets one or more of the following criteria:
 - i. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city, the region, the state or the nation;
 - ii. It is associated with the lives of persons significant in the city's past;
 - iii. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction;
 - iv. It represents the work of an important creative individual or master;
 - v. It possesses high artistic values; or
 - vi. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in the prehistory or history of the city, the region, the state or the nation;
 - b. The nominated resource has integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and association. Integrity shall be judged with reference to the particular criterion or criteria specified in subsection A.1.a of this section;
 - c. The nominated resource has significant historic or architectural worth, and its designation as a landmark is reasonable, appropriate and necessary to promote, protect and further the goals and purposes of this chapter.
2. Factors to be considered. In determining whether to list a nominated resource on the Sacramento register as a landmark, the factors below shall be considered.
 - a. A structure removed from its original location is eligible if it is significant primarily for its architectural value or it is the most important surviving structure associated with a historic person or event.
 - b. A birthplace or grave is eligible if it is that of a historical figure of outstanding importance and there is no other appropriate site or structure directly associated with his or her productive life.
 - c. A reconstructed building is eligible if the reconstruction is historically accurate, if the structure is presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and if no other original structure survives that has the same association.
 - d. Properties that are primarily commemorative in intent are eligible if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value invests such properties with their own historical significance.
 - e. Properties achieving significance within the past 50 years are eligible if such properties are of exceptional importance.

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California Register Criterion 1/Sacramento Register Criterion i (Events): 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.

The property at 1401 Alhambra Boulevard appears eligible under Criterion 1/i as the longtime location of the Incredible Edible Place, a gay-owned and LGBTQ+-friendly restaurant that opened in 1977 during an important transitional period in the development of Sacramento's LGBTQ+ community, when the community still remained largely underground but was becoming increasingly visible and open. The Incredible Edible Place was one of the earliest openly gay restaurants in the City of Sacramento. The restaurant was owned and operated by a gay man, Paul Fitzgerald, and had a mix of gay and straight patrons and staff. Fitzgerald envisioned the restaurant as a gathering place for Sacramento's LGBTQ+ community, and it became the meeting place for local LGBTQ+ individuals, groups, clubs, and organizations, including the site of the first meetings of political advocacy groups the Advocates for Gay State Employees (AGSE) in 1979 and River City Democratic Club in 1983. The property, thus, is significantly associated with the establishing, support, and increasing the visibility of Sacramento's LGBTQ+ community and is eligible under Criterion 1/i.

California Register Criterion 2/Sacramento Register Criterion ii (Persons): Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history.

The property at 1401 Alhambra Boulevard appears to be eligible under Criterion 2/ii for its association with gay business owner Paul Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald opened both the Incredible Edible Place and Upstairs Downstairs gay bar, both of which were important gathering places for the LGBTQ+ community when it was developing into a visible part of the broader Sacramento community in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Fitzgerald's leadership and vision for his businesses to serve as incubators for the LGBTQ+ business community, professionals, organizations, and other groups transformed them into important community gathering spaces that contributed to the development of Sacramento's LGBTQ+ community during its formative years. As such, the property is eligible under Criteria 2/ii.

California Register Criterion 3/Sacramento Register Criteria iii-v (Architecture): Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.

The property at 1401 Alhambra Boulevard does not appear to be individually eligible under Criterion 4/vi. The subject property has not been identified as the work of a notable architect or builder and does not possess high artistic merit. The building is a late example of a modest commercial building designed in the Spanish Eclectic style with concrete block cladding, a hipped concrete tile roof, and large arched openings. The building is not a distinctive or exemplary representation of the style. Therefore, it is not eligible for listing based on its architectural design under Criterion 3/iii-v.

California Register Criterion 4/Sacramento Register Criterion vi (Information Potential): Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

The property at 1401 Alhambra Boulevard does not appear to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register or Sacramento Register under Criterion 4/vi as a building or property that has the potential to provide information important to the prehistory or history of the City of Sacramento, state, or nation. It does not feature construction or material types, or embody engineering practices that would, with additional study, provide important information. Evaluation of this property was limited to age-eligible resources above ground and did not involve survey or evaluation of the subject property for the purposes of archaeological information.

Sacramento Register Factor e.: Factor e. for consideration of properties for listing on the Sacramento Register states that properties that achieved their historic significance less than 50 years ago should be of exceptional significance. The subject property was constructed in 1975, 49 years ago. It will be 50 years old in 2025. The property opened as the Incredible Edible Place in 1977, 47 years ago as of the date of this evaluation. The property is exceptionally significant for its cultural importance to the LGBTQ+ community. Based on a reconnaissance-level survey of properties identified through the Sacramento LGBTQ+ Historic Experience Project in 2024, relatively few properties remain that have a strong individual association with the development of the City of Sacramento's LGBTQ+ community, particularly outside the Midtown area, and that retain sufficient historic integrity. Additionally, properties that were significant as community social gathering spaces that were not gay bars are also rare. Therefore the property meets consideration Factor e.

Integrity

1401 Alhambra Boulevard retains all seven aspects of integrity (setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association). The building remains in its original location and continues to be surrounded by a variety of commercial, residential, and mixed-use development that was present during its period of significance (1977-1992). The building appears to have undergone minimal exterior alterations since the closure of the Incredible Edible Place in 1992, primarily consisting of re-roofing and the installation of exterior signage. The building would still be recognizable to someone who visited the restaurant while it was in operation, and continues to convey its identity as a commercial building built in the 1970s.

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Character-defining Features of 1401 Alhambra Boulevard

Character-defining features of 1401 Alhambra Boulevard that reflect its period of significance (1977-1992) include but are not limited to the following features:

- One-story height
- Concrete block cladding
- Hipped parapet roof with broad overhanging boxed wood eaves and concrete tile roofing
- Arched window and door openings

Conclusion

The property at 1401 Alhambra Boulevard appears to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register and the Sacramento Register under Criteria 1/i (Events) and 2/ii (Persons) for its association with the gay-owned and gay-friendly restaurant The Incredible Edible Place, and its owner Paul Fitzgerald. The restaurant was an important gathering place for members of the LGBTQ+ community during the early years of its development in Sacramento in the 1970s and was the site of some of the first meetings of significant LGBTQ+ clubs and organizations. 1401 Alhambra Boulevard appears to retain all seven aspects of historic integrity from its period of significance. California Historical Resource Status Code (CHRSC) of "3CS, 5S3" has been assigned to the property, meaning "Appears eligible for CR as an individual property through survey evaluation" and "Appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation."¹⁹

References

Advertisement. *Sacramento Bee*. 16 September 1976: D6.

Building permit records. City of Sacramento.

California, U.S., Divorce Index, 1966-1984. Ancestry.com.

"City Building Permits." *Sacramento Bee*. 23 June 1974: E13.

Classified ads. *Sacramento Bee*. 11 October 1975: C5.

"Fitzgerald, Paul Neeson." *Sacramento Bee*. 22 January 2012: B5.

"Gay State Employees Have a Voice." *Mom...Guess What...!*. 1 September 1979.

Graham, James K. "Gay Business...Right Here in River City." *Mom Guess What...!*. April 1979.

Macias, Chris. "Celebrating Inclusion." *Sacramento Bee*. 5 September 2015: B1, B6.

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"Public Notice No. 632." *Sacramento Bee*. 2 November 1977: E6.

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Wiegand, Steve. "Tree-Planting with a Twist." *The Sacramento Bee*. March 16, 1992.

U.S. Public Records Index, 1950-1993, Volume 2, Ancestry.com.

¹⁹ California State Office of Historic Preservation Department of Parks and Recreation, *Technical Assistance Bulletin #8: User's Guide to the California Historical Resource Status Codes & Historical Resource Inventory Directory*, Sacramento, November 2004.