



Staff Report

City of Pomona Historic Preservation Commission

December 3, 2025

FILE NO: DHS-000611-2025

A request for a Determination of Historic Significance to determine if the structures on the subject site hold any historic significance.

ADDRESS: 1760 Cordova Street

APPLICANT: Rodd Golshan

PROJECT PLANNER: Carlos Molina, Associate Planner

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

RECOMMENDATION: Approve File No. DHS-000611-2025 and adopt Resolution No. 25-042.

Project Information:

GENERAL PLAN DISTRICT: Urban Neighborhood

ZONING DISTRICT: Urban Neighborhood District 2 (UND2)

TRANSECT: T4-A

SPECIFIC PLAN DISTRICT: N/A

GENERAL PLAN DENSITY: 70 DU/AC

Important Dates:

DATE SUBMITTED: September 16, 2025

DATE DETERMINED COMPLETE: September 30, 2025

Architectural Style:

The primary building on the site is designed in the commonly described "Dingbat" style following the Mid-Century Modern style (1945-1960) of architecture stemming from the International architecture style (1925-present).

The "dingbat" style was commonly reserved for apartment buildings located on typical residential neighborhood lots measuring approximately 7,500 SF (50'W x 150'D). A typical "dingbat" style apartment building includes

approximately five to twelve units within a one to two story building, a flat or low-pitched roof, external stairs and balconies, and open carports located to the rear of the site accessed by a drive aisle located to one side of the property or by an alley. Facades are extremely limited in their detailing, often time providing large expanses of walls with no window, doors, or combination of materials and colors. The extent of detailing found on these buildings are commonly located on the building frontages facing the street; these facades would employ simple façade additions to stucco walls such as geometric shapes (either painted or attached) and either painted or channel letter signs designed to emulate the Mid-Century Modern design language that was prominent during the post-war period.

Architectural Description:

The site consists of a primary two-story building consisting of six residential units along with a detached six-space carport located to the rear of the site. The apartment building is built using Type V construction with a stucco exterior, composite shingle roof, and a combination of aluminum and vinyl windows. The building includes exterior stairs to access the three units located on the second floor of the building. The façade includes consistent and linear repetition of windows and doors with no variation in materials. The building façade appears to have miscellaneous decorative features added over time, such as a small portion of stone veneer located on the wall facing the public right-of-way and wood trim added to windows located on the primary walls of the building. The wall facing the carport in the rear is predominantly blank with no doors/windows and only includes wall-mounted utility meters. The carport is built in Type V construction with a composition shingle roof, and is open on one-side for vehicle ingress/egress.

RELEVANT ALTERATIONS:

None.

Character-Defining Features:

1. Rectangular volumes
2. Unornamented surfaces
3. Limited to no detailing on windows and doors
4. Linear window groupings
5. Expanses of windowless wall surface
6. Unified wall cladding (stucco commonly)

HISTORY:

Subject Site

According to Los Angeles County Assessors data and available building permits (Attachment No. 2), the site was developed in 1959 with the existing six-unit apartment building and the detached carport located to the rear of the site. The original building permit for the site lists Willard Groth as the property owner and John P. Overholt as the general contractor; no architect or engineer was listed for the project. Subsequent building permits found for the site include miscellaneous maintenance-related projects such as re-roofing (1977), water heater replacements (2007), window replacements and repairs to stairs (2008). According to Code Compliance Division records, the property acquired eight (8) code enforcement violations from 2007-2015. Those cases involved property maintenance related issues associated with the 2007-2008 building permits, business license requirements for rental properties, partial conversion of the carport into a storage room which was subsequently removed in 2015, and fencing installed to the rear of the property associated with a 2015 Fence and Wall Permit Application with the

Planning Division. Review of the existing property does not indicate any work conducted on the site that is not consistent with available City records.

Archival research into the listed contacts produced six (6) articles posted in the Progress Bulletin from 1956-1963 (Attachment No. 3). The articles consisted of construction projects John P. Overholt had been involved with and articles relating to Williard Groth's involvement in the local Boy Scouts chapter.

Surrounding Neighborhood

Cordova Street is located nearest to the Indian Hill Boulevard and San Bernardino Avenue intersection. The surrounding neighborhood consists primarily of residential developments, with both single-family and multi-family residential structures. The entire block of Cordova Street consists of multi-family apartment developments; all designed in the "dingbat" architecture style with varying degree of façade ornamentation. According to LA County Assessor's data, all residential developments along Cordova Street were built between 1958-1962 and individually include six to twenty-one units per development. Immediately adjacent to Cordova Street is the location of the Key Co-Operative Village built in 1962, boasting a total of 112 units arranged in triplexes located on the east and west side of Benedict and Appleton Streets. The development was designed by prominent South Pasadena-based architects Smith and Williams (Whitney R. Smith and Wayne R. Williams) alongside landscape architect Garret Eckbo. According to the *City of Pomona Historic Context Statement*, the Key Co-Operative Village is one of the largest and most architecturally significant apartment developments built in Pomona during this period.

Just west of the multi-family developments located on Cordova Street, Appleton and Benedict Way are single-family tract-style homes built between 1950-1970. It is important to note, according to historic aerials (Attachment No. 4) of the neighborhood from 1948-1972, the Cordova block of apartment buildings provide evidence that the block was purpose built with apartments and were among some of the first apartment buildings built in the neighborhood.

Historic Context Statement:

The construction date of the site puts this property within *Chapter 10: Postwar Growth, Diversification, and Redevelopment (1946-1980)* of the City of Pomona Historic Context Statement.

Following the end of WWII, Southern California saw a drastic growth in population which diversified the residential, commercial, civic, institutional, and industrial character of the region. To address housing shortages, developers responded with tracts of mass-produced residential developments utilizing new architectural and construction methods which allowed units to be built quickly and cheaply.

Within the City of Pomona, the postwar period production of housing primarily focused on single-family tract housing with very limited custom, single-family units. During the 1960s, Pomona led all the San Gabriel Valley cities in the number of dwelling units authorized. For example, between 1960-1964, 74 tracts comprising 1,993 lots were developed in the City of Pomona.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Pomona saw the largest growth of apartment-style residential development. The scale of these developments was larger in scale as opposed to other municipalities that were seeing a range of scales in multi-family housing. Notable examples of these developments in Pomona include the 36-unit Berkeley Manor Apartments (1660 Berkeley Avenue) built in 1956 and the 30-unit Pomona Plaza Apartments (1675 Berkeley Avenue) built in 1959. Examples from the 1960s include the 25-unit Grand Terrace Duplex (1962) located on Eleanor Street, the 122-unit Key Co-Operative Village (1961) located at 1500 E. San Bernardino Avenue, and the 276-unit Mount San Antonio Gardens (1963) located at 900 E. Harrison Avenue. This pattern of large-scaled development continued

well into the 1970s fueled by the growth of real-estate trends such as the condominium financing structure and the introduction of extensive recreational facilities as amenities for residents in large-scale developments.

Survey Information:

The 1992 City Historic Resources Survey locates Cordova Street within the Northeast quadrant of Pomona. Cordova Street was not included in the streets surveyed (Attachment No. 5); therefore, no property survey is available for the site.

City Directories:

No entries identified.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps:

The City keeps a 1928 Sanborn Map that was updated by the Building and Safety Department approximately up until 1958. The location of the subject site is not within the region recorded in the map.

Significance:

The 1960s and 1970s brought on the widespread development of the condominium. Individual properties or historic districts that are eligible under this theme may be significant as the site of an important event in history; for an association with an ethnic or cultural group or a person important in local, state, or national history; for exemplifying an important trend or pattern of development (typically, as contributors to historic districts). Resources significant under this theme may include single-family residences constructed in vast residential tracts recorded during the period immediately following World War II, and the multi-family residences that were increasingly popular by the late 1950s and early 1960s. Properties may also be significant as an example of a style or type.

All research findings on the subject site indicate little to no historical significance as a stand-alone property. However, the development scheme, period of development of Cordova Street, and the site's proximity to an important example of post-war development in the Key Co-Operative Village located on Benedict and Appleton Streets would suggest potential historical significance of the subject site and the surrounding neighborhood as a historic district highlighting popular architectural trends during the 1950s-1960s.

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).*

As an individual property, the site is not eligible under this criterion as there is no identifiable evidence that can sufficiently prove that it is the site of an event important in history or that it is a rare example of a residential development type. Note that according to the eligibility standards under Criterion A/1/1,9

(Events/Patterns of Development) as written in the *City of Pomona Historic Context Statement*, in order to be individually eligible for designation for representing a pattern of development, the property must be the first of its type, a rare remnant example of significant period of development, or a catalyst for development in the city or neighborhood.

However, a collection of residential properties that are eligible under this criterion as a historic district may be significant for representing an important pattern or trend in postwar residential development and/or as an intact collection of residences that represent the postwar growth of Pomona. In order to be eligible as a historic district, a historic district eligible under this theme must: (1) Retain a majority of contributing buildings from the period of significance, and (2) retain significant character-defining features from the period of significance, including any important landscape or hardscape features; and (3) retain the original layout, reflecting planning and designing principles from the period, and (4) retain the essential aspects of historic integrity.

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

No information was found that would suggest people associated with the site were persons significant with our past in accordance with eligibility requirements.

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 site does embody the distinctive characteristics of a type of construction method, the site does not have any elements that can set itself apart as a specially distinguishable example of the identified style.

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 could have been important to Native American 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).*

As a singular property, there have been no events identified that occurred on this property that would have made a significant contribution to National, California, or Pomona's history nor is the primary building on site a rare remaining example of a residential development type. Therefore, the site does not meet this criterion.

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

All persons found to be associated with the site do not meet the integrity considerations necessary to qualify as persons of particular importance at a local, state, or national level.

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 site embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Dingbat architecture style that was a prominent style in southern California during the post-war residential boom. However, no information is available eluding that the site is a work of a master or capable of possessing high artistic values. Therefore, this site 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 criteria relates to archaeological resources and there is no information that this site was could have been important to Native American 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);*

While the site does embody the distinctive characteristics of a type of construction method, the site does not have any elements that can set itself apart as a specially distinguishable example of the identified style.

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

Research into the listed builder of the development did not produce evidence that would suggest they may be considered a notable figure in their profession. Therefore, this criterion is not applicable.

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);*

Based off modifications made to the structure (i.e. replacement of aluminum windows for vinyl) and the aging condition of the façade, the building is not being classified as an excellent example of architectural achievement or innovation (Mid Century Modern / Dingbat architecture). 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);*

Despite the presences of many of the character-defining characteristics of the Dingbat style of architecture, The building does not present features that are especially unique and exemplary of notably significant examples of the Dingbat style of architecture.

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 site is located in a fully urbanized area, adjacent to a commercial corridor (Indian Hill Boulevard), and grouped as part of collection of properties with a higher density of residential units functioning as a buffer to the tract-style suburban neighborhoods just west of the site that were developed during the same period as the subject site. Based on the observations, the site does not have a particularly unique location, however, it's location among an entire block of dingbat style apartment buildings may be classified as a view representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood.

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 site reflects a geographical pattern of development that is associated with the post-war period that brought significant suburban, tract-style residential development to the City of Pomona. In particular, the site and its surrounding neighborhood saw significant multi-family apartment-style residential development that spans multiple blocks that is not commonly found in other regions of the city.

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 site is not one of a few remaining distinguishable examples of the Dingbat style in the City of Pomona, region, state, or nation. Therefore, the property does not meet this criterion as a single property.

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);*

All persons found to be associated with the site did not produce findings capable of determining the persons as significant in the City's past. Therefore, the property 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);*

Based on research findings into the site, the property does not reflect special elements of the City's history and therefore does not meet this criterion as an individual property.

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 criteria relates to archaeological resources and there is no information that this site could have been important to Native American 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*);

Based on staff's observations of the surrounding neighborhood, research into the trends of development during the time of construction, the area as whole does hold potential for designation as a historic district. As existing, Cordova Street is lined entirely with a style of architecture that was designed specifically for "in-fill" multi-family developments within existing single-family neighborhoods. Additionally, the proximity of the Key Cooperative Village, which is an excellent example of larger multifamily developments that were being developed during the time period adds to the potential historic significance highlighting trends of architecture and development during the post-war period.

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

Based on the design of the individual sites along Cordova Street and the adjacent Key Cooperative Village, the area can illustrate the key patterns of site and community design intended to meet the drastic housing needs during the post-war period along with the rising prominence of the automobile as a primary mode of transportation.

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 observations, the area most closely aligns with Landmark Designation Criteria 1.

Environmental Review:

Staff has determined that this project is exempt for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378(a) of the CEQA Guidelines.

Conditions of Approval:

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

Required Findings:

The findings required in Section 1190.C 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 site is not eligible for designation as a single historic landmark, however; the site may be eligible as a contributor to a historic district.

Attachments:

1. Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 25-042
2. Building Permits
3. Archive Findings
4. Historic Aerial Photographs
5. 1992 Historic Resources Survey - NE Quadrant
6. Site Photographs & Surrounding Area