



Craig Kohruss / The Fresno Bee
 Guests and employees mingle Wednesday in the main lobby of the newly renovated law offices of Marderosian Runyon Cercone Lehman & Armo during their open house on Fresno's Fulton Mall. The law firm's building is the former Hodge & Sons clothing store.

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Revitalization realization

After 18 months and \$3 million, a Fresno law firm has finished its contribution to renovating Fulton Mall.

By Sanford Nax / The Fresno Bee

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A law firm unveiled its new \$3million commitment to downtown Fresno on Wednesday, the latest investment in an area that gradually is being revitalized.

Marderosian Runyon Cercone Lehman & Armo spent \$3 million and 18 months transforming and expanding its century-old Fulton Mall building into a sleek, modern office that reflects the progressive interests of its partners, including pop culture and sports.

"When was the last time you walked into an office with Spider-Man in the corner?" said Mick Marderosian, senior partner.

Marderosian is a fan of Spider-Man, and a life-size replica of the superhero adorns a corner of the lobby. The attorney obtained Spidey from a friend in the movie business.

Spider-Man, pop culture magazines in the lobby, modern art work, sleek furniture provided by Facility Designs, mill finish aluminum and architectural elements suspended from the ceiling contribute to the modern image Marderosian and the others wanted to portray.

"With a place like this, you need a grand entrance," said Jeff Jones, project manager for Henderson Architectural Group, which oversaw the renovation.

The building, constructed about 1910, is the former Hodge & Sons clothing store.

The law firm bought the structure in 1986 and remained committed to the city's core when other businesses were moving north.

The firm had three lawyers when the building was bought; it now has 14.

"We wanted to reflect the law firm — young people and growing," Marderosian said.

Marderosian said he never considered relocating.

He said he remembers his mother taking him to the opening of Fulton Mall in 1964, and he is now participating in its renaissance.

Thousands of office workers have poured downtown in recent years with the construction of new office buildings. Downtown is home to an expanded medical center, a new federal courthouse and even housing.

Marlene Murphey, executive director of the city's Redevelopment Agency, said the renovation coincides with other projects.

The law firm is near a new \$50 million IRS compliance center and parking garage, she said.

It is also close to the former Fresno Hilton, which is being renovated; the proposed Fresno Park Plaza housing development by Reza Assemi that could contain about 70 units between Divisadero and Sacramento streets and Broadway and Fulton Street; and a warehouse across from Chukchansi Park that Steve Geil plans to redevelop into 20,000 square feet of offices and stores, she said.

"They've committed their future to the downtown renaissance," Murphey said of the law firm. The reporter can be reached at snax@fresnobee.com or (559) 441-6495.



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Craig Kohruss / The Fresno Bee
One of the conference rooms showcases modern executive treatment. The law firm wanted to project the progressive interests of its partners.



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The lobby of Marderosian Runyon Cercone Lehman & Arno includes a Spider-Man replica among the decorations after a \$3 million renovation. Senior partner Mick Marderosian is a fan of the character.

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