



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** December 11, 2024

**To:** Candice Bowcock, Principal Planner, City of La Verne

**FROM:** Casey Tibbet, M.A., Associate/Architectural Historian

**SUBJECT:** Historical Significance Evaluations for the Hillcrest Gateway Project, La Verne, Los Angeles County, California (LSA Project No. 20241974)

LSA completed historical significance evaluations of the properties at 2692 Park Avenue and 2675, 2677, 2681, and 2683 A Street (Assessor Identification Number [AIN] 8381-010-006); 2712 Park Avenue (AIN 8381-010-033); and 2730 Park Avenue (AIN 8381-010-028) in La Verne. There are a total of seven residences on the three properties, and all are 50 years of age or older. Due to the age of the buildings, in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City of La Verne (City) required the evaluations as part of the environmental review process for the proposed Hillcrest Gateway Project (project). More specifically, the proposed project includes an update to the Brethren Hillcrest Homes Master Plan and demolition of the residences on these three properties to facilitate construction of nine single-family homes.

To evaluate these properties LSA conducted research to determine the dates of construction and later alterations and to identify historically important events and people that may be associated with each property. LSA also conducted an intensive-level field survey of each property. In compliance with CEQA, each property was evaluated for historical significance using the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) criteria. There is no local criteria. The evaluations were documented on Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523A (Primary Record) and 523B (Building, Structure, and Object Record) forms and each property was identified on a DPR Location Map (refer to the attached DPR forms for details).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the research and field surveys, LSA makes the following recommendations to the City.

### 2692 Park Avenue

LSA recommends to the City that the one-story Ranch style residence (2692 Park Avenue) and four related one-story Minimal Traditional style residences (2675, 2677, 2681, and 2683 A Street) do not meet the criteria for listing in the California Register and are not “historical resources” for purposes of CEQA.

### **2712 Park Avenue**

LSA recommends to the City that the one-story Minimal Ranch style single-family property at 2712 Park Avenue is eligible for listing in the California Register under Criteria 1 and 2 as the location where Oliver (Ollie) V. Riley invented the original Chrondek electronic timers used in the sport of drag racing. The first timer was reportedly developed at his kitchen table after work hours and on weekends and the first timers for sale were manufactured in his garage at 2712 Park Avenue. The Chrondek timer provided a reliable, accurate, consistent, and exact way to time the racers; it legitimized the sport and was a major factor in its early success. The period of significance is 1953 to 1954. This encompasses the timeframe when Ollie invented and manufactured the Chrondek timers in his home. LSA recommends that the property is a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA.

### **2730 Park Avenue**

LSA recommends to the City that the one-story, Minimal Ranch style single-family residence at 2730 Park Avenue does not meet the criteria for listing in the California Register and is not a “historical resource” for purposes of CEQA.

Attachment: DPR Forms

State of California — The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI # \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Resource Name or #: 2692 Park Avenue

**P1. Other Identifier:** 2675, 2677, 2681, and 2683 A Street

**\*P2. Location:**  Not for Publication  Unrestricted \*a. County: Los Angeles and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

**b. USGS 7.5' Quad:** San Dimas, CA Date: 1981 T   ; R   ; S.B.B.M.

**c. Address:** 2692 Park Avenue City: La Verne Zip: 91750

**d. UTM Zone:** 11; \_\_\_\_\_mE/ \_\_\_\_\_mN (G.P.S.)

**e. Other Locational Data:** (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate): AIN 8381-010-006

**\*P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) This multi-family residential property is situated on the east side of Park Avenue and extends to the west side of A Street. It includes five residences, one oriented toward Park Avenue and four oriented toward A Street, and a garage oriented toward A Street. The A Street residences and freestanding garage are generally arranged in a semi-circle around a central driveway. The garage is at the west end.

**2692 Park Avenue.** This one-story, Ranch style residence is irregular in plan and rests on a raised foundation. It is surmounted by a moderately-pitched, side-gable, hip, and gable-on-hip roof sheathed with composition shingles and has narrow eaves and a brick chimney. The exterior walls are clad with a combination of stucco, T1-11 panels, and brick. The west-facing, asymmetrical façade has a projecting, attached garage with the original door; a south-facing, wood-framed, double-hung window on the side of the garage; two vinyl-framed, sliding windows; a south-facing, modern door; two vinyl-framed, sliding windows; a wood and glass door; and a projecting wing with a bay window with vinyl-framed, single-hung windows flanking a fixed window. The eave over the recessed, partial-width front porch is supported by three wood posts. The rear of the residence has at least two T-1-11-sided additions and modern windows. The back yard includes an empty swimming pool and a freestanding, covered patio. The residence is in poor condition and the integrity has been compromised by alterations. See Continuation Sheets

**\*P3b. Resource Attributes:** (Original uses) HP3-Multi-family property

**\*P4. Resources Present:**  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other (Isolates, etc.)

**P5a. Photo or Drawing** (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



**P5b. Description of Photo:** (View, date, accession #) Top: 2692 Park Avenue, façade, view east (10/8/24). Bottom: 2675–2683 A Street overview, view west (10/8/24).

**\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:**  Historic  Prehistoric  Both  
1946 – 2692 Park Avenue  
1963 and 1964 – A Street residences  
(Source for all: Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor n.d.)

**\*P7. Owner and Address:**  
Hillcrest  
2705 Mountain View Drive  
La Verne, CA 91750-4313

**\*P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)  
Casey Tibbet, M.A.  
LSA Associates, Inc.  
1500 Iowa Avenue, Suite 200  
Riverside, CA 92507



See Continuation Sheet

**\*P9. Date Recorded:**  
October 8, 2024

**\*P10. Survey Type:** (Describe) Intensive-level CEQA compliance

**\*P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

**\*Attachments:**  NONE  Location Map  Sketch Map  Continuation Sheet  Building, Structure, and Object Record  Archaeological Record  District Record  Linear Feature Record  Milling Station Record  Rock Art Record  Artifact Record  Photograph Record  Other (List):

**BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD**

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\*NRHP Status Code 6Z

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 2692 Park Avenue

**B1. Historic Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B2. Common Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B3. Original Use:** Single-family residence      **B4. Present Use:** Multi-family property (all vacant)

\***B5. Architectural Style:** Ranch (2692 Park Avenue) and Minimal Traditional (A Street residences)

\***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

2692 Park Avenue

1946 – Residence was built (Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor n.d.). No original permit was found.

1948 – Permit issued to owner J.F. Vicat for a new 12 x 20-foot roof over a cement patio slab.

1949 – Permit issued to owner Robert J. Carl to enclose the porch.

1966 – Permits issued to owner Ruben H. Gonzalez to add a swimming pool and 420 square feet to the existing residence.

The addition includes two bedrooms and a porch.

1996 – Permit issued to owner Ruben H. Gonzalez for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC).

2018 – Permit issued to owner Ruben H. Gonzalez to reroof with composition shingles.

See Continuation Sheet

\***B7. Moved?**  No     Yes     Unknown    **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_    **Original Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

\***B8. Related Features:** A Street residences

**B9a. Architect:** None found      **b. Builder:** None found

\***B10. Significance: Theme:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Area:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Property Type:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Applicable Criteria:** NA

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This property does not meet the criteria for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), and there are no local criteria for significance. It is not a "historical resource" for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

**Historic Overview.** In 1774, an expedition of nonnative people on their way to San Francisco used the mission trail (now Arrow Highway) to cross the Pomona Valley and the area that is now La Verne (La Verne Historical Society n.d.). Six decades later, after Mexico gained control of California, the area was part of the 1837 Rancho San Jose land grant that was given to Ygnacio Palomares and Ricardo Vejar (Anonymous 2018). In 1852, after the United States gained control of California, Palomares and Vejar filed a claim for the rancho, which was patented in 1875 (Ibid.). Palomares and Vejar used the lands primarily for sheep and cattle operations, as well as growing crops, until the severe drought in the mid-1860s, which decimated the sheep and cattle industries (Ibid.; Brackett 1920). In 1864, Palomares died and Vejar lost his share of the rancho to foreclosure (Ibid.). In the following years, with the valley economy in near ruin, the ranchos began to disintegrate, and the livestock and grain industries began being replaced by grape crops and, later, olive groves (Brackett 1920; Dumke 1991). See Continuation Sheet

**B11. Additional Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes)

\***B12. References:**

Ancestry.com

Var. Various records including city directories, voter registration, Census data, and military information accessed online in October 2024 at: <https://www.ancestry.com/search/>.

Anonymous

2018 Rancho San Jose. Accessed online in June 2018 at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rancho\\_San\\_Jose](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rancho_San_Jose).

See Continuation Sheet

**B13. Remarks:**

\***B14. Evaluator:** Casey Tippet, M.A., LSA Associates, Inc., 1500 Iowa Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside, CA 92507

\***Date of Evaluation:** November 2024

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)  
  
Refer to Location Map

State of California - The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**CONTINUATION SHEET**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI # \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_

Page 3 of 9 \*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 2692 Park Avenue  
\*Recorded by LSA Associates, Inc. \*Date: November 2024  Continuation  Update

**P3a. Description:** (continued from page 1)

**2675 A Street.** This one-story, Minimal Traditional style residence is irregular in plan and rests on a concrete slab foundation. It has a low-pitched, side-gable roof sheathed with composition sheets and has moderate eaves. The exterior walls are covered with stucco. The northwest-facing, asymmetrical façade has a metal-framed sliding window, a modern door, a metal-framed sliding window, a recessed, one-car garage with a metal door, and an attached carport. The east elevation, facing A Street, has a vinyl-framed sliding window and a wooden geometric accent. The residence is in fair condition and has minor alterations (modern doors and windows).

**2677 A Street.** This one-story, Minimal Traditional style residence is roughly rectangular in plan and rests on a concrete slab foundation. The side-gable roof is low-pitched, sheathed with composition sheets, and has moderate eaves. The exterior walls are covered with stucco and brick skirting. The northeast-facing, asymmetrical façade has a recessed carport and one-car garage with a metal door, a vinyl-framed ribbon window with sliding end vents, a modern door, and a metal-framed sliding window. The residence is in fair condition and has sustained alterations (windows and doors).

**2681 A Street.** This one-story, Minimal Traditional style residence is roughly L-shaped in plan and rests on a concrete slab foundation. It has a low-pitched, side-gable and flat roof with moderate eaves and is sheathed with composition sheets. The exterior walls are covered with stucco. The south-facing façade has a recessed, attached carport, and a modern front door flanked by metal-framed sliding windows. The east elevation features a wooden geometric accent and a vinyl-framed ribbon window with end vent sliders. The west elevation has a wood and glass door and a water heater closet. The carport is also attached to the carport for the 2683 A Street residence. The residence is in fair condition and has sustained alterations (door and window).

**2683 A Street.** This one-story, Minimal Traditional style residence is irregular in plan and rests on a concrete slab foundation. It has a low-pitched, side-gable roof with moderate eaves and is sheathed with composition sheets. The exterior walls are covered with stucco and one small section of brick skirting (east elevation). The asymmetrical, south-facing façade had two metal-framed, sliding windows, a wood and glass door, and a carport. The carport is also connected to the adjacent carport for 2681 A Street. A very narrow shade structure attached to the façade has four wood posts and a lattice screen. The east elevation has a vinyl-framed, ribbon window with end vent sliders. The residence is in fair condition and has sustained alterations (window and narrow shade structure).

The detached, two-car garage is located southwest of the 2683 A Street residence. It has a low-pitched, front-gable roof, stucco walls, and what appears to be the original, wooden door. It is in poor condition but retains integrity.

**P5a. Photo** (continued from page 1)



2675 A Street, façade, view south (10/8/24).

See Continuation Sheet

State of California - The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
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\*Recorded by LSA Associates, Inc. \*Date: November 2024  Continuation  Update

**P5a. Photo** (continued from page 3)



2677 A Street, façade, view south (10/8/24).



2681 A Street, façade, view north (10/8/24).

See Continuation Sheet

State of California - The Resources Agency  
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Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
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\*Recorded by LSA Associates, Inc. \*Date: November 2024  Continuation  Update

**P5a. Photo** (continued from page 4)



2683 A Street, façade and garage, view northwest (10/8/24).

**\*B6. Construction History:** (continued from page 2)  
2675 and 2677 A Street

1963 – Permit issued to owner Ruben Gonzalez for a 1,520-square-foot, one-story duplex (2675–2677 A Street) with two garages and two carports. Architect is listed as D & A Drafting.

1965 – Permit issued to owner Ruben Gonzalez for sewer connection (2675 A Street).

2681-2683 A Street

1964 – Permits issued to owner Ruben Gonzalez for a new 1,500-square-foot, one-story duplex with two carports and a 400-square-foot, detached garage.

**\*B10. Significance:** (continued from page 2)

In the late 1860s and 1870s, large sheep and cattle ranches began transitioning to small farms and more intensive agricultural development. In 1876, the Southern Pacific Railroad completed a line from San Francisco to Los Angeles and soon railroads were branching out across southern California (Landis 2010). This was followed by “extensive advertising and publicity campaign[s],” which helped create an unprecedented land boom in the 1880s (Dumke 1991:28). In 1887, “Lordsburg was one of 25 settlements established” along Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway’s (Santa Fe) San Bernardino to Los Angeles line (City of La Verne 1992:3).

Named for its founder Isaac Wilson Lord, Lordsburg (now La Verne) boasted a large hotel (1888) and parcels of land for sale, but the community experienced one of the few failures of attempted land development in southern California when the boom went bust shortly after the town was founded (Heckman 2000; City of La Verne 1992). No paying guests ever stayed in the 130-room, Queen Anne-style hotel, which was located approximately 1 mile southeast of the subject property (La Verne Historical Society n.d.). In 1889, the Santa Fe brought in one of its most successful tour conductors, George McDonough, in an effort to generate interest in some of the struggling southern California towns along its routes (La Verne Historical Society n.d.; City of La Verne 1992). McDonough, who had worked in the Midwest and had helped settle German Baptist Brethren in Kansas and Texas, began advertising free tours in the *Gospel Messenger*, which was commonly read in Brethren homes (City of La Verne 1992). In 1889, M.M. Eshelman toured Lordsburg and McDonough convinced him that the town would be suitable for a colony and a college (City of La Verne 1992:4). In 1890, Eshelman and other Brethren settled in Lordsburg, and after 1 year, approximately 100 members had relocated to the community (Ibid.). That same year (1890), the first navel oranges were planted in Lordsburg, and over the next several decades, the citrus industry would become the dominant economic force in the area (City of La Verne 1992).

While the citrus industry was growing, so was the college. In 1891, the Brethren opened Lordsburg College in Lord’s hotel and were successful in attracting a sufficient number of settlers from their sect to establish a congregation and sustain the community (Heckman 2000). After 10 years, the college closed for a year (1900–1901) but reopened in 1902 under a new president who made expansion his primary goal (Wilson Library 1991). The area had grown enough that, in 1905, Bonita Union High School (now Damien High School) was opened (approximately 1 mile southwest of the subject property), serving the communities of San Dimas and Lordsburg (Tearden and Bricker 1998). By 1908, the college had full ownership of the hotel and land adjacent to it and, in 1918, the first new building, a women’s dormitory, was constructed (Wilson Library 1991). In 1917, after the death of Isaac Lord, (see *Continuation Sheet*)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
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Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_

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\*Recorded by LSA Associates, Inc. \*Date: November 2024  Continuation  Update

**\*B10. Significance:** (continued from page 5)

the college and Lordsburg were renamed La Verne (Heckman 2000). The last service was held in the old hotel in 1926, ending the use of that building by the college (Wilson Library 1991). Later, the hotel was torn down, and the materials were reused in other buildings on campus and throughout the community (Wilson Library 1991).

Citriculture was the economic base of the community until the 1940s, when the local citrus industry began to decline due to an unknown blight. After World War II (WWII), the groves began to give way to residential development, and the community truly became a college town (City of La Verne 2018). By 1953, the subject residence and a few other homes had been built on both sides of Park Avenue between Elmcrest Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and a small housing tract had been developed north of Elmcrest Street (NETR var.). However, into the 1990s, many reminders of the citrus heritage remained, most notably in the form of old packinghouses along Arrow Highway (City of La Verne 1992). The original commercial center around D and First Streets still has numerous historic-period buildings, and the city is filled with early 20<sup>th</sup> century homes.

**People Associated with These Residences.**

2692 Park Avenue

This residence was built in 1946 (Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor n.d.). The earliest owner found for the residence was J.F. Vicat (City of La Verne var.). John F. and Dorothy (or Dorothea) S. Vicat were listed at this address in 1948 but by 1950 had relocated to New York (Ancestry.com var.). From 1949 to at least 1952, Robert V. Carl, a construction superintendent, his wife Mildred A., and their children, Lois, Mildred, Robert, and Donna, lived at this address (Ibid.). From 1953 to at least 1956, Colonel J.G. De La Vergne and his wife were listed at 2692 Park Avenue (*Progress-Bulletin* 1953 and 1956). In 1953, Colonel De La Vergne, who was an Army chaplain attached to General Eisenhower's staff during WWII, was working as head of the social science department at the California Baptist Theological Seminary in Covina (*Progress-Bulletin* 1953).

From as early as 1958 to as late as 2020, Ruben H. Gonzalez and/or members of his family lived at 2692 Park Avenue (*Progress-Bulletin* 1958a; Ancestry.com var.). Mr. Gonzalez graduated from Chino High School in 1949 and received his bachelor's degree from La Verne College before earning a Master of Arts in elementary school administration from Los Angeles State College in 1958 (*Progress-Bulletin* 1958b). He planned to teach 8<sup>th</sup> grade at Las Palmas School in Covina (Ibid.). He, his wife Dolores, and their two children, Kathy and Philip, were listed at this address (Ibid.). In 1962, at age 31, Mr. Gonzalez ran for the La Verne City Council; at that time, he was teaching 7<sup>th</sup> grade at Eva D. Edwards School in Covina and serving a second term as a member of the executive council of the Covina Unified Education Association (*Progress-Bulletin* 1962). No additional relevant information was found for the Gonzalez family.

2675, 2677, 2681, and 2683 A Street

These residences were built and owned by Ruben H. Gonzalez in the mid-1960s (City of La Verne var.). It is assumed that Mr. Gonzalez owned them for as long as he owned the adjacent residence at 2692 Park Avenue. Almost no information was found for residents during the historic period (pre-1976). In 1964, Mrs. Lillian Mills lived at 2681 A Street (*Progress-Bulletin* 1964) and in 1969, Mrs. Helen Coe Butler lived at 2677 A Street (*Progress-Bulletin* 1969).

**Architectural Styles.** The residence at 2692 Park Avenue was built in the Ranch style. Common characteristics of this style include a one-story configuration; a sprawling layout, often laid out in an L or U shape that creates backyard privacy; low-pitched hip, gable, or gable-on-hip roof with wide eaves; a variety of wood, brick, and stucco siding, often in combination; wood-frame double-hung windows, often with multiple lights or diamond-panes; a large picture window in the façade, often flanked by narrower windows; and an attached two-car garage. Decorative features include scalloped vergeboards, false cupolas and dove-cotes, extended gable eaves, and turned porch supports. Later examples of the style incorporate aluminum-framed vertical-slider windows instead of wood-framed double-hung windows.

The residences on A Street were built in the Minimal Traditional style. Common characteristics of this style include a rectangular or L-shaped massing topped by a low-pitched hipped or cross-gable roof with narrow eaves featuring a variety of simple decorative treatments (exposed rafter tails, boxed eaves, plain fascia); stucco wall cladding; and less commonly, wood clapboard, wood-framed double-hung windows, and a front stoop entry (as opposed to a full- or partial-width porch).

**Significance Evaluation.** These residences are being evaluated for historical significance in compliance with CEQA using the California Register criteria. Although the City has no historic preservation ordinance or criteria for significance, it identifies and protects historic resources by designating landmark nominations via City Council resolution and creating Specific Plan areas subject to design review.

See *Continuation Sheet*

State of California - The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**CONTINUATION SHEET**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
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**\*B10. Significance:** (continued from page 6)

**Criterion 1: It is associated with the 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.** This property is associated with the post-WWII residential boom, which made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local, regional, and even national history. As a single-family property (1946–1963), it was one of the approximately 30 million single-family homes built in the United States during a 30-year period following the end of WWII (California Department of Transportation [Caltrans] 2011:2). These homes were typically modest in size and style and constructed in a short time as part of large tracts marketed to the working class. “The fundamental unit for postwar housing is not the individual house, but the tract, or a single construction phase within a larger tract or new community,” and typically a single home would not be individually significant in this context (Caltrans 2011:121). As with most homes associated with this historic context, individually this residence is unimportant and insignificant. Furthermore, alterations to the residence (siding, windows, door, and additions) and the property (addition of four units) have compromised the integrity of the property.

As a multi-family property (1963–present), it is associated with the demographic and social changes of the postwar period that led to a greater demand for single-person housing. “The proportion of multi-family housing (apartments and condominiums) grew steadily in the 1960s, surpassing 40 percent of all new housing units constructed each year from 1968 through 1973...In California, the proportion of multi-family housing began to increase in the late 1950s and grew to become a majority of the new housing units built from 1962-64 and again from 1969-73” (Caltrans 2011:53). Most of the multi-family construction “took the form of low-rise garden apartment complexes in suburban areas. These typically consisted of multiple two-story buildings with separate, common parking shelters. Some of the larger apartment and condominium complexes had layouts based on cluster planning principles, with considerable areas of open space. Many included facilities for recreation such as swimming pools and tennis courts. Such shared amenities became increasingly popular, probably more than amenities within the individual living spaces, as builders competed for a portion of the youthful apartment market” (Caltrans 2011:53). These residences are an example of a small, infill, multi-family development and, aside from multiple buildings, do not exhibit the typical characteristics of the postwar multi-family housing developments. The property is not a particularly good example of the postwar multi-family development trend. It is not significant under this criterion.

**Criterion 2: It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.** Research did not identify any historically important people associated with these residences. The residences are not significant under this criterion.

**Criterion 3: It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method or construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.** The residence at 2692 Park Avenue embodies characteristics of the Ranch style, but the alterations (siding, windows, door, and additions) have compromised its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. It does not possess high artistic values and does not rise to a level beyond the ordinary. It is not the work of a master architect or builder. It is not significant under this criterion.

The A Street residences exhibit characteristics of the Minimal Traditional style but have sustained alterations (windows and doors) that have compromised their integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. They do not possess high artistic values and do not rise to a level beyond the ordinary. They are not the work of a master architect or builder. They are not significant under this criterion.

**Criterion 4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.** These residences were built in 1946, 1963, and 1964 using common methods and materials. They do not have the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, State, or nation. They are not significant under this criterion.

**\*B12. References:** (continued from page 2)

Architectural Resources Group

2016 City of Arcadia, Citywide Historic Resources Survey Report. On file at the City of Arcadia Development Services Department.

Brackett, F.P.

1920 *History of the Pomona Valley*. Historic Record Company, Los Angeles, California.

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

2011 *Tract Housing in California, 1945-1973. A Context for National Register Evaluation*. Caltrans Division of Environmental Analysis, Sacramento.

See Continuation Sheet

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Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
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\*Recorded by LSA Associates, Inc. \*Date: November 2024  Continuation  Update

**\*B12. References:** (continued from page 7)

City of La Verne

- 1992 Lordsburg Specific Plan. Accessed online in July 2018 at: <https://www.ci.la-verne.ca.us/index.php/documents/community-development/general-and-specific-plans/225-lordsburg-specific-plan/file>.
- 2018 History of La Verne. Accessed online in August 2018 at: <http://www.ci.la-verne.ca.us/index.php/about-la-verne/history-of-la-verne>.
- Var. Building permits for 2692 Park Avenue, 2675-77 A Street, and 2681-83 A Street. Provided by City staff in November 2024.

City of Los Angeles

- 2015 Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement. Context: Architecture and Engineering. Theme: The Ranch House, 1930-1975. Accessed online in August 2021 at: [https://planning.lacity.org/odocument/1acefe03-5615-425f-9182-d58a79014901/The\\_Ranch\\_House%2C\\_1930-1975.pdf](https://planning.lacity.org/odocument/1acefe03-5615-425f-9182-d58a79014901/The_Ranch_House%2C_1930-1975.pdf)

Dumke, Glenn S.

- 1991 *The Boom of the Eighties in Southern California*. Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

Heckman, Martin L.

- 2000 *Lordsburg/La Verne in Southern California*. Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, South Carolina.

Landis, Mark

- 2010 Land booms, bust tells story of state's growth. *Los Angeles Daily News*. Accessed online in July 2018 at: <https://www.dailynews.com/2010/03/29/land-booms-busts-tell-story-of-states-growth/>.

La Verne Historical Society

- n.d. A Brief History of La Verne. Accessed online in June 2018 at: <http://www.lavernehistoricalsociety.org/a-brief-history-of-la-verne.html>.

NETR

- Var. Historical aerial photographs from various dates. Accessed online in October 2024 at: <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>

*Progress-Bulletin*

- 1953 CGS Confers M.A. Degree on Covinan. June 12, page 34.
- 1956 Four Scholarships Awarded By Two Management Clubs, March 8, page 17.
- 1958a 44 in Valley Area Get L.A. State Degrees, Jun 14, page 12.
- 1958b Four Scholarships Awarded By Two Management Clubs, March 8, page 17.
- 1962 Gonzalez Will Run In La Verne, January 26, page 33.
- 1964 La Verne. July 5, page 8.
- 1969 Summer Nuptials Charted. September 15, page 8.

Tearen, Janet and Lauren Weiss Bricker

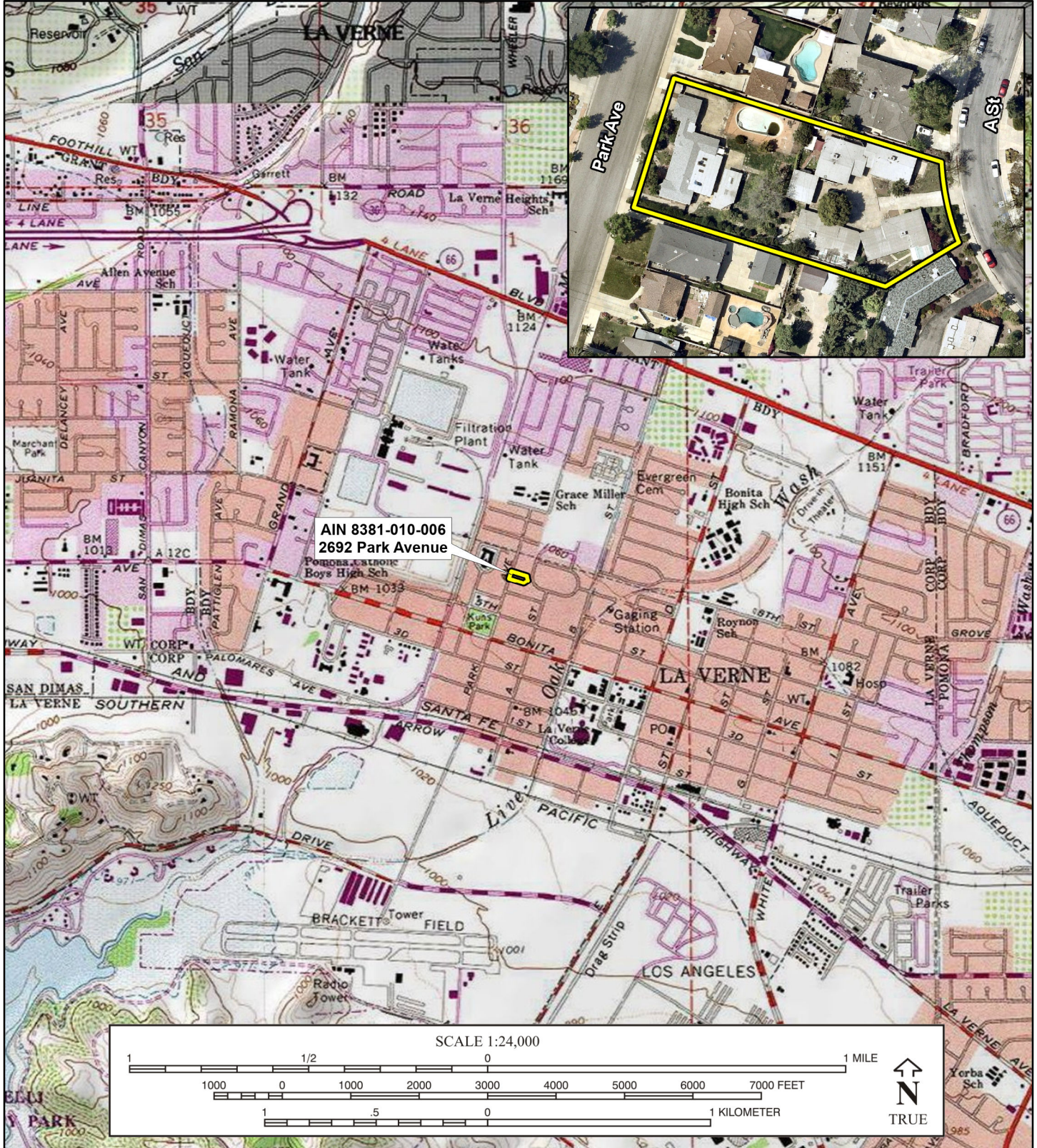
- 1998 Historic Resources Survey for Damien High School, 2280 Damien Avenue, La Verne, CA.

Wilson Library

- 1991 University of La Verne: A Centennial History. From the video archive of Bill and Charlotte Neill. Produced in 1991 as part of the celebration for the college's hundredth anniversary. Viewed online in July 2018 at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPJHtKHZgLS>.

State of California - Resource Agency  
**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**LOCATION MAP**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
 HRI # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_



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DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI # \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code 3CS

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Resource Name or #: 2712 Park Avenue

**P1. Other Identifier:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*P2. Location:**  Not for Publication  Unrestricted \*a. County: Los Angeles and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

b. USGS 7.5' Quad: San Dimas, CA Date: 1981 T: \_\_\_\_\_; R: \_\_\_\_\_; S.B.B.M.

c. Address: 2712 Park Avenue City: La Verne Zip: 91750

d. UTM: Zone: 11; \_\_\_\_\_mE/ \_\_\_\_\_mN (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate): AIN 8381-010-033

**\*P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)  
This one-story, Minimal Ranch residence is situated on the east side of Park Avenue in a residential neighborhood with a mix of modern and historic-period (50 years of age or older) homes. The residence is L-shaped in plan and rests on a raised foundation. It has a moderately pitched, hipped roof sheathed with composition shingles that has narrow eaves. The exterior walls are covered with stucco and all fenestration is modern. The west-facing, asymmetrical façade has a raised, partial-width porch sheltered beneath the eave that is supported by wood posts spanned by a wood balustrade. Along the porch are a pair of vinyl-framed windows flanked by shutters and a north-facing modern door. The remainder of the façade has a pair of vinyl-framed windows flanked by shutters, a bay window, and a single vinyl-framed window. The balustrades flanking the concrete steps to the front porch appear to be a later addition. The south (side) elevation has three vinyl-framed windows. There is a detached garage with a modern door located southeast of the house. The property appears to be in good condition, but the architectural integrity has been compromised by the modern windows, front door, and balustrade.

**\*P3b. Resource Attributes:** (Original uses) HP2-Single-family property

**\*P4. Resources Present:**  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other (Isolates, etc.)

**P5a. Photo or Drawing** (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



**P5b. Description of Photo:** (View, date, accession #) Façade, view east (10/8/24)

**\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:**  Historic  Prehistoric  Both  
1950 (Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor n.d.)

**\*P7. Owner and Address:**  
Brethren Hillcrest Homes  
2705 Mountain View Drive  
La Verne, CA 91705-4313

**\*P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)  
Casey Tibbet, M.A.  
LSA Associates, Inc.  
1500 Iowa Avenue, Suite 200  
Riverside, CA 92507

**\*P9. Date Recorded:**  
October 8, 2024

**\*P10. Survey Type:** (Describe) Intensive-level CEQA compliance

**\*P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

**\*Attachments:**  NONE  Location Map  Sketch Map  Continuation Sheet  Building, Structure, and Object Record  Archaeological Record  District Record  Linear Feature Record  Milling Station Record  Rock Art Record  Artifact Record  Photograph Record  Other (List):

# BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

**B1. Historic Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B2. Common Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B3. Original Use:** Single-family residence      **B4. Present Use:** Single-family residence

\***B5. Architectural Style:** Minimal Ranch

\***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)  
1950 – Permit issued to owner/builder, Otto Raley, for a new one-story, six-room, stucco house with a wood shingle roof.  
1961 – Permits issued to owner O.V. Riley to convert a closet into a bathroom.  
197(?) – Permit issued to owner Richard L. Hart to reroof residence.  
1986 – Permits issued to owners Richard and Linda Hart to extend the family room (90 square feet) and to install a wood-burning stove in the family room.  
1991 – Permit issued to owners Dick and Linda Hart for copper re-piping.  
1994 – Permit issued to owner Richard L. Hart to construct a roof over a slab in back of the existing garage.  
1999 – Permit issued to owner Dick Hart to reroof house.  
2007 – Plumbing permit issued to owner Richard Hart.

\***B7. Moved?**  No     Yes     Unknown    **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_    **Original Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

\***B8. Related Features:** Detached garage

**B9a. Architect:** None found      **b. Builder:** Otto Raley (owner/builder)

\***B10. Significance: Theme:** Post-World War II Recreation, Sub-Theme: Drag Racing    **Area:** City of La Verne

**Period of Significance:** 1953-1954    **Property Type:** Single-family residence    **Applicable Criteria:** CR 1 and 2

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This property is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) under Criteria 1 and 2 as the location where Oliver (Ollie) V. Riley invented the original Chrondek electronic timers used in the sport of drag racing. The first timer was reportedly developed at his kitchen table after work hours and on weekends, and the first timers for sale were manufactured in his garage at 2712 Park Avenue. The Chrondek timer provided a reliable, accurate, consistent, and exact way to time the racers; it legitimized the sport and was a major factor in its early success. The period of significance is 1953 to 1954. This encompasses the timeframe when Ollie invented and manufactured the Chrondek timers in his home. The property is a "historical resource" for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

**Historic Overview.** In 1774, an expedition of nonnative people on their way to San Francisco used the mission trail (now Arrow Highway) to cross the Pomona Valley and the area that is now La Verne (La Verne Historical Society n.d.). Six decades later, after Mexico gained control of California, the area was part of the 1837 Rancho San Jose land grant that was given to Ygnacio Palomares and Ricardo Vejar (Anonymous 2018). In 1852, after the United States gained control of California, Palomares and Vejar filed a claim for the rancho, which was patented in 1875 (Ibid.). Palomares and Vejar used the lands primarily for sheep and cattle operations, as well as growing crops, until the severe drought in the mid-1860s, which decimated the sheep and cattle industries (Ibid.; Brackett 1920). In 1864, Palomares died and Vejar lost his share of the rancho to foreclosure (Ibid.). In the following years, with the valley economy in near ruin, the ranchos began to disintegrate, and the livestock and grain industries began being replaced by grape crops and, later, olive groves (Brackett 1920; Dumke 1991). *See Continuation Sheet*

**B11. Additional Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes)

\***B12. References:**  
*See Continuation Sheet*

**B13. Remarks:**

\***B14. Evaluator:** Casey Tibbet, M.A., LSA Associates, Inc., 1500 Iowa Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside, CA 92507

\***Date of Evaluation:** November 2024

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)

Refer to Location Map

(This space reserved for official comments.)

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_

HRI # \_\_\_\_\_

Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_

Page 3 of 8\*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 2712 Park Avenue\*Recorded by LSA Associates, Inc.\*Date: November 2024 Continuation Update**\*B10. Significance:** (continued from page 2)

In the late 1860s and 1870s, large sheep and cattle ranches began transitioning to small farms and more intensive agricultural development. In 1876, the Southern Pacific Railroad completed a line from San Francisco to Los Angeles and soon railroads were branching out across southern California (Landis 2010). This was followed by “extensive advertising and publicity campaign[s],” which helped create an unprecedented land boom in the 1880s (Dumke 1991:28). In 1887, “Lordsburg was one of 25 settlements established” along Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway’s (Santa Fe) San Bernardino to Los Angeles line (City of La Verne 1992:3).

Named for its founder, Isaac Wilson Lord, Lordsburg (now La Verne) boasted a large hotel (1888) and parcels of land for sale, but the community experienced one of the few failures of attempted land development in southern California when the boom went bust shortly after the town was founded (Heckman 2000; City of La Verne 1992). No paying guests ever stayed in the 130-room, Queen Anne-style hotel, which was located approximately 1 mile southeast of the subject property (La Verne Historical Society n.d.). In 1889, the Santa Fe brought in one of its most successful tour conductors, George McDonough, in an effort to generate interest in some of the struggling southern California towns along its routes (La Verne Historical Society n.d.; City of La Verne 1992). McDonough, who had worked in the Midwest and had helped settle German Baptist Brethren in Kansas and Texas, began advertising free tours in the *Gospel Messenger*, which was commonly read in Brethren homes (City of La Verne 1992). In 1889, M.M. Eshelman toured Lordsburg and McDonough convinced him that the town would be suitable for a colony and a college (City of La Verne 1992:4). In 1890, Eshelman and other Brethren settled in Lordsburg, and after 1 year, approximately 100 members had relocated to the community (Ibid.). That same year (1890), the first navel oranges were planted in Lordsburg and over the next several decades the citrus industry would become the dominant economic force in the area (City of La Verne 1992).

While the citrus industry was growing, so was the college. In 1891, the Brethren opened Lordsburg College in Lord’s hotel and were successful in attracting a sufficient number of settlers from their sect to establish a congregation and sustain the community (Heckman 2000). After 10 years, the college closed for a year (1900–1901) but reopened in 1902 under a new president who made expansion his primary goal (Wilson Library 1991). The area had grown enough that, in 1905, Bonita Union High School (now Damien High School) was opened (approximately 1 mile southwest of the subject property), serving the communities of San Dimas and Lordsburg (Tearen and Bricker 1998). By 1908, the college had full ownership of the hotel and land adjacent to it and, in 1918, the first new building, a women’s dormitory, was constructed (Wilson Library 1991). In 1917, after the death of Isaac Lord, the college and Lordsburg were renamed La Verne (Heckman 2000). The last service was held in the old hotel in 1926, ending the use of that building by the college (Wilson Library 1991). Later, the hotel was torn down, and the materials were reused in other buildings on campus and throughout the community (Wilson Library 1991).

Citriculture was the economic base of the community until the 1940s, when the local citrus industry began to decline due to an unknown blight. After World War II (WWII), the groves began to give way to residential development, and the community truly became a college town (City of La Verne 2018). By 1953, the subject residence and a few other homes had been built on both sides of Park Avenue between Elmcrest Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and a small housing tract had been developed north of Elmcrest Street (NETR var.). However, into the 1990s, many reminders of the citrus heritage remained, most notably in the form of old packinghouses along Arrow Highway (City of La Verne 1992). The original commercial center around D Street and First Street still has numerous historic-period buildings and the city is filled with early 20<sup>th</sup> century homes.

**Postwar Recreation, Sub-theme: Drag Racing.** From about 1950 through the mid-1970s, the average income of the American worker rose by 50 percent, and the middle class grew and prospered (Randl 2004:32). With more disposable income and more leisure time (thanks in part to the nearly universal 40-hour work week), the demand for recreational activities grew. A new leisure industry consisting of magazine editors, builders, realtors, and sporting goods and vehicle manufacturers emerged (Randl 2004). Between 1940 and 1970, the number of paid holidays and vacation days had more than doubled for most workers and Saturdays were no longer part of the work week. Recreation was America’s new hobby, and the car culture led the way.

The postwar period saw resurgence in the popularity of hot rodding and drag racing. “By 1950, hot rodders who had been racing in dry lake beds were taking to the streets,” sometimes injuring or killing themselves or others (Allen 2008). In those days, if you were a hot rodder, it was the same as being in a gang today (Ibid.). Nearby Pomona had its share of illegal street racers, but it also had a “car-loving” police chief (Ralph Parker) and a young motorcycle sergeant named Bud Coons who was a car enthusiast (Ibid.). Parker and Coons were also interested in safety, and, with this in mind, Coons began organizing rally runs and shows and barbeques for racers (Ibid.). In 1951, Chief Parker, Coons, and the Lions Club approached the Pomona fairgrounds with the idea of setting aside an area for drag racing (Ibid.). Soon street racers had a legal straightaway and complaints about speeding, as well as deaths from speeding, dropped dramatically (Ibid.). This success prompted the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to send a bulletin to other jurisdictions regarding the Pomona approach (Ibid.). The same year (1951), Wally Parks founded the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) with the goal of promoting safety (Parks 2008). In 1937, Parks was a founding member of the 1937 Southern California Timing Association (SCTA), which was focused on conducting land speed events. Parks also was involved in the first Hot Rod Show in America presented by SCTA in 1948, the introduction of *Hot Rod Magazine* in 1948, the opening of Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah (see *Continuation Sheet*)

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**\*B10. Significance:** (continued from page 3)

for hot rod speed trials in 1949, and was editorial director for all of Bob Petersen's magazines (*Hot Rod Magazine* 2009). As early as 1972, Parks began receiving awards for his participation in automotive sports, including Man of the Decade (1962–1972 by *Popular Hot Rodding* magazine) and Man of the Year (1973 by Specialty Equipment Marketing Association [SEMA]) (Ibid.). Among his myriad awards, in 1992, he was "drag racing's first inductee into the International Motorsports Hall of Fame" in Talladega, Alabama, and in 1993 he was "inducted into the Motorsports Hall of Fame in Novi, Michigan" (Ibid.:2).

"On April 11–12, 1953, the NHRA held its first sanctioned event, the Southern California Championship Drag Races, at Pomona Raceway, located at a far corner of the grounds [less than two miles south of the subject residence]. Over the weekend, 375 cars ran 850 timed races" (Fairplex 2010:77). With a first-class drag racing facility and supervised races, drag racing became a true sport (Parks 2008). In 1961, the "NHRA held its inaugural Winternationals at Pomona Raceway in February before the largest single-day audience in the brief history of drag racing" (Fairplex 2010:77).

Drag racing might never have achieved the stature it has without O. "Ollie" V. Riley (Rickman 1969). Ollie "is the man who built the [Chrondek] timers that made the sport of drag racing the exciting, exacting, and competitive science it is today [1969]" (Ibid.). In 1953, Bud Coons attended a meeting at which Ollie gave a talk on the low-air-speed timer he had developed for General Electric; after the meeting, Bud asked Ollie if he could build a timer for hot rods (Ibid.). Because Ollie knew nothing about hot rods, Bud introduced him to Wally Parks for a crash course. The first electronic timer was born out of hours spent at Ollie's kitchen table putting together circuits with Bud after working all day at Convair (Ibid). This first timing unit was launched into drag racing during a 3-month-long national tour designed to promote the sport. The tour was a huge success, and after only 6 weeks, orders for the new timing unit came pouring in (Ibid.). "By the early fall of '54, Ollie had orders for \$8,000 worth of timers, and no production...He quit his job at Convair and began producing Chrondek timers in the family garage [at 2712 Park Avenue]. This lasted all of six weeks" before he moved the operation to a larger space in La Verne, the former First National Bank building at the corner of D Street and Second Street, less than 1 mile southeast of his house (Ibid.; Huerta 2011). The building was later replaced by a Circle K (Huerta 2011). He also leased a building for the Chrondek Company near the southwest corner of D and Second streets, where there is now University of La Verne housing (Huerta 2011; *Progress-Bulletin* 1957). Four years later, he expanded again, this time in Costa Mesa (Rickman 1969). This first timer evolved into the completely automated robot known as the Chrondek timer, which by 1969 was the top time authority in drag racing (Rickman 1969). By 1969, Ollie had developed a print-out time for NHRA and several other products including an accelerometer, a fuel test kit, "fast draw" timers, timed targets for firing range target systems, and specialized timers for Ford, Chevrolet, Firestone, Goodyear, Ski-doo Snowmobile Company, and Edwards Air Force Base (Ibid.).

"The impact of Ollie's drag racing inventions spread nationally. 'This is a national competition because of this inventor,' Gary Colby says. 'I don't think there would be drag racing today without Oliver's inventions. His innovation was ahead of his time,' says Darren Davis 'California Kid' drag racer. The time devices validated old records in the modern era and allowed for future NHRA success. Ollie's inventions can be seen at the NHRA museum in Pomona, Calif. 'The museum keeps the memory of these cars and inventions,' says Monique Valadez, NHRA museum [Wally Parks NHRA Motorsport Museum] manager" (Huerta 2011).

**People Associated with this Residence.** This residence was built in 1950 by owner Otto Raley (City of La Verne var.). Otto, a driver with the public school system, and his wife Opal are listed at this address in 1951, but by 1952, they are listed nearby at 1736 Elmcrest Street (Ancestry.com var.). From about 1952 to at least 1963, Oliver V. and Garnet Riley lived at this address (*Progress-Bulletin* 1957 and 1963). Oliver Virgil Riley was born in 1918 in Kansas (Ancestry.com var.). In 1940, he was a senior in engineering at Kansas State College when he married Garnett North Wilson, who was a nurse (*Manhattan Republic* 1940). In 1950, the couple and their three sons (Tommy, Gary, and Patrick) were living in Kansas, where Oliver was employed as a professor of electrical engineering at Kansas State College (Ibid.). Around 1952, the family moved to 2712 Park Avenue in La Verne (*Progress-Bulletin* 1957). As discussed above, in 1953, Ollie met Bud Coons and was introduced to the sport of drag racing, which led to his invention of the sport's first electronic timer. In 1954, Ollie left his job at Convair to start producing Chrondek timers in his garage and then in a building at 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and D Street in La Verne. The Rileys remained at 2712 Park Avenue at least into 1963 (*Progress-Bulletin* 1963). Around 1974, Richard L. and Linda C. Hart moved into the residence (Ancestry.com var.). The Harts lived in the residence for approximately 50 years (Townsend 2024). No information was found for the period between 1963 and 1974.

**Architectural Style.** The Minimal Ranch style is a subset of the Traditional Ranch style, which was immensely popular and is often considered the "quintessential Ranch house" (City of Los Angeles 2015:17). Buildings designed in the Traditional Ranch style generally have a rusticated appearance, are typically one-story, and include elements of working ranches such as wide eaves, a combination of exterior claddings, and large picture windows (Architectural Resources Group 2016). The Minimal Ranch is a pared-down version of the Traditional Ranch, with a smaller footprint and fewer architectural details, such as wall materials and ornamentation. They were typically built in accordance with the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) guidelines to be eligible for federal home (see *Continuation Sheet*)

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**\*B10. Significance:** (continued from page 4)

loans. Because of their modest character and lack of architectural details, minor alterations to these residences often have a larger impact than they would on a more articulated design.

**Significance Evaluation.** This property is being evaluated for significance in compliance with CEQA using the California Register criteria. Although the City has no historic preservation ordinance or criteria for significance, it identifies and protects historic resources by designating landmark nominations via City Council resolution and creating Specific Plan areas subject to design review.

**Criterion 1: It is associated with the 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.** This residence is associated with the post-WWII residential boom that made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local, regional, and even national history. "More than 40 million housing units were built in the United States during the 30 year period following the end of WWII, and at least 30 million of these were single-family houses" (California Department of Transportation [Caltrans] 2011:2). These homes were typically modest in size and style and constructed in a short time as part of large tracts marketed to the working class. "The fundamental unit for postwar housing is not the individual house, but the tract, or a single construction phase within a larger tract or new community," and typically a single home would not be individually significant in this context (Caltrans 2011:121). As with most homes associated with this historic context, individually this residence is unimportant and insignificant.

The residence and garage are also associated with the theme of postwar recreation and the sub-theme of drag racing. They are the location where the Chrondek electronic timer was invented and first manufactured by engineer, Ollie V. Riley. The first timer was developed at his kitchen table after work hours and on weekends and the first timers for sale were manufactured in his garage. The Chrondek timer provided a reliable, accurate, consistent, and exact way to time drag racers; it legitimized the sport and was a major factor in its early success. The residence and garage are significant under this criterion.

**Criterion 2: It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.** This residence is associated with Ollie V. Riley, an engineer who invented the timing mechanisms for drag racing in 1953. Known as the Chrondek, the electronic timers provided a reliable and accurate way to time races and gave legitimacy to the fledgling sport. The first timer was developed at his kitchen table, and the first orders for it were manufactured in his garage at 2712 Park Avenue. Without these timers, the sport may never have achieved the stature it has now. After 6 weeks, the manufacturing process was moved out of his garage to a location at 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and D Street in La Verne. The building that housed the Chrondek Company does not appear to be extant. The residence is significant under this criterion.

**Criterion 3: It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method or construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.** This residence embodies characteristics of the Minimal Ranch style, but the alterations (windows and door) have compromised its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. It does not possess high artistic values and does not rise to a level beyond the ordinary. It is not the work of a master architect or builder. It is not significant under this criterion.

**Criterion 4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.** This residence was built in 1950 using common methods and materials. It does not have the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, State, or nation. It is not significant under this criterion.

**Character-defining Features.** Character-defining features (CDFs) are those features that are necessary for the property to retain integrity and through that integrity convey its significance. In this case, the most important features are those that identify the property as dating to its period of significance (1953–1954). They are the features that, in combination, would cause a historical contemporary to recognize it as it exists today. Because the house has sustained alterations, many of the features that would have been CDFs, such as the original windows and doors, are no longer extant. The CDFs include the scale, massing, and spatial relationships of the buildings and the design of the façade (i.e., window, door, and porch placements and stucco siding).

**Integrity.** There are seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The property does not need to retain all seven aspects of integrity, but it must retain enough to convey its significance. For properties that are significant for their associations with events or people, a basic integrity test is whether a historical contemporary would recognize the property as it exists today. Under these criteria, integrity of design and workmanship are often not as important as other aspects of integrity. See *Continuation Sheet*.

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**\*B10. Significance:** (continued from page 5)

**Location.** The residence and garage are in their original locations and retain their original spatial relationships. Integrity of location is high.

**Design.** The scale and massing of the residence has not been changed; however, a covered patio has been added to the rear of the garage. The covered patio is a minor and inconsequential change to the scale and massing of the garage because it is only visible from the backyard of the residence. The placement of the façade windows, door, and front porch have not changed and the replacement windows, door, and added balustrade are relatively minor changes in terms of design. The modern garage door is also a minor design alteration. Although these alterations have compromised integrity of design to some degree, the residence would likely still be recognizable to a historical contemporary. Integrity of design is moderate.

**Setting.** Based on historic aerial photographs, in 1953 this area was in the process of transitioning from agricultural uses to residential neighborhoods. Today, it is fully developed with residences, a park, a school, and a few commercial businesses. Although development has intensified considerably since 1953, the immediate area retains its residential character and still has many historic-period homes. Integrity of setting is moderate.

**Materials.** As previously noted, the windows, front door, balustrade flanking the front steps, and garage door are not original. In addition, the wood shingle roof has been replaced with composition shingles. Integrity of materials is moderate.

**Workmanship.** The workmanship associated with this property does not rise to a level beyond the ordinary, but it appears to retain a high degree of integrity.

**Feeling.** The combination of the non-original windows, front door, balustrade, garage door, and roofing material have weakened the historic character of the property. Although the property does not convey a strong sense of stepping back in time, it retains enough CDFs to convey its association with the 1950s. Integrity of feeling is moderate.

**Association.** The residence and garage are the places where the Chrondek electronic timer was invented and originally manufactured. The property retains a high degree of integrity of association.

In summary, the property retains a moderate degree of integrity and would very likely be recognizable to a historical contemporary.

**\*B12. References:** (continued from page 2)

Allen, David

2008 Pomona A to Z: D is for Drags. Accessed online in January 2011 at: <http://blogs.dailybulletin.com/davidalleIn/2008/02/d.html>.

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Anonymous

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Brackett, F.P.

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2011 *Tract Housing in California, 1945-1973. A Context for National Register Evaluation*. Caltrans Division of Environmental Analysis, Sacramento.

City of La Verne

1992 Lordsburg Specific Plan. Accessed online in July 2018 at: <https://www.ci.la-verne.ca.us/index.php/documents/community-development/general-and-specific-plans/225-lordsburg-specific-plan/file>.

2018 History of La Verne. Accessed online in August 2018 at: <http://www.ci.la-verne.ca.us/index.php/about-la-verne/history-of-la-verne>.

Var. Building permits for 2712 and 2714 Park Avenue provided via email by city staff in November 2024. See *Continuation Sheet*

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**CONTINUATION SHEET**

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**\*B12. References:** (continued from page 6)

City of Los Angeles

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*Manhattan Republic*

1940 Weddings. September 19, page 1.

NETR

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1954 Mrs. Riley Heads Church Blood Bank. October 15, page 12.

1957 La Verne Engineer Develops Timing Devices for New Auto Test Group, March 7, page 25.

1963 La Verne Planners Favor Duplex Zoning for Block of New Lots. January 4, page 10.

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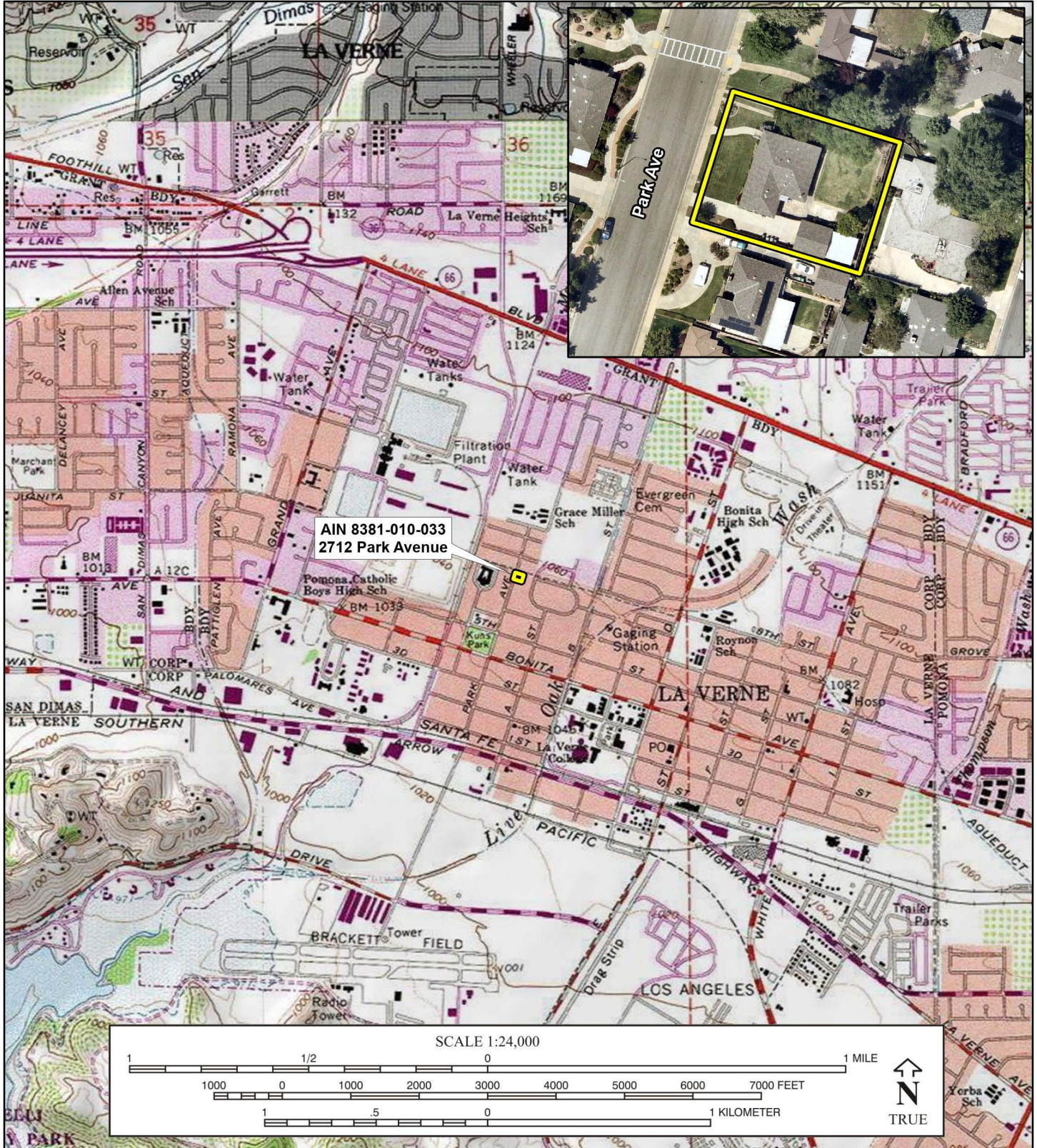
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State of California - Resource Agency  
**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**LOCATION MAP**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
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**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI # \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code 6Z

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 7

Resource Name or #: 2730 Park Avenue

**P1. Other Identifier:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*P2. Location:**  Not for Publication  Unrestricted **\*a. County:** Los Angeles and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

**\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad:** San Dimas, CA **Date:** 1981 T   ; R   ; S.B.B.M.

**c. Address:** 2730 Park Avenue **City:** La Verne **Zip:** 91750

**d. UTM: Zone:** 11; \_\_\_\_\_mE/ \_\_\_\_\_mN (G.P.S.)

**e. Other Locational Data:** (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate): AIN 8381-010-028

**\*P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)  
This one-story Minimal Ranch residence is situated on the east side of Park Avenue in a residential neighborhood that includes modern and historic-period (50 years of age or older) single- and multi-family homes. The wood-framed residence is irregular in plan and rests on a raised foundation. It has a moderately pitched, cross-hipped roof sheathed with composition shingles that has a brick chimney and narrow eaves. The exterior walls are covered with stucco and the façade has brick skirting. The west-facing, asymmetrical façade has a bay window with modern, single-hung windows flanking a fixed window; recessed entry with a wood and glass door accessed by a raised, concrete stoop, accented with seven angled vertical boards; a metal-framed sliding window; a gated breezeway; and an attached garage with a modern door. Fenestration in the side and rear elevations consists of metal-framed, single-hung, and sliding windows. The rear elevation also includes an addition to the garage, a modern door, an attached patio cover, and a raised, covered porch. The backyard has large, freestanding bird cages and a brick fireplace, grill, countertops, and a shed all sheltered beneath a freestanding canopy. The property includes mature trees and appears to be in at least fair condition. Integrity has been compromised by non-original fenestration.

**\*P3b. Resource Attributes:** (Original uses) HP2-Single-family property

**\*P4. Resources Present:**  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other (Isolates, etc.)

**P5a. Photo or Drawing** (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



**P5b. Description of Photo:** (View, date, accession #) Façade, view east (10/8/24)

**\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:**  Historic  Prehistoric  Both  
1952 (City of La Verne var.)

**\*P7. Owner and Address:**  
Hillcrest  
2705 Mountain View Drive  
La Verne, CA 91750-4313

**\*P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)  
Casey Tibbet, M.A.  
LSA Associates, Inc.  
1500 Iowa Avenue, Suite 200  
Riverside, CA 92507

**\*P9. Date Recorded:**  
October 8, 2024

**\*P10. Survey Type:** (Describe) Intensive-level CEQA compliance

**\*P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

**\*Attachments:**  NONE  Location Map  Sketch Map  Continuation Sheet  Building, Structure, and Object Record  Archaeological Record  District Record  Linear Feature Record  Milling Station Record  Rock Art Record  Artifact Record  Photograph Record  Other (List):

# BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

**B1. Historic Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B2. Common Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B3. Original Use:** Single-family residence      **B4. Present Use:** Single-family residence

\***B5. Architectural Style:** Minimal Ranch

\***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

1952 – Permit issued to owner Reliable Builders, Inc. for a new 1,450-square-foot, one-story, six-room dwelling with stucco walls and a shake roof and a garage. Architect/engineer is listed as Roy Stuhley of Reliable Builders, Inc.

1992 – Permits issued to owner Harold Peck to install a 12 x 22-foot manufactured awning at the rear of the residence and to reroof the residence with composition shingle.

1993 – Permit issued to contractor Kevin Becker for a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system.

1994 – Permit issued to owners Mr. and Mrs. Peck for a new patio cover (enclosed).

\***B7. Moved?**  No     Yes     Unknown    **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_    **Original Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

\***B8. Related Features:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B9a. Architect:** Roy Stuhley, Reliable Builders, Inc.      **b. Builder:** Reliable Builders, Inc.

\***B10. Significance: Theme:** \_\_\_\_\_      **Area:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance:** \_\_\_\_\_      **Property Type:** \_\_\_\_\_      **Applicable Criteria:** NA

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

This 1952 Minimal Ranch-style residence does not meet the criteria for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) and there are no local criteria for significance. It is not a "historical resource" for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

**Historic Overview.** In 1774, an expedition of nonnative people on their way to San Francisco used the mission trail (now Arrow Highway) to cross the Pomona Valley and the area that is now La Verne (La Verne Historical Society n.d.). Six decades later, after Mexico gained control of California, the area was part of the 1837 Rancho San Jose land grant that was given to Ygnacio Palomares and Ricardo Vejar (Anonymous 2018). In 1852, after the United States gained control of California, Palomares and Vejar filed a claim for the rancho, which was patented in 1875 (Ibid.). Palomares and Vejar used the lands primarily for sheep and cattle operations, as well as growing crops, until the severe drought in the mid-1860s, which decimated the sheep and cattle industries (Ibid.; Brackett 1920). In 1864, Palomares died and Vejar lost his share of the rancho to foreclosure (Ibid.). In the following years, with the valley economy in near ruin, the ranchos began to disintegrate, and the livestock and grain industries began being replaced by grape crops and, later, olive groves (Brackett 1920; Dumke 1991). See *Continuation Sheet*

**B11. Additional Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes)

\***B12. References:**

Ancestry.com

Var. Various records including city directories, voter registration, Census data, and military information accessed online in October 2024 at: <https://www.ancestry.com/search/>.

Anonymous

2018 Rancho San Jose. Accessed online in June 2018 at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rancho\\_San\\_Jose](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rancho_San_Jose).

See *Continuation Sheet*

**B13. Remarks:**

\***B14. Evaluator:** Casey Tippet, M.A., LSA Associates, Inc., 1500 Iowa Avenue, Suite 200, Riverside, CA 92507

\***Date of Evaluation:** October 2024

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)

Refer to Location Map

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_

HRI # \_\_\_\_\_

Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_

Page 3 of 7\*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 2730 Park Avenue\*Recorded by LSA Associates, Inc.\*Date: October 2024 Continuation Update**\*B10. Significance:** (continued from page 2)

In the late 1860s and 1870s, large sheep and cattle ranches began transitioning to small farms and more intensive agricultural development. In 1876, the Southern Pacific Railroad completed a line from San Francisco to Los Angeles and soon railroads were branching out across southern California (Landis 2010). This was followed by “extensive advertising and publicity campaign[s],” which helped create an unprecedented land boom in the 1880s (Dumke 1991:28). In 1887, “Lordsburg was one of 25 settlements established” along Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway’s (Santa Fe) San Bernardino to Los Angeles line (City of La Verne 1992:3).

Named for its founder, Isaac Wilson Lord, Lordsburg (now La Verne) boasted a large hotel (1888) and parcels of land for sale, but the community experienced one of the few failures of attempted land development in southern California when the boom went bust shortly after the town was founded (Heckman 2000; City of La Verne 1992). No paying guests ever stayed in the 130-room, Queen Anne-style hotel, which was located approximately 1 mile southeast of the subject property (La Verne Historical Society n.d.). In 1889, the Santa Fe brought in one of its most successful tour conductors, George McDonough, in an effort to generate interest in some of the struggling southern California towns along its routes (La Verne Historical Society n.d.; City of La Verne 1992). McDonough, who had worked in the Midwest and had helped settle German Baptist Brethren in Kansas and Texas, began advertising free tours in the *Gospel Messenger* which was commonly read in Brethren homes (City of La Verne 1992). In 1889, M.M. Eshelman toured Lordsburg and McDonough convinced him that the town would be suitable for a colony and a college (City of La Verne 1992:4). In 1890, Eshelman and other Brethren settled in Lordsburg, and after 1 year, approximately 100 members had relocated to the community (Ibid.). That same year (1890), the first navel oranges were planted in Lordsburg and over the next several decades the citrus industry would become the dominant economic force in the area (City of La Verne 1992).

While the citrus industry was growing, so was the college. In 1891, the Brethren opened Lordsburg College in Lord’s hotel and were successful in attracting a sufficient number of settlers from their sect to establish a congregation and sustain the community (Heckman 2000). After 10 years, the college closed for a year (1900–1901) but reopened in 1902 under a new president who made expansion his primary goal (Wilson Library 1991). The area had grown enough that, in 1905, Bonita Union High School (now Damien High School) was opened (approximately 1 mile southwest of the subject property) serving the communities of San Dimas and Lordsburg (Tearen and Bricker 1998). By 1908, the college had full ownership of the hotel and land adjacent to it and, in 1918, the first new building, a women’s dormitory, was constructed (Wilson Library 1991). In 1917, after the death of Isaac Lord, the college and Lordsburg were renamed La Verne (Heckman 2000). The last service was held in the old hotel in 1926, ending the use of that building by the college (Wilson Library 1991). Later, the hotel was torn down, and the materials were reused in other buildings on campus and throughout the community (Wilson Library 1991).

Citriculture was the economic base of the community until the 1940s, when the local citrus industry began to decline due to an unknown blight. After World War II (WWII), the groves began to give way to residential development, and the community truly became a college town (City of La Verne 2018). By 1953, the subject residence and a few other homes had been built on both sides of Park Avenue between Elmcrest Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and a small housing tract had been developed north of Elmcrest Street (NETR var.). However, into the 1990s, many reminders of the citrus heritage remained, most notably in the form of old packinghouses along Arrow Highway (City of La Verne 1992). The original commercial center around D Street and First Street still has numerous historic-period buildings, and the city is filled with early 20<sup>th</sup> century homes.

**People Associated with this Residence.** This residence was built in 1952 by Reliable Builders, Inc.; Roy Stuhley, President of Reliable Builders, was listed as the architect (City of La Verne var.; *Progress-Bulletin* 1951a). In 1951, after building five subdivisions in other areas, the company proposed two subdivisions in La Verne. The first was 16 units at 4<sup>th</sup> and D streets and the second was 56 units along the northern extension of Park Avenue (*Progress-Bulletin* 1951b). The North Park Avenue tract was called La Verne Highlands and was owned by the Hanawalt family (*Progress-Bulletin* 1951c). It was located a few lots north of the subject property along Elmcrest and Maplewood streets (Tract No. 17459 1951). An online search of Los Angeles County newspapers found several mentions of Reliable Builders, Inc. from 1951 into 1953 and many additional mentions of Reliable Builders as late as 1977. Mr. Stuhley is routinely referred to as a builder or developer in various news articles; he does not appear to have been a trained architect. The last mention of him found in conjunction with a development project was in 1970 (*Los Angeles Times* 1970).

The earliest occupant found was Chester Glenn Van Dusen in 1953 (*Progress-Bulletin* 1953). Research indicates Mr. Van Dusen lived at this address with his wife Gladys until his death in 1959 (*Progress-Bulletin* 1959). He was born in 1904 in Kansas and moved to California as a young man (Ibid.). From 1928 to 1950, he worked as a pressman in the commercial printing department of the *Progress-Bulletin* (Ibid.). From 1950 until his death in 1959, he worked for the Day Printing Corporation (Ibid.).

In 1960, Harold R. and Velda Peck were listed at 2730 Park Avenue (*Progress-Bulletin* 1960; Legacy.com 2024). Harold Ray Peck was born in June 1924 in Missouri, but by age 5 was living with his family in Pomona, California (Ancestry.com var.). During WWII, Harold was an armorer gunner on a B-24 doing reconnaissance missions in southeast Asia (Legacy.com 2024). He received an Associate of Arts from Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC); Bachelor of Science and master’s degrees in Agricultural Sciences from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; and a Counseling Credential from Loyola (see *Continuation Sheet*)

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**\*B10. Significance:** (continued from page 3)

University (Ibid.). In 1952, he became an agriculture instructor at Mt. SAC (*Los Angeles Times* 1967). According to his 2010 obituary, during his 37 years at Mt. SAC, "he was responsible for the administration of the working farm, created a bird sanctuary, and served as Dean of Vocational Sciences" (Legacy.com 2024). He "raised prize-winning birds and was a renowned expert in the field of aviculture" (Ibid.). "He received numerous national and state honors including California Agriculture Teacher of the Year, Outstanding Professor Emeritus at Mt. San Antonio College, induction into the Agriculture Hall of Fame, and appointment to the position of Chair of the United States Department of Education, Commission on Agricultural Post Secondary Curriculum. Harold was a popular expert guest on television shows, appearing 21 times" (Ibid.). The Pecks had three children, son Terry and daughters Sandra and Susan (Ibid.). The Pecks were listed at this address at least into the 1990s (Ancestry.com var.). Research, including outreach to the Mt. SAC Agricultural Sciences Department and a review of the notice of Mr. Peck's death in the horticultural department's newsletter, was unable to confirm the achievements listed in Mr. Peck's obituary (Lannom 2011).

**Architectural Style.** The Minimal Ranch style is a subset of the Traditional Ranch style, which was immensely popular and is often considered the "quintessential Ranch house" (City of Los Angeles 2015:17). Buildings designed in the Traditional Ranch style generally have a rusticated appearance, are typically one-story, and include elements of working ranches, such as wide eaves, a combination of exterior claddings, and large picture windows (Architectural Resources Group 2016). The Minimal Ranch is a pared-down version of the Traditional Ranch, with a smaller footprint and fewer architectural details, such as wall materials and ornamentation. They were typically built in accordance with the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) guidelines in order to be eligible for federal home loans. Because of their modest character and lack of architectural details, minor alterations to these residences often have a larger impact than they would on a more articulated design.

**Significance Evaluation.** This property is being evaluated for significance in compliance with CEQA using the California Register criteria. Although the City has no historic preservation ordinance or criteria for significance, it identifies and protects historic resources by designating landmark nominations via City Council resolution and creating Specific Plan areas subject to design review.

**Criterion 1: It is associated with the 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.** This residence is associated with the post-WWII residential boom that made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local, regional, and even national history. "More than 40 million housing units were built in the United States during the 30 year period following the end of World War II, and at least 30 million of these were single-family houses" (California Department of Transportation [Caltrans] 2011:2). These homes were typically modest in size and style and constructed in a short time as part of large tracts marketed to the working class. "The fundamental unit for postwar housing is not the individual house, but the tract, or a single construction phase within a larger tract or new community" and typically a single home would not be individually significant in this context (Caltrans 2011:121). As with most homes associated with this historic context, individually this residence is unimportant and insignificant.

**Criterion 2: It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.** The residence was occupied by Harold R. Peck and members of his family from 1960 into the 1990s. According to Mr. Peck's obituary, he had many achievements during his 37 years as an agriculture instructor at Mt. San Antonio College. However, research was unable to confirm much of what was stated in the obituary and no evidence of any important contributions to the field of agricultural sciences by Mr. Peck was found. The residence is not significant under this criterion.

**Criterion 3: It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method or construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.** This residence embodies characteristics of the Minimal Ranch style, but the alterations (windows and door) have compromised its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. It does not possess high artistic values and does not rise to a level beyond the ordinary. It is not the work of a master architect or builder. It is not significant under this criterion.

**Criterion 4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.** This residence was built in 1952 using common methods and materials. It does not have the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, State, or nation. It is not significant under this criterion.

See Continuation Sheet

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\*Recorded by LSA Associates, Inc. \*Date: October 2024  Continuation  Update

**\*B12. References:** (continued from page 2)

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Brackett, F.P.

1920 *History of the Pomona Valley*. Historic Record Company, Los Angeles, California.

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

2011 *Tract Housing in California, 1945-1973. A Context for National Register Evaluation*. Caltrans Division of Environmental Analysis, Sacramento.

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1953 Advertisement for La Verne Highlands. June 21, page 125.

1967 Instructor Honored by Association. July 16, page 215.

1970 Two Apartment Projects Slated. June 16, page 136.

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Var. Historical aerial photographs from various dates. Accessed online in October 2024 at: <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>.

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1951a Ceremony To Set Off Construction Of 64 L.V. Homes. August 31, page 8.

1951b Variances Sought for Two L.V. Subdivision Projects. August 15, page 8.

1951c Photo caption, La Verne Development. September 5, page 8.

1953 Two Persons Hurt in Four Traffic Accidents Here. November 14, page 19.

1959 Former P-B Pressman Dies. August 26, page 17.

1960 George Hastons Celebrate 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. September 21, page 17.

See Continuation Sheet

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\*Recorded by LSA Associates, Inc. \*Date: October 2024  Continuation  Update

**\*B12. References:** (continued from page 5)

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1998 Historic Resources Survey for Damien High School, 2280 Damien Avenue, La Verne, CA.

Tract No. 17459

1951 Tract No. 17459 on file with Los Angeles County Public Works. Accessed online in November 2024 at: <https://pw.lacounty.gov/sur/nas/landrecords/tract/MB0428/TR0428-013.pdf>.

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**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**LOCATION MAP**

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