



Staff Report

City of Pomona Historic Preservation Commission

July 2, 2025

FILE NO: DHS-000417-2025

A request for a Determination of Historic Significance for the bathroom structures located within Tony Cerda Park.

ADDRESS: 450 W. Grand Avenue (Tony Cerda Park)

APPLICANT: City of Pomona

PROJECT PLANNER: Alan Fortune, Associate Planner

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission determine that the existing restroom facilities within Tony Cerda Park at 450 W. Grand Avenue is not Historic and adopt HPC Resolution No. 25-016 (Attachment No. 1).

Property Background:

The property located at 450 W. Grand Avenue is developed as a city park known as Tony Cerda Park. The restroom facilities within the park were constructed in 1975.

Critical Issues:

- Tony Cerda Park as a whole has much historical significance and is identified as a potential local historic landmark by the City of Pomona Latina/o Historic Context Statement; however, the existing restroom facilities are not specifically historic.

Discussion of Critical Issues:

1. Tony Cerda Park is historically and culturally significant to the City of Pomona and had been identified by the City of Pomona Latina/o Historic Context Statement as having potential for local historic landmark designation. The restroom facilities at Tony Cerda Park are proposed for demolition by the City of Pomona Public Works Department through the "Park Restroom and Replacement" Capital Improvement Project (CIP). Due to the structures being greater than 50 years old, a Determination of Historic Significance is required prior to demolition. Staff has reviewed all relevant records and archives and did not locate any records indicating historic

significance. The bathroom facilities, constructed in 1975, are not associated with any historic or culturally significant event or persons.

Architectural Style:

The restroom facilities were constructed in 1975 by Pomona-based architects, Cashion-Horie Architects, Inc. 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 the Commission's reference (Attachment No. 3).

Architectural Description:

The structure, consisting of a set of two (2) gendered restrooms, is approximately 396 square feet measuring 11' x 36'. It is composed of white brick with composition roof shingle on two (2) "lean-to" roofs, each facing opposite directions separated by a utility room. 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. Gendered restroom facilities with white brick construction
2. Two (2) "lean-to" roofs each facing a different direction, separated with brick utility room
3. Exposed wooden rafters and wooden support posts

History:

Tony Cerda Park is located on the south side of W. Grand Avenue between S. Park Avenue and S. Main Street. The park is located directly north of Madison Elementary School and surrounded primarily by single family homes. The park is approximately 4.5 acres in size.

In 1961, the City of Pomona began acquiring undeveloped land directly to the north of Madison Elementary School for park purposes (Attachment No. 4). The park was developed in phases with the original park being less than three (3) acres in size.

In early 1962, a sprinkler system was installed at an estimated cost of \$4,500 with fencing and landscaping costing approximately \$2,500. In July 1962, 40 trees were planted to continue landscaping Madison Park. In 1965, the park expanded to S. Park Avenue and expanded in 1966 to S. Main Street.

On May 31, 1970, a group peacefully gathered at Madison Park, colloquially known as "Sharkie Park," to condemn police brutality and to protest a lack of educational opportunities and under-funded City services in Latino neighborhoods. The police presence and response resulted in multi-day riots and additional protests, leading to injuries to 13 people and 51 arrests.

At the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting on September 14, 1972, at the request of a large audience, a motion was made to officially change the name of Madison Park to "Sharkie" Park to honor the 12th Street community group living in the neighborhood (page 3 of Attachment No. 5). This was approved by the City Council on September 25, 1972. Full development of the land (with the exception of the restrooms) as a "neighborhood"

park took place in 1973, with work being done by the Brindle Company at a cost of \$68,420.16. Much of this funding was received through grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) with the City similarly and concurrently developing Hamilton Park (formerly known as Cherryville Park).

Sharkie Park was officially dedicated on July 22, 1973 (Attachment No. 6) with celebrations that included entertainment, dancing, and boxing exhibitions.

The subject restrooms were constructed in 1975 at a cost of approximately \$30,085 (See City Council Resolution 75-11 as Attachment No. 6). They were designed by Pomona-based firm Cashion-Horie Architects, Inc. This firm designed many bathrooms and other park improvements for the City of Pomona during this time.

In 1988, Sharkie Park was again renamed to Madison Park. In 2008, Madison Park was renamed once again to Tony Cerda Park, to celebrate the community activist and neighborhood resident (Attachment No. 7).

On December 16, 2024, the City of Pomona awarded a construction contract to ARC Construction, Inc. for the "Park Restroom Construction and Replacement" Capital Improvement Project (CIP) to replace the restrooms at Tony Cerda Park.

Significance:

Based on the information staff has on the park, it is significant because of the protest and subsequent riots in 1970. The site as a whole, has been identified in both the Pomona Historic Context Statement and the City of Pomona Latina/o Historic Context Statement. Tony Cerda Park is culturally significant to the City of Pomona as having been a location for the Chicano civil rights movement in Pomona and having been the location of a number of historical events. The Contexts Statements have been provided as Attachment Nos. 8 and 9. However, the restroom structure within Tony Cerda Park was not constructed until 1975, after the period of significance of the park. Therefore, the restrooms do not have significance to local, regional, or national history nor does it 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 restrooms 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 celebrate the contributions of Pomona resident and community leader Tony Cerda, the restrooms within the park do not have direct association with 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 restrooms 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 celebrate the contributions of Pomona resident and community leader Tony Cerda, the restrooms themselves do not have direct association with 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 structures were designed and built by Pomona-based architects Cashion-Horie Architects, Inc. 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 share similarities to other park improvements conducted by the City during the early 1960'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 Tony Cerda Park does 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 celebrate the contributions of Pomona resident and community leader Tony Cerda, the restrooms themselves do not have direct association with 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 Tony Cerda Park does 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 bathrooms were constructed after the period of significance for the park, and therefore, is not historic, even though the park itself is eligible for designation.

Attachments:

1. Draft Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 25-016
2. Site Plan
3. Site Photographs
4. Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes of June 8, 1961
5. Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes of September 14, 1972
6. "Celebrations mark the completion of Cherrieville and Sharkie parks," Progress Bulletin (Pomona), July 23, 1973
7. Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes of May 8, 2008
8. Relevant Pages of City of Pomona Historic Context Statement
9. Relevant Pages of Pomona Latina/a Historic Context Statement