



Historic Preservation Commission

Staff Report

May 7, 2025

FILE NO: DHS-000279-2025
A request to make a Determination of Historic Significance.

ADDRESS: **2282 N. Garey Avenue**

APPLICANT: Satwinder Singh

PROJECT PLANNER: Irene Moure, Assistant Planner

RECOMMENDATION: Determine that the property located at 2250 N. Garey Avenue (File No. DHS-000279-2025) is **not** historically significant and adopt Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 25-012 (Attachment No. 1).

BACKGROUND:

On March 11, 2025, Mr. Satwinder Singh submitted a request to determine the historic significance of the commercial structure located at 2250 N. Garey Avenue.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:

The subject structure is rectangular with a mansard roof and vertical, tongue and groove (shiplap) siding. The windows are made of wood and are of true-divided light style. Decorative masonry planters are attached to the front façade. A large fabric awning continuously spans the length of the front face of the building above the windows.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Based on visual analysis, the existing building is a freestanding, single-story rectangular structure. The windows on the west and south elevations are large and of true divided light style. The windows cover a large portion of the façade. Vertical, tongue and groove (shiplap) siding are prominent on all elevations of the structure with a decorative masonry planter that is seamlessly attached to the front façade.

The subject structure is located on a northern portion of Garey Avenue near the juncture of Arrow Highway, or State Route 2, which follows parts of and aligns with the historic Route 66.

Relevant Construction/Alterations:

1. Sizzler's Family Steakhouse Restaurant Construction – 1965
2. Installation of Board and Batten Siding and New Masonry Planters – 1972
3. Repair of Exterior Wall due to Vehicular Damage – 1975
4. Construction of Mansard Roof with Aluminum Shingles – 1980
5. Construction of Awning – 1986

Character-Defining Features:

1. Mansard Roof and Exposed Overhang
2. Vertical, Tongue and Groove (Shiplap) Siding
3. Masonry Planters
4. Fabric Canopy
5. Wood Windows of True Divided Light

HISTORY:

Historic Context Statement:

The structure is highlighted in the Theme: Commercial Development section of the Citywide Historic Context Statement (Attachment No. 2). The following pages from the Historic Context Statement identify criteria and integrity standards for historic consideration.

Survey Information:

The 1993 Survey did not survey the subject property.

City Directories:

The subject structure is not found in archived City Directories from 1896 to 1948.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps:

The City's Sanborn Maps collection was maintained from 1885 to 1957. The final addendum was added in 1957, 8 years before the construction of the commercial structure.

Significance:

According to Chapter 9, Postwar Growth, Diversification, and Redevelopment (1946-1980) of the Citywide Historic Context Statement, the structure can be described as a freestanding, mid-century, modern-style dining establishment.

This theme is summarized as a period of postwar population growth, suburban development, and a significant increase in auto-oriented culture where cars became more than just a form of transportation. Much of the notable commercial development during this era of the City occurred on the major corridors currently established as Arrow Highway, Garey Avenue, Mission Boulevard, Valley

Boulevard, Indian Hill Avenue, and Holt Avenue. Roadside architecture evolved into elaborate and deliberate expressive styles to attract passing motorists.

Furthermore, throughout the nation, this era experienced a spur of fast-food restaurant development. During this fast-food expansion, Sizzler's Family Steakhouse restaurant was introduced as a "fast-casual" alternative, offering family-friendly, dine-in options with plenty of on-site parking.

The Los Angeles County Assessor and Building & Safety permit records history show the commercial structure was built in 1965. Minor alterations to the structure were later added as the restaurant rose to be the ultimate steakhouse chain in Southern California and nationwide. For instance, in 1975, decorative masonry planters were attached to the front of the building and are seamlessly integrated into the siding on the east and west elevations. In 1980, a mansard roof was added to conceal rooftop mechanical equipment. Lastly, in 1986, a large awning was added to the front of the building, spanning the façade. Wood windows of true divided light cover a large portion of the Westerly and Southerly façade. Photographs have the structure have been attached (Attachment No. 2).

According to Business License Records, the Sizzler restaurant use ceased in 2013. Since 2013, Pancakes R Us leased the structure with minor alterations, such as paint and signage update.

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).

This commercial structure is an example of mid-century, modern architecture during Pomona's, and largely Southern California's, commercial and residential postwar boom. However, a series of minor modifications have altered the site to a more contemporary design. Therefore, the property does not meet this criterion.

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

Staff was unable to locate minimal to no information can be found of the architect who designed these structures during this era. Therefore, the property does not meet this criterion.

3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, represents the work of a master, possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction (Criterion C).

The building has mid-century elements and plenty of parking stalls for the purpose of attracting

families seeking dine-in, full-service options. The mansard roof is a common element on many commercial structures throughout the Pomona corridors. 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 structure is located strategically away from the downtown core of Pomona. This intent is on par with local, state, and nationwide commercial development where urban downtowns experienced a growth decline during this period. While the area grew, the site is not significant in the growth of Pomona. Therefore, the property does not meet this criterion.

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

While the founders of the Sizzler restaurant are significant to the iconic Southern California steakhouse franchise, this structure is not particularly associated with any persons of importance. Therefore, the property does not meet this criterion.

3. 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 3).

The building has mid-century elements and plenty of on-site parking for the purpose of attracting families seeking affordable dine-in, full-service options in a suburban development. However, while the mansard roof is distinguishable element on many commercial structures throughout Pomona's corridors, it is not particularly unique on this structure as an awning was added to it. 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);

This commercial building is designed to elicit dine-in, full-service experience during a period of fast-food options. The structure is an example of a period where commercial outlets were designed for the purpose of roadside attraction and to allure families in a growing North Pomona suburb. The alteration to the building took away its distinctive characteristics. 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);

Staff was unable to locate a notable builder, designer, landscape designer, or architect associated with the architectural elements of the building. 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);

Staff was not able to determine any details or materials that represent a significant structural or architectural achievement. 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 architectural elements, such as the mansard roof, is a distinctive design component that other commercial structures along Pomona's corridors share. However, this feature is common are more exemplary examples of such located in different areas of the city. Therefore, the property 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);

In the Historic Context Statement, like many other downtown areas within Southern California and the larger United States, commercial development was strategically built away from the downtown

Pomona area near the former Route 66. Furthermore, while the Sizzler use has ceased, Pancakes R Us has operated since 2013. The restaurant has continued to serve the Pomona community and larger regional area. A local Pomona newspaper has captured the ribbon cutting event of the current restaurant and the excitement that celebrated the new addition to eateries on North Garey Avenue (Attachment No. 4). It does not however, represent a unique location and does not represent any visual feature of the neighborhood or Pomona. Therefore, the property 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 reflects Pomona's geographic and cultural growth patterns distinctive to postwar development and alignment with the evolution of car culture from a means of transportation to a symbolic representation of independence. 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).

While the windows of the structure are wood and are of true divided light, the commercial structure is a typical modern design and does not possess any distinguishing characteristics. Therefore, the property 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);

The remaining structure is not associated with persons significant in Pomona's history. 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);

The structure is located strategically at the junction of North Garey Avenue and Arrow Highway, to attract passing motorists and align with the growing suburban communities in North Pomona. However, modifications to the structure have diminished distinguishable architectural elements. Staff's research does not identify this structure as having a cultural and economic element that meets this criterion.

INTEGRITY:

The culmination of minor exterior modifications has significantly changed the structure to a more a contemporary design.

CONCLUSION:

The commercial structure is an example of postwar auto-oriented commercial development capturing modern roadside architecture during an era of unprecedented growth and cultural change. However, there is a lack of distinguishable or exemplary architectural elements. Therefore, the structure does not meet the designation criteria for historic significance.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 25-012
2. Historic Context Statement – Commercial Theme (1946-1980)
3. Site Photographs
4. La Nueva Voz – Pomona Gets New Pancake Restaurant