



# Staff Report

City of Pomona Historic Preservation Commission

March 4, 2026

**FILE NO:** DHS-000642-2025

A request for a Determination of Historic Significance for a property located at 1318 Murchison Avenue.

**ADDRESS:** 1318 Murchison Avenue

**APPLICANT:** Sumit Brahmhatt

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

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:** This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378(a) of the California CEQA Guidelines as it is not considered a project.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve File No(s). DHS-000642-2025 and adopt Resolution No. 26-007 (Attachment No. 1).

## Architectural Style:

The architectural style of the main structure located on the subject property can be described as a Craftsman Bungalow. The other structure on site is a small accessory storage structure of approximately 150 square feet to the rear of the property that attempts to bare minimal Craftsman architectural elements. Photographs of the site and the surrounding area are attached for review (Attachment No. 2).

## Architectural Description:

The primary structure is a one-story configuration and is rectangular in shape. The architectural elements bare Craftsman Bungalow elements, such as the river rock porch with wood columns, the expansive roof eaves, double-hung windows, and the wood siding. However, this structure also has undergone several modifications that have removed many distinguishing Craftsman architectural elements. At one point, the open front porch was enclosed on three sides and a 330 square foot family room with a fireplace was added to the rear of the structure. Moreover, the other structure on the site is a 150 square foot storage accessory structure. The accessory structure attempted to bear and replicate some similarities with the primary by matching the siding material and expansive roof eaves. However, the siding is in a vertical direction whereas the primary has horizontal.

Overall, both structures have undergone many modifications that have removed distinguishing elements that essentially obscure the architectural integrity of the Craftsman Bungalow and are, more-or-less, in a dilapidated state.

**RELEVANT ALTERATIONS:**

- 1955 – Enclose open front porch
- 1963 – 330 square foot family room w/fireplace addition
- 2005 – Reconversion of 2 units into 1
- 2011 – Addition of master bath, laundry room, and closet

Character-Defining Features:

1. River rock porch with wood columns
2. Expansive roof eaves
3. Wood siding
4. Double-hung windows

HISTORY:

Building and Safety permit records indicate the structure was constructed in 1931 and was a part of the Naranja Val Vista Tract. However, the structure at the time was noted to have a stucco exterior. There are no records capturing the exterior siding change nor are there records for the construction of the accessory structure to the rear of the property. The records on file are limited to the porch enclosure and room addition. However, a few of the inhabitants of the property are somewhat noteworthy but, in large, the property has lived a quiet, unassuming life.

Historic Context Statement:

The eligibility standards set forth in “Theme: Residential” of Chapter VII. An Established City (1900-191) is used to determine the significance of the subject property. The property must meet the following criteria: Criterion A/1/1,9 (Events/Patterns of Development), Criterion B/2/2 (Important Persons), and Criterion C/3/3,5,7 (Architecture and Design) to be eligible for historic designation (Attachment No. 3).

Survey Information:

The property was included in the 1993 Citywide survey. It lies within the northwest quadrant of the City. However, the survey noted that while the structure was in good condition, it had too many alterations to be considered contributing to a potential future historic district (Attachment No. 4).

City Directories:

The property appears in the City directories between 1951 to 1989. Below is a chart listing the previous inhabitants of the property per the City directories. One notable property owner was Kenneth F. Poe and kin. Mr. Poe is distantly related to American writer of gothic horror and macabre poetry, Edgar Allan Poe. Non-literary figure, Mr. Poe’s children, such as Miss Mary Jane Poe and Miss Betty Poe, appeared a few times in archived Progress Bulletin articles for, at the time, noteworthy community engagement and extracurricular activities (Attachment No. 5).

Other homeowners, such as Mr. and Mrs. Packard, may not have appeared in the City directories, but there are archived articles related to an alcohol-induced accident and for contributing to the delinquency of minors (Attachment No. 5).

Year	Name
1951 - 1952	Richard and Luara G. Joyce
1953 – 1977	Kenneth F. Poe
1980	No Telephone
1984	No Telephone
1989	Robin Zebleckis

### Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps:

The property was not included in the Sanborn Maps. The collection did not include this area of the City.

### Significance:

The property was a part of the Naranja-Val Vista Tract that experienced development approximately in 1918. This area was developed with mostly single-family homes. The Craftsman Bungalow home style was also the most popular at the time this tract was developed. This is evident as the existing primary structure was identified as a Craftsman Bungalow in the 1993 Citywide survey. However, the property was deemed as non-contributing due to the series of major modifications the property underwent. Building and Safety permit records also identify these modifications, such as the enclosure of the distinctive Craftsman Bungalow porch. Moreover, while the previous inhabitants appeared in archived newspaper articles and some are distant kin to an important American literary figure, none of them are considered to be important persons to Pomona's history.

Overall, the structures on the site have experienced modifications that have removed many distinguishable Craftsman Bungalow architectural elements (Attachment No. 6). Staff's review of permit records, City directories, and survey information has determined that the property is not eligible for a determination of historic significance.

### 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 is a part of one of the earliest tract developments that occurred in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, known as the Naranja-Val Vista Tract. However, the property itself is not significant to this event. Therefore, it does not meet this criterion.

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

Although the previous homeowners of the property share a lineage with American writer and literary figure, Edgar Allan Poe, they are not particularly important to national or Pomona's past. Therefore, they do 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).

At one point in time, the primary structure on the property embodied the distinguishable elements of a Craftsman Bungalow, that is no longer the case as the structure has undergone major modifications. Therefore, this criterion is not met.

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

This criterion does not apply as there has not been archeological information identified.

#### **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 is a part of one of the earliest tract developments that occurred in the early 20th century, known as the Naranja-Val Vista Tract. However, the property itself is not significant to this event. Therefore, it does not meet this criterion.

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

While the property is distantly associated with Edgar Allan Poe, Mr. Kenneth F. Poe nor other homeowners were not a person important to local, California, or national history. Therefore, this criterion is not met.

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).

During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century development of the Naranja-Val Vista Tract, Craftsman and California bungalow home styles were a popular choice. However, the main structure has been modified where many of these elements were removed. Therefore, this criterion is not met.

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 does not apply as there has not been archeological information identified.

## 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);

During the early 20th century development of the Naranja-Val Vista Tract, Craftsman and California bungalow home styles were a popular choice. However, the main structure has been modified where many of these elements were removed. Therefore, this criterion is not met.

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

The subject property was a part of a large tract development and does not bear distinguishable elements. Therefore, it 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 1933 Citywide survey identified the primary structure as not eligible for a contributing status due to its many modifications. Therefore, it 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);

Due to its extensive modifications, the property is not similar to other distinctive properties, sites, areas, or objects. Therefore, it 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 property is not located in a unique location or in a vista representing an established feature of a neighborhood, etc. Therefore, it 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 property is in an early 20th century development of the Naranja-Val Vista Tract where Craftsman and California bungalow home styles were a popular choice in this era. However, the main structure has been modified where many of these elements were removed. Therefore, this criterion is not met.

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 City of Pomona possesses more prominent and architecturally intact Craftsman Bungalows, especially those located within established historic districts. Therefore, this criterion is not met.

#### **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);

While one of the subject property's inhabitants is loosely and distantly identified with persons significant to local, state, or national history, such as Edgar Allan Poe. These persons are not considered to be significant.

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 structures on the site do not exemplify or reflect special elements of the City of Pomona. The main structure underwent major alterations that have reduced its aesthetic and architectural integrity.

#### **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 does not apply as there has not been archeological information identified

#### **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 neighborhood in which the property is in has many modern structures, such as recently built townhomes, and other structures that have been altered. Furthermore, the Interstate Route 10 Freeway abuts the subject parcel. Therefore, it 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

Although the property is associated with the Naranja-Val Vista Tract, which experienced one of the first tract developments in the city in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is not reflective of distinctive examples of park landscape, site design, or community planning.

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.

Based on Staff's analysis, the property does not meet either of the Landmark Designation Criteria listed above. Building permit records and historic surveys identify major modifications that have removed many distinguishing architectural elements. Even though the property is a part of one of the earliest tract development events, this parcel is not significant to said event.

### 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 is not considered a project.

### Conditions of Approval:

The Conditions of Approval are contained in the attached resolution (Attachment No. 1).

### Required Findings:

The findings required in Section 800.C.(2) of the Pomona Zoning and Development Code for a Determination of Historic Significance are contained in the attached resolution (Attachment No. 1).

### Conclusion:

The subject property is not eligible to be designated as a landmark as it does not meet any of the Landmark Designation Criteria set forth in Section 800.C.(2).

Attachments:

1. Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 26-007
2. Photographs of site and surrounding area
3. Historic Context Statement Excerpt
4. 1993 Citywide Survey
5. Archived articles and city directories
6. Building and Safety permit records