



## Staff Report

City of Pomona Historic Preservation Commission

September 3, 2025

**FILE NO:** DHS-000355-2025

A request to make a Determination of Historic Significance for 1677 N. Garey Avenue.

**ADDRESS:** 1677 N. Garey Avenue

**APPLICANT:** Tafoya and Associates

**PROJECT PLANNER:** Irene Mouré, Assistant Planner

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:** This project is exempt for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378(a) of the California CEQA Guidelines.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Determine File No(s). DHS-000355-2025 is not historic and adopt Resolution No. 25-024 (Attachment 1).

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### Architectural Style:

There is an existing standalone, one-story configuration commercial structure on the property. This structure has modest architectural detailing that is consistent with the Mid-Century, Modern-style shops designed and constructed in the 1950s and 1960s along commercial corridors, such as Garey Avenue. However, there have been major alterations to the property that has obscured any recognizable styles. Therefore, the architectural style is considered "commercial vernacular".

### Architectural Description:

Due to the major alterations to the property, there are no distinguishable characteristics for the one-story, commercial building with stucco siding. There is also an attached mansard style roof to the front façade. Currently, the structure is an indistinguishable commercial structure with large shopfront windows that are boarded up as the property is vacant. The condition of the site provides limited information regarding the architectural detailing.

### RELEVANT ALTERATIONS:

1946 – 950 square foot "radio shop" constructed

1956 – Installation of one window to the north side, closure of one window to the south side for a donut shop

1976 – 150 square foot addition to the front, mansard roof addition

1991 – Stucco over existing redwood siding

### Character-Defining Features:

1. One-story configuration
2. Mansard roof
3. Large shopfront windows

### HISTORY:

See discussion items below describing the historic background of the property.

### Historic Context Statement:

The property is within the "Commercial Development" theme of "Postwar Growth, Diversification, and Redevelopment" (1946-1980) section of the Citywide Historic Context Statement. The attached pages from the Historic Context Statement identify criteria and integrity standards to be considered historic (Attachment 3).

### Survey Information:

The subject property was not and has not been surveyed. It was not included in the 1993 Citywide survey.

### City Directories:

The property first appears in the city directories in 1948 (Attachment 4).

Year		Name
1948	Fikel Radio & Television (Farrell Fikel)	
1951	Fikel Radio & Television (Farrell Fikel)	

### Business History:

The property has experienced a plethora of different retail outlets. The first recorded land use activity was a radio and television repair shop. Next, a donut shop in 1956. In 1968, the property operated as the campaign headquarters for Robert F. Kennedy during his bid for presidency. In following, a Certificate of Occupancy was issued for a retail outlet selling clothing in 1971. From the 1980s to the late 1990s, the property functioned as a flower shop. In the early 2000s, the property served as a car accessory installation site, such as stereos and tinted windows. The site has remained vacant since 2015 (Attachment 5).

Year	Name
1948	Fikel Radio & Television (J.F. Fikel)
1956	Bill's Donut Time
1968	Robert F. Kennedy's Campaign Headquarters
1971	Retail Clothing
1980	Alan's Flowers
1995	Suzann's Flowers
1998	Southern California School of Floral Design
2004	Stereo X

### Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps:

The subject property was not included in the city's Sanborn Map collection.

### Significance:

The property has a fascinating history with historic figures, such as former US Senator and the 64<sup>th</sup> US Attorney General – Robert F. Kennedy. This property once operated as RKF's official campaign headquarters for the Pomona Valley area during his bid to be the 1968 presidential nominee. RFK was assassinated in 1968 during his campaign run. His death came three years after his brother's, former President John F. Kennedy's assassination, and two months after the assassination of Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. RFK visited the Pomona headquarters often whenever he toured Pomona and nearby cities, such as Ontario, including on May 20, 1968, just two weeks before he was assassinated on June 5, 1968.

Moreover, while not as prominent as RFK, the original owner of the property Farrell Fikel designed and constructed "bomb-contained radio telemetering units and land-based recording equipment" during his service in World War II. Fikel also worked on wiring fighter jets. He had closed his original radio business at 135 S. Gibbs Street to join the war and reopened another shop at the subject property after his service was completed (Attachment 5).

### 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 property was the official campaign headquarters for Robert F. Kennedy (RFK), the former US Senator and 64<sup>th</sup> US Attorney General, during his bid for presidency in 1968. RFK visited the area often, including on May 20, 1968, just two weeks before he was assassinated on June 5, 1968. This was also an important time in Pomona's history as Pomona's Black and Latino communities were actively protesting and fighting for their civil rights. Therefore, the property meets this criterion.

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

The property is associated with RFK, who made this site his official presidential campaign headquarters for the 1968 presidential race. RFK was assassinated the same year in the City of Los Angeles. Prior to his assassination, he would visit the City of Pomona frequently during his campaign tours, including on May 20, 1968, just two weeks before he was assassinated on June 5, 1968. Therefore, the property meets 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).

While the property is considered a commercial vernacular architecture and does not have distinctive characteristics of a particular style. Therefore, the property does not meet this criterion.

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

This criterion relates to archaeological resources and there is no information that this site may have been important to Indigenous tribes in the area. Therefore, the property is not likely to yield any information.

## 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 property was the official campaign headquarters for Robert F. Kennedy (RFK), the former US Senator and 64<sup>th</sup> US Attorney General, during his bid for presidency in 1968. RFK visited the area often, including on May 20, 1968, just two weeks before he was assassinated on June 5, 1968. Therefore, the property meets this criterion.

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

The property is associated with RFK, who made this site his official presidential campaign headquarters for the 1968 presidential race. RFK was assassinated the same year in the City of Los Angeles. Prior to his assassination, he would visit the City of Pomona frequently during his campaign tours, including on May 20, 1968, just two weeks before he was assassinated on June 5, 1968. This was also an important time in Pomona's history as Pomona's Black and Latino communities were actively protesting and fighting for their civil rights. Therefore, the property meets this criterion. Therefore, the property meets 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).

While the property is considered a commercial vernacular architecture and does not have distinctive characteristics of a particular style. Therefore, the property 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).

This criterion relates to archaeological resources and there is no information that this site may have been important to Indigenous tribes in the area. Therefore, the property is not likely to yield any information.

## 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 property does not embody distinctive characteristics of a style, period, or method of construction. There are more distinctive examples of post-WWII commercial outlets. Therefore, the property 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 property is not associated with the work of a notable builder or designer. Therefore, the property 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);

While the property is considered a commercial vernacular architecture and does not have distinctive characteristics of a particular style. Therefore, the property 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 property does not meet this criterion because it is not similar to other distinctive properties. It is a commercial vernacular architectural style and is not similar to other distinctive properties.

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 property does not meet this criterion because it not in a unique location or represents an established feature.

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 property is a part of the significant commercial development pattern that took place in the 1950s and 1960s. Therefore, the property 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).

This property does not meet this criterion as it does not possess distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type.

#### **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);

The property is associated with RFK, who made this site his official presidential campaign headquarters for the 1968 presidential race. RFK was assassinated the same year in the City of Los Angeles. Prior to his assassination, he would visit the City of Pomona frequently during his campaign tours, including on May 20, 1968, just two weeks before he was assassinated on June 5, 1968. His last visit to Pomona often held luncheons in Pomona at local restaurants with business owners and held public speaking events at the Pomona Mall, which is currently recognized as Downtown Pomona. Therefore, the property meets 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);

This site does exemplify special elements of Pomona's economic and cultural history. The original owner of the property was a Pomona resident who closed a radio shop in the city to join war efforts. Furthermore, it is associated with RFK and his presidential campaign as it was the official campaign headquarters at a time that was also an important time in Pomona's history as Pomona's Black and Latino communities were actively protesting and fighting for their civil rights. Therefore the property meets 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.

This criterion relates to archaeological resources and there is no information that this site may have been important to Indigenous tribes in the area. Therefore, the property is not likely to yield any information.

### 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 property is not located in any identified area that could be a potential historic district. There is not a concentration of eligible historic resources in the area. Therefore, the property 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*); and

The property is not located in any identified area that could be a potential historic district. While the Garey Avenue corridor was a location of post-war growth, it does not have any distinctive examples that would qualify the neighborhood as historic. Therefore, the property 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.

As discussed above, the property meets criteria for designation as a local historic landmark, but the neighborhood does not have significance. Therefore, the property does not meet this criterion.

### Architectural/Historical Integrity:

While the property has an interesting history, the structure has experienced modifications that have changed the original architecture. The structure's architectural integrity was not maintained from the era of its construction or through the occupancy of RFK's presidential campaign headquarters. It no longer represents the period of time related to its significance, and the alterations have made it unrecognizable from its period of significance. The alteration have made it ineligible for designation as a local historic landmark.

### Required Findings:

The findings required in Section 800.C.1 of the Pomona Zoning and Development Code for a Determination of Historic Significance are contained in the attached resolution (Attachment 1).

### Conclusion:

While the property has an interesting history, the structure has experienced modifications that have changed the original architecture. The structure's architectural integrity was not maintained from the era of its construction or through the occupancy of RFK's presidential campaign headquarters. It has deviated from its original state and, therefore, does not bear historic significance that aligns with the criteria.

### Environmental Review:

Staff have determined that this project is exempt for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378(a) of the California CEQA Guidelines as it not considered a project.

### Conditions of Approval:

The Conditions of Approval are contained in the attached resolution (Attachment 1).

### Attachments:

1. Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 25-024
2. Photographs of site and surrounding area
3. Applicable Historic Context Statement Pages
4. City Directories
5. Previous Businesses + Articles