



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Jen Baker

SUBJECT: **Sakauye Farmhouse
Acquisition and Move to
History Park**

DATE: January 5, 2026

Approved

Date:

1/7/26

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 7

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the acquisition and move of the historic Sakauye Farmhouse from the 0 Seely Avenue Mixed-Use project site to the City-owned History Park.

SUMMARY AND OUTCOME

On August 13, 2024, the City Council approved a planned development rezoning at 0 Seely Avenue, which entitles a project to construct a new mixed-use neighborhood, including roughly 1,500 new homes and a 2.5-acre neighborhood park. The site presently hosts a functioning farmstead, historically owned by Eiichi Sakauye and his family. Councilmember Kamei submitted a memorandum for the August 13, 2024 City Council meeting, noting the historic contributions of Eiichi Sakauye and the relevance of his family farmstead as one of the few properties in California to which a Japanese American family had successfully returned after the Second World War era internment and dislocation of this community. The City Council discussion of the item underscored a desire to preserve the farmhouse as a symbol of this difficult history for future generations, either by incorporating it into the planned neighborhood park or by relocating it to History Park.

After consultations with the Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services Department, the Sakauye Family, the broader Japanese American community in Silicon Valley, and History San José, a consensus emerged to move the Sakauye Farmhouse to History Park and restore it. The Administration originally estimated the total cost of such a move at \$750,000.

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Per City Council direction on August 13, 2024, the developer of the 0 Seely Avenue project, Seely Development Partners LLC (a subsidiary of the Hanover Company), committed \$100,000, which was used to move the Sakauye Farmhouse to another location on the project development site. Through a Budget Document submitted by Councilmember Kamei and included in the approved Mayor's June Budget Message for FY 2025-2026, the City allocated \$25,000 towards the cost of moving the Sakauye Farmhouse. Through fundraising efforts, History San José has raised \$809,269 to date to cover the costs of relocating and renovating the Sakauye Farmhouse, with several additional donations pledged for 2026. The farmhouse will be moved to History Park immediately upon City Council approval of this recommendation to acquire the property and relocate it.

The outcome and community benefits of this recommendation that will enable the relocation of the Sakauye Farmhouse to History Park include:

- Ensuring the Sakauye Farmhouse's preservation for future generations and providing a historic asset for History San José's agricultural and Japanese-American historic narratives and interpretation;
- Connecting the farmhouse to the historic Sakauye migrant farmworker cabins and the Stevenson Fruit Barn currently sited at History Park, creating a cohesive educational experience for the community; and
- Facilitating the historic Sakauye Farmhouse as a local museum for public education, research, and enjoyment.

BACKGROUND

History San José's activities began in 1949 following the centennial celebration of the California Gold Rush and statehood. Originally known as the San José Historical Museum and managed by the City of San José, History San José was incorporated in 1998 under its current name as an independent 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization. Over the decades, History San José has grown to include three sites: History Park, the Gonzalez/Peralta Adobe-Fallon House Historic Site, and the Collection Center/Research Library and Archives. History San José is the designated operator contracted by the City of San José to manage these City-owned cultural and historical assets.

History Park in Kelley Park is a 14-acre, town-like assemblage of 32 original and reconstructed homes, businesses, and landmarks that highlight the culture and history of San José and the Santa Clara Valley. History Park is also home to community partner affiliate organizations that provide exhibits and programming to showcase their constituencies and contributions to the Santa Clara Valley.

History San José manages one of the largest collections of regional history artifacts in California, housed at the Collection Center, a state-of-the-art facility near History Park.

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The Museum continues to collect contemporary history documenting the social and political happenings in the Valley. The research collection includes photographs, personal papers, manuscripts, maps, films, oral histories, and published works, as well as historical records from the City of San José and County of Santa Clara. The collection is made available to researchers worldwide, promoting the importance of San José and the Santa Clara Valley.

ANALYSIS

Section 12(B) of the Amended and Restated Operation Agreement between the City of San José and History San José (formerly the History Museums of San José), dated June 23, 2009, requires that History San José shall not construct or install any permanent improvement at the museum without the prior written approval of the City Manager. Notwithstanding the foregoing sentence, any proposed permanent improvement that is not identified in the Master Plan for History Park requires the prior approval of the City Council. City Council's approval will be conditioned, among other things, on History San José having sufficient funds to maintain the contemplated permanent improvement without additional City funding.

In response to plans to demolish the structure, History San José offered to relocate the historic farmhouse to History Park. On November 18, 2025, Seely Development Partners LLC and History San José executed a Bill of Sale for the Sakauye Farmhouse for \$10. The Bill of Sale to History José included permission to relocate the structure from its present location on the Seely Avenue Mixed-Use Project site to History Park. History San José is currently preparing to move the Sakauye Farmhouse from the Seely Avenue Mixed-use Project site to the City-owned History Park. The original move date for the Sakauye Farmhouse was changed from November 15, 2025 to January 31, 2026, to give History San José more time to secure the necessary funding to relocate the farmhouse.

Pursuant to the requirements of its operating agreement with the City, History San José submitted a work plan for the move to the City. The work plan includes a preconstruction estimated cost of \$63,420 and a relocation cost of \$759,180, totaling \$822,600. Underwood & Rosenbaum conducted a survey of the future location of the Sakauye Farmhouse at History Park. The Sakauye Farmhouse will be relocated by Scott Heavy Movers, with oversight by Garden City Construction, a general contractor with experience in historical preservation. The farmhouse was inspected by a state-licensed asbestos and lead inspector/risk assessor with B2 Environmental qualifications to determine the presence of lead-based paint and asbestos in the building materials. Asbestos was not found in the portion of the farmhouse that will be relocated. Lead-based paint was found in a few locations that are currently encapsulated, with no signs of flaking. After the farmhouse is relocated, a state-licensed lead inspector will re-inspect the structure to determine if the lead-based paint remains intact. If any lead-based paint is not intact, it will be encapsulated. The Sakauye Farmhouse's location will

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be adjacent to the migrant farmworker cabins at History Park (see Attachment - Map of Sakauye Farmhouse Location at History Park). The Sakauye Farmhouse will be a new addition to History Park. Initial maintenance tasks will be performed as part of the moving procedures. History San José will perform continued maintenance and will not require additional City funding. With funds raised for renovation, History San José plans to maintain the Sakauye Farmhouse using materials and methods consistent with those used to preserve its other historic buildings at History Park.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

History San José will be required to submit a work plan detailing the Sakauye Farmhouse renovation and the structure's operational use once renovations are complete. Progress reports will be provided to the City as part of History San José's quarterly reports to the City Manager's Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs. Reports will include updates on ongoing renovations to the historic Sakauye Farmhouse.

COST SUMMARY/IMPLICATIONS

The estimated cost of this acquisition and move is \$822,600. As part of the City's Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Adopted Operating Budget, \$25,000 was made available for this project. Currently, History San José has raised over \$802,269 for this project. The difference between the relocation cost estimate and the funds raised to date is \$13,331. History San José states that the relocation cost difference will be covered through several pledged donations planned for 2026. The remaining costs for renovating and maintaining the Sakauye Farmhouse will be covered by funds raised by History San José and the Japanese American Museum of San José. History San José plans to continue its fundraising efforts throughout the project's life.

BUDGET REFERENCE

The following table identifies the fund and appropriation for the City funding allocated for the project described in this memorandum.

Fund #	Appn. #	Appropriation Name	Total Appropriation	2025-2026 Adopted Operating Budget Page	Last Budget Action (Date, Ord. No.)
001	232E	Sakauye Farmhouse Relocation	\$25,000	884	6/17/2025 31230

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COORDINATION

This memorandum was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office, the City Manager's Budget Office, and the Departments of Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services; Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement; and Public Works.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

This memorandum will be posted on the City's Council Agenda website for the January 27, 2026 City Council meeting.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION AND INPUT

Presently, there is no input or recommendation from the City's Historical Preservation Commission, which has been informed of the Sakauye Farmhouse acquisition and move.

CEQA

Environmental Impact Report for Seely Avenue Mixed-Use Project. (Resolution No. RES2024-297), File No(s). PDC21-035, PD22-002, PT22-003 and ER21-284.

PUBLIC SUBSIDY REPORTING

This item does not include a public subsidy as defined in section 53083 or 53083.1 of the California Government Code or the City's Open Government Resolution.

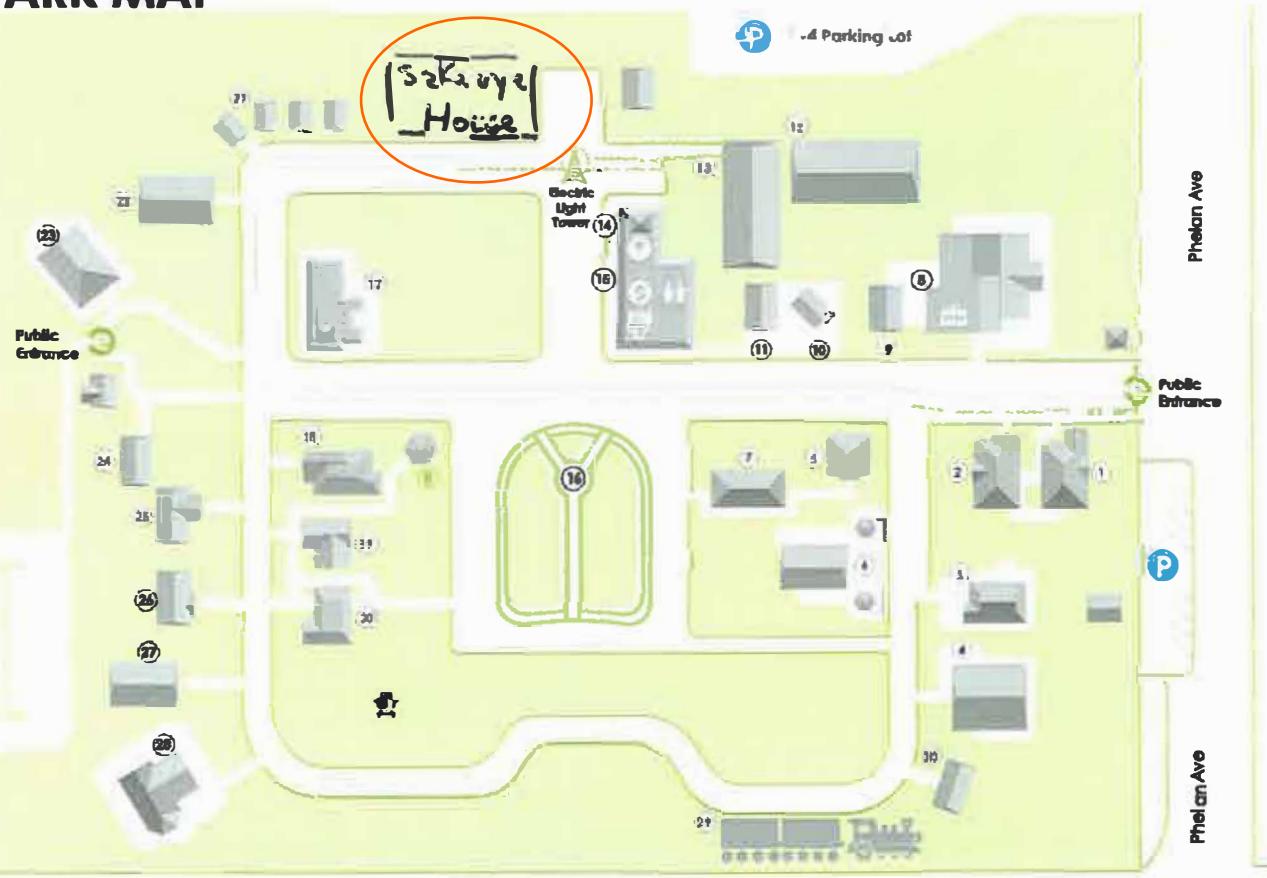


JEN BAKER
Director, City Manager's Office of
Economic Development and
Cultural Affairs

For questions, please contact Kerry Adams Hapner, Director of Cultural Affairs, City Manager's Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs, at kerry.adams.hapner@sanjoseca.gov.

ATTACHMENT – Map of Sakauye Farmhouse Location at History Park

HISTORY PARK MAP



KEY

- Public Entrance
- BBQ Area
- Band Stand
- Electric Light Tower
- O'Brien's Ice Cream Parlor
- ATM
- HSJ Administrative Offices
- Parking
- Restroom
- Trolley Rail
- Trolley

PARK DIRECTORY

- 1 Nelson-DeLuz House
- 2 Pasetta House: Leonard and David McKay Gallery
- 3 Paulson House: California Pioneers of Santa Clara County
- 4 Dashaway Stables
- 5 Doctor Warburton's Office
- 6 Portuguese Historical Museum at the Imperio: Portuguese Heritage Society of California
- 7 Chinese American Historical Museum at the Ng Shing Gung: Chinese Historical and Cultural Project
- 8 Rod Diridon Sr. Trolley Barn: California Trolley & Railroad Corporation
- 9 Blacksmith Shed
- 10 Associated Oil Company Gas Station

- 11 Print Shop: San Jose Printers' Guild
- 12 Schmahl Science Workshops
- 13 Bay Area Glass Institute (BAGI)
- 14 Bank of Italy
- 15 Pacific Hotel
 - Arbuckle Gallery
 - Renzel Room
 - O'Brien's Ice Cream Parlor and Candy Shop
 - G&A Gift Shop
- 16 Lillian Gong-Guy Plaza
- 17 Empire Firehouse
- 18 Andrew P. Hill House
- 19 Edwin Markham House: Poetry Center San José
- 20 Umberger House

- 21 Sakauye Orchard Migrant Cabins
- 22 Stevens Ranch Fruit Barn
- 23 Gordon House: Rotary Club of San José
- 24 Coyote Post Office
- 25 Chiechi House: La Raza Historical Society of Santa Clara Valley
- 26 Zanker House: African American Heritage House
- 27 Santa Ana School House: Connie L. Lurie College of Education Alumni Association
- 28 Greenwald House: Viet Museum Immigrant Resettlement & Cultural Center
- 29 Southern Pacific Railroad Locomotive 1215 and Orchard Supply Hardware Boxcar
- 30 Coyote Train Depot

History San José



Preserving Our Heritage

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historysanjose.org