



# Staff Report

## City of Pomona Historic Preservation Commission

June 4, 2025

**FILE NO:** DHS-000416-2025

A request for a Determination of Historic Significance for the bathroom structures located within Martin Luther King, Jr. Park.

**ADDRESS:** 800 W. Lexington Avenue (Martin Luther King, Jr. Park)

**APPLICANT:** City of Pomona

**PROJECT PLANNER:** Alan Fortune, Associate Planner

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission determine that the restroom facilities and attached shade structure within Martin Luther King, Jr. Park at 800 W. Lexington Avenue, is not Historic and adopt HPC Resolution No. 25-015 (Attachment No. 1).

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### Property Background:

The property located at 800 W. Lexington Avenue is developed as a City park known as Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. The restroom facilities and attached patio structure within the park were constructed sometime between 1970 and 1972.

### Critical Issues:

- Minimal information exists about the bathroom structures located within Martin Luther King, Jr. Park.

### Discussion of Critical Issues:

1. Due to the structures being greater than fifty years old, a Determination of Historic Significance is required. Staff has reviewed Building and Safety permit records, historic surveys, and Library special collections and did not locate any records indicating historic significance.

### Architectural Style:

The restroom facilities with an attached patio and shade structure were constructed sometime between 1970 and 1972. A definitive construction date could not be determined without Building and Safety permit records. The

architectural style of the structures can be described as “vernacular” as the building does not exemplify any character-defining features of any particular historic style of architecture. Site photographs have been attached for Commission’s reference (Attachment No. 3).

### Architectural Description:

The structure, consisting of a set of gendered restrooms and an attached patio structure, is approximately 1,764 square feet. It is a square structure with 42 square feet on either side. It is composed of split face block with composition roof shingle. Because the building lacks character-defining features of any particular historic style of architecture, the style of the structure can be described as “Vernacular.”

### Character-Defining Features:

1. Split face block structure
2. Composition roof with exposed support beams
3. Gendered restroom facilities with attached partly composition shingled and partly trellised patio

### HISTORY:

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park is located at the southeast corner of West Lexington Avenue and South White Avenue.

The City of Pomona began acquiring the land from Armstrong Nurseries Inc. for park development in 1956 (Attachment No. 4), however, according to aerial imagery, the park was not developed until after 1966.

The park located was initially named Lexington Park after the adjacent Lexington Elementary School. Lexington Park was renamed to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park in 1968 (see Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes as Attachment No. 5).

In 1969, the City Council approved Resolution Nos. 69-186 and 69-187 to develop and improve Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park. These improvements included the installation of a baseball backstop, signs, walkways, lights, drinking fountains, plants, a playground, picnic tables, barbeque, and other off-site improvements for a total of \$38,000 (Attachment No. 6). These improvements were designed by “Cashion-Horie, Architects, A.I.A.” (Attachment No. 7).

In 1970, the Pomona City Council requested the City Attorney to draft an agreement to cover a Cal Poly proposal for the development of the Park. Full improvements of the park took place between 1970 and 1972, including the construction of the bathroom and patio structure.

In 1999, the Parks & Recreation Commission discussed the enclosing and enlarging the entire restroom/shelter area to allow for additional recreation programming and activities (Attachment No. 8).

### Significance:

Based on the information staff has on the structure, the bathroom and patio structure within Martin Luther King, Jr. Park does not have significance to local, regional, or national history nor does have any particularly significant architectural features based on our designation criteria.

## Designation Criteria:

Staff reviewed the National Register, California Register, and local designation criteria to determine whether the property is historic.

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CRITERIA

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history (Criterion A).

The restroom and patio structures are not associated with events that have made significant contributions to our history. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

2. Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past (Criterion B).

Though the park is named to memorialize Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the restroom and attached patio structures within the park do not have direct association him or any persons of historic significance. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

3. 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 may lack individual distinction (Criterion C).

The existing structure is in poor condition and does not have any character-defining features for any particular style of architecture, nor does the structure embody distinctive characteristics of the type, time period, or region. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory (Criterion D).

The structure is not located on a site identified as having potential archaeological resources on it. It is therefore, unlikely to yield any information important to history or prehistory and does not meet this criterion.

### CALIFORNIA REGISTER OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

1. 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 (Criterion 1).

The restroom and patio structures are not associated with events that have made significant contributions to our history. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

2. Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history (Criterion 2).

Though the park is named to memorialize Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the restroom and patio structures themselves do not have direct association him or any persons of historic significance. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

3. 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 (Criterion 3).

The existing structure is in poor condition and does not have any character-defining features for any particular style of architecture, nor does the structure embody distinctive characteristics of the type, time period, or region. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

4. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation (Criterion 4).

The structure is not located on a site identified as having potential archaeological resources on it. It is therefore, unlikely to yield any information important to history or prehistory and does not meet this criterion.

## **CITY OF POMONA LANDMARK DESIGNATION CRITERIA**

### **Architecture / Physical Features**

1. It embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship (Criterion 3 in previous ordinance).

The existing structure is in poor condition and does not have any character-defining features for any particular style of architecture, nor does the structure embody distinctive characteristics of the type, time period, or region. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

2. It is the work of a notable builder, designer, landscape designer or architect (Criterion 5 in previous ordinance).

The City did not locate record of who the original architects were of the bathroom structures, though they likely were Pomona-based Cashion-Horie, Architects. The work was not conducted by notable builders or architects. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

3. It embodies elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation (Criterion 7 in previous ordinance).

The bathroom structure does not embody elements of significant architectural design or innovation. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

4. It is similar to other distinctive properties, sites, areas, or objects based on an historic, cultural, or architectural motif (Criterion 8 in previous ordinance).

The restrooms inherently share similarities to other park improvements conducted by the City during the late 1960's or early 1970's; however, these are not distinctive properties relating to historic or cultural motif. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

5. It has a unique location or singular physical characteristics or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city of Pomona (Criterion 6 in previous ordinance).

The bathrooms do not have a unique location, nor do they represent an established and familiar visual to the neighborhood. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

6. It reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of park or community planning (Criterion 9 in previous ordinance).

The construction of the bathrooms at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park do not represent significant geographical patterns of development for Pomona or the region. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

7. It is one of the few remaining examples in the city of Pomona, region, state, or nation possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen (Criterion 10 in previous ordinance).

The structure does not exemplify any particular historic style of architecture and is not among the few remaining examples of type of structure of this period. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

#### **Person(s) and Events Important in Our History**

1. It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history (Criterion 2 in previous ordinance).

Though the park is named to memorialize Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the restroom and patio structures themselves do not have direct association him or any persons of historic significance. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

2. It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the city of Pomona's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, architectural, or natural history (Criterion 1 in previous ordinance).

The restrooms do not exemplify or reflect special elements of the City of Pomona's history. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

## Archaeology

1. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

The structure is not located on a site identified as having potential archaeological resources on it. It is therefore, unlikely to yield any information important to history or prehistory and does not meet this criterion.

## CITY OF POMONA HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION CRITERIA

1. It is a contiguous area possessing a concentration of eligible historic resources or thematically related grouping of structures which contribute to each other and are unified by plan, style, or physical development; and (b) embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction; represents the work of a master; or possesses high artistic values (*Criterion 4 in previous ordinance*).

The bathroom structures do not contribute to any concentration of eligible historic resources that would contribute to the eligibility of neighborhood designation as a historic district. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

2. It reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of a park landscape, site design, or community planning (*Criterion 9 in previous ordinance*).

The construction of the bathrooms at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park do not represent significant geographical patterns of development for Pomona or the region. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

Meets at least one of Landmark Designation Criteria as follows:

- a. Architecture / Physical Features Criteria 1, 2, 3, or 4; and/or
- b. Person and Events Criteria 1 or 2.

The existing structure is in poor condition and does not have any character-defining features for any particular style of architecture, nor does the structure embody distinctive characteristics of the type, time period, or region. Therefore, the structure does not meet this criterion.

## Conclusion:

Based on the designation criteria, Staff has determined that the property does not meet national, state, or local designation criteria. Therefore, staff has determined that the restrooms are ineligible to be designated as the structure is not historically nor architecturally significant.

Attachments:

1. Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 25-015
2. Site Plan
3. Photographs of site and surrounding area
4. City Council Resolution No. 4215
5. Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes of June 13, 1968
6. City Council Resolution No. 69-186
7. City Council Resolution No. 69-187
8. Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes of April 8, 1999